



# Cessnock City Library Review

## Report and Strategy 2014 -2024

Welcoming | Engaging | Inspiring | Innovative | Relevant | Inclusive | Accessible | Flexible |  
Adaptive | Responsive | Cohesive | Connected | Supportive | Enabling

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## Executive Summary

The Cessnock City Library Service Review and Strategy comprises three main sections:

- Section 1: Strategic Plan
- Section 2: Current Operational Review
- Section 3: Strategic Context and Background

The final two sections of the report provided the context and situational analysis that informed the development of a ten-year strategy for the Cessnock City Library Service.

### Strategic Plan

The library's strategy provides a framework for the future design, development and delivery of services. The current library buildings at Cessnock and Kurri Kurri are incapable of meeting current demands and expectations, let alone future population growth. They did not meet the guidelines of *People places: A guide for public library buildings in New South Wales* (Library Council of New South Wales, Sydney) in 2001, and they fall even further short now, particularly in the provision of overall floor areas.

Whilst there is a recognition from users that they enjoy using the libraries and their services, many users, and certainly the staff, understand how much more could be achieved in a different building environment.

Implementation of the Plan's Infrastructure Strategies and Actions are fundamental to the future development the Cessnock City Library service. This implementation will strengthen Council's position to enable future provision of library buildings which are of a size to meet future population growth; which have the flexibility to respond to changing demands and expectations for spaces, services, facilities and programs; and which are adaptable to the integration, co-location and delivery of compatible services.

Without a strong commitment to and delivery of major expansion or replacement of the current Cessnock and Kurri Kurri libraries, the potential to achieve success in all areas of this Library Strategic Plan will be considerably diminished.

While it is impossible to fully predict the future of public library services, it is clear that there is a growing focus on programming, digital delivery and the important role the library plays in equitable access (bridging the digital divide), and the importance of community partnerships and collaborations. There is also an increasing focus on how libraries will be resourced into the future.

### Vision

*Cessnock City Library Service is a welcoming, engaging and enabling place; providing opportunities for creativity and innovation; and relevant and responsive to the needs of the local community.*



The library will be a welcoming, creative and enabling place where people can meet, connect, access information, use and explore new technology, and enjoy learning and recreational activities; and a place to keep and share our history, stories and culture – a meeting, keeping, sharing place.

The areas of focus for the plan, and the goals, are:

**Infrastructure** – the current library buildings, and a vision for future service delivery

*Goal - To provide welcoming and inclusive community spaces that are well used and accessible to all*

**Services and Programs** – how the Library will deliver its services, both physically and in the online world to meet user needs and expectations for a diverse and varied range of programs, services and events

*Goal - Relevant and inclusive, outcomes based quality services programs and events that meet the needs of the community*

**Technology** – how the Library will keep up to date with the latest developments for staff and users, including the website, digital products, social media and the Library Management System

*Goal - Customer focused and relevant information technology and support services*

**Marketing** - how the Library will communicate the breadth and depth of its service, collections and programming to its customers and the community

*Goal - Targeted and effective marketing strategies that build community recognition, knowledge, and usage of services, programs and facilities*

**Partnerships** – how the Library will develop partnerships with sponsors, volunteers, supporters and advocates

*Goal – Collaborative partnerships that benefit the library service, its customers, Council and the community*

**Collections** – how the library will develop and manage its collections

*Goal - Maintain current, balanced, well-organised and managed collections that meet and reflect the needs of customers and the community.*

## Current Operational Review

This section outlines the result of the comparative review of Cessnock City Library using *Living Learning Libraries: Standards and Guidelines for New South Wales Public Libraries 2012*,<sup>1</sup> an evidence-based guide to the development of library services in NSW.

Areas of review included Expenditure, Technology, Programs and Events, Collections, Staffing, Visitation, Loans and Hours of opening; and the following is a brief overview of the current situation:

- Collections are of a reasonable age and currency
- Collection turnover is below the median NSW standard
- Current acquisition levels per capita are above the NSW median
- The library is under-staffed, when viewed both in terms of absolute numbers and the percentage of qualified staff. In future, more focus should be placed on specialist areas e.g. servicing the aged and increased programming which will require a phase-up of staffing numbers within a revised organisational structure
- Total opening hours exceed the minimum standard
- The number of library programs and events has experienced growth between 2010-11 and 2011-12. Programs focus on children's activities and the areas of lifelong learning, author talks, local history lectures, technology classes and craft activities
- Attendance at Library programs and events has increased by over 40% in the last 12 months
- There is good access to public technology and WiFi

## Strategic Context and Background

Cessnock City Library is part of a much larger local, state and national network of public libraries. It is one of 1,500 public library services nationwide and plays an important and highly valued community role. This section of the report provides a national snapshot of Australian public libraries, and the policy and strategic context within which Cessnock City Library (the Library) operates. Importantly it also provides an overview of the legislative context within which the Library operates i.e. the NSW Library Act 1939.

This section also describes how the Library aligns with Council's Vision and Community Strategies for Cessnock, which are of the utmost importance to the development of the Library's strategic goals and strategies for the future.

Current and future demographics trends are reviewed and analysed and their likely impacts on the Library are explored. Areas of demographic focus include population growth, cultural diversity, education, access to technology, economic indicators, and employment.

The section contains a review of emerging public library trends and their potential impact on the Library, now and into the future. Trends include:

- Usage (visitation, lending etc.)

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<sup>1</sup> *Living Learning Libraries: standards and guidelines for NSW public libraries 2012* 4<sup>th</sup> edition  
[http://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/services/public\\_libraries/living\\_learning\\_libraries/index.html](http://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/services/public_libraries/living_learning_libraries/index.html) [accessed May 2013]

- Innovations in service delivery and library building design
- Shared service models
- Community development programs
- Technology and the impact of the NBN
- eMaterials (e.g. eBooks, eVideo and eAudio), and
- Social media

## SECTION 1: STRATEGIC PLAN



## 1.1 Cessnock City Library Strategic Plan

The strategic plan was formulated after extensive staff and community consultation.

The following strategies will guide the development of the Library over the next ten years. Each year the actions associated with this strategy will need to be reviewed and prioritised to ensure the Library continues to lead, investigate, inspire and meet the needs of the community of the Cessnock Local Government Area now and into the future.

Note: actions associated with these draft goals and strategies will be developed in consultation with the library staff.



Figure 15 - Areas of Strategic Focus

## 1.1.1 Infrastructure

### Rationale

The current library facilities no longer meet contemporary standards and are inadequate for projected future use – especially in the context of expected population growth in the Greta-Branxton-North Rothbury and Kurri Kurri and surrounds areas, and an ageing population. To inform future planning, it will be crucial for the library to develop a visioning brief and gather and develop functional and other design brief data.

This master plan will focus on equitable access, a strong technology backbone, and flexible and adaptive spaces. It will also facilitate future resourcing strategies e.g. grant applications, Council's capital and operational budget commitment, and federal regional and local community infrastructure funding bids. Commercial partnerships will also need to be considered.

Cessnock City Library will provide physical access to its services from three physical branches, the web and other online facilities, and externally via its outreach service e.g. Home Library Service.

1. Cessnock Library
2. Kurri Kurri Library
3. Huntlee Library
4. Web and online services
5. Outreach services (includes Home Library Service, and externally delivered library programming and selected services)

### Goal

To provide welcoming and inclusive community spaces that are well used and accessible to all members of our community

### Strategies

Development of a Cessnock City Library Service Building Master Plan, that includes:

1. A visioning brief for library facilities for Cessnock, Kurri Kurri and the proposed Huntlee town
2. Identification of possible sites, which may need to be acquired
3. A library design brief for each current and proposed site
4. A draft plans for costing and resourcing purposes e.g. applications for funding including grants, Council capital investment, partnerships (including commercial), and regional infrastructure funding

The Cessnock City Library Building Master Plan should consider the following key visioning concepts:

- Provision of accessible library spaces where they are most needed
- Improvement of library infrastructure (buildings)
- Provision of welcoming and inclusive library spaces
- Improvement of functional spaces within library branches
- Exploration of shared service opportunities
- Exploration of commercial opportunities e.g. Café (leased space)

## 1.1.2 Services and Programs

### Rationale

The range of services and programs offered by a modern public library continue to expand and change. It is vital that future planning of these ensures alignment to the Library's core business objectives and outcomes, and that they meet certain basic criteria:

- Facilitate lifelong learning, including literacy
- Support children's education
- Support recreation, local culture and the arts
- Foster social cohesion

### Goal

Relevant and inclusive, outcomes based quality services, programs and events that meet the needs of the community

### Strategies

1. Encourage and support a culture of reading within the community
2. Support and encourage the development of literacy skills in the community (including digital literacy)
3. Support and encourage life long learning (flexible and adaptive to meet locally identified and espoused needs)
4. Facilitate access to reputable information and content for all community members, in the libraries and online/web-based
5. Develop project briefs (outcomes-based) for library programs and key services<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Project Brief Template example: [http://www.rhcs.com.au/?page\\_id=63](http://www.rhcs.com.au/?page_id=63)

6. Re-align existing roles to ensure that the Library's services and programs meet the needs of the community
7. Support the provision of quality service by the selection, development and support of skilled staff
8. Develop library systems and policies that support customer service (governance)



### 1.1.3 Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

#### Rationale

Libraries have been at the forefront of public technology access for well over a decade. However the exponential growth in technology innovations e.g. mobile access, web-based services and social media is creating a higher expectation of access and service by the community and staff. ICT strategies are designed to better define service parameters, and to enable continuous improvement of services. Importantly they place an emphasis on planning and collaborating with Council's Information Technology section; and partnering with, for example, the local education sector.

#### Goal

Customer focused and relevant information technology and support services

#### Strategies

1. Information technology research and evaluation (ongoing watch on, and evaluation of, ICT based innovations for adoption or adaption)
2. Develop a digital service delivery model (including in-house and remote; mobile and web based)
3. An information technology plan, including marketing strategy
4. Information technology training and awareness (staff)
5. Information technology training and awareness (users / community)
6. Development of apps for smart devices and/or a mobile website
7. Content aggregation and publishing by the library i.e. local studies, family history, and other locally produced materials, including music, art and writing
8. Review Library Management System and its capacity to meet future needs

## 1.1.4 Marketing

### Rationale

Community and staff feedback indicates the need to better communicate and market the breadth and depth of the Library's services, collections and programming to its customers and the community. In the public library sector the development of marketing plans is becoming more commonplace, with many libraries choosing to develop marketing strategies for particular target groups such as youth, rather than a whole of service marketing plan. The target groupings proposed in this strategy resonate with Council plans and community demographics (current and forecast).

### Goal

Targeted and effective marketing strategies that build community recognition, knowledge, and usage of services, programs and facilities

### Strategies

1. Staff marketing planning training
2. Situational analysis (target group based analysis, including non-users) \*
3. Engaging partners in the marketing planning process e.g. educational partners
4. Develop and adopt targeted marketing strategies and tactics (the marketing plan)

\* The review and community consultation data produced by this project will inform the situational analysis

## 1.1.5 Partnerships

### Rationale

Creating a range of partnerships is essential if the Library wishes to continue to be relevant and viable into the future. The combining of skills and resources gives partners a greater capacity to deliver agreed to goals than either party on its own. Partnerships can also be developed with sponsors, volunteers and library supporters and advocates (e.g. Friends of the Library).

### Goal

Collaborative partnerships that benefit the library service, its customers, Council and the community

### Strategies

1. Formalising existing and potential networks (key stakeholder groups and organisations), particularly in the education sector (school and TAFE)
2. Share new (or existing) library premises with a local business, Council or community partner e.g. a cafe, a bookshop, gallery, community centre etc
3. Commercial developments / partnership that enhance and / or support the ongoing delivery of library services and programs
4. Establishment of partnership and collaboration guidelines
5. Establishment of sponsorship guidelines
6. Optimised use and support of volunteers

## 1.1.6 Collections

### Rationale

With electronic collections set to replace hard copy collections in increasing proportions (estimates vary, but there is some agreement at about 50% electronic collections in 10 years), the Library will need the ability to effectively manage and promote these collections to customers, who will expect to be able to browse them in the same way they do hard copy collections, and receive 'reader advisory' services from staff. Presentation of library collections is increasingly important as customers expect spaces to be attractive, welcoming and well set out.

### Goal

Maintain balanced, well-organised and managed, current collections that meet and reflect the needs of customers and the community

### Strategies

1. Comprehensive and focused collection development planning (including eCollections) i.e. the development of collection profiles, resourcing, promotion, and community engagement strategies
2. Develop a collection management plan (i.e. how the library will manage the life cycle of its collections)
3. Creation of eBrowsing areas e.g. touch screen kiosks<sup>3</sup> and tables
4. An online Readers' Advisory service
5. Re-allocation of former hard copy collection space for other purposes including study, programming and technology (pending take up of eResources)
6. Purchase of eReaders etc. for loan to customers
7. eServices for the house bound i.e. a focus on accessibility to ensure people with vision impairment have the benefit of suitable eTechnology and format

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<sup>3</sup> Example: 3M Cloud Library Service, including multi-platform apps, lendable eReaders, and Kiosks for browsing and lending. See: [http://solutions.3m.com/wps/portal/3M/en\\_US/library-systems-NA/library-technologies/ebook-lending/](http://solutions.3m.com/wps/portal/3M/en_US/library-systems-NA/library-technologies/ebook-lending/) (accessed June 2013)

## 1.2. Cessnock City Library Service Strategy

### 1.2.1 The Aim of the Cessnock Library Service Strategy

The library's strategy provides a framework for the future design, development and delivery of services. While it is impossible to fully predict the future of public library services, it is clear that there is a growing focus on programming, digital delivery and the important role the library plays in equitable access (bridging the digital divide), and the importance of community partnerships and collaborations. There is also an increasing focus on how libraries will be resourced into the future.

### 1.2.2 Consultation Methodology and Findings

#### Consultation

A formal consultation process was completed over a period of approximately 2 months. The methodology used for this process included:

- An online library staff survey
- An online and paper-based library user survey
- A telephone based non-user survey<sup>4</sup>
- A Home Library Service user survey
- Staff workshop
- Council officer workshop
- Council Leadership Group workshop
- Councillor presentation
- Face to face consultations with key stakeholders from the community, education sector, and special interest groups, including: parents / carers, local history and family history groups, childcare professionals, education professionals, school students, community members and local businesses in Cessnock and Kurri Kurri

#### Research and Review

- Previous library review documents
- Council strategies
- Community profile and future trends (demographics)
- Comparative research against NSW Public Library benchmarking standards and statistics
- Library statistical data
- Analysis of emerging trends in public libraries

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<sup>4</sup> Conducted by Jetty Research [<http://jettyresearch.com.au/>] on behalf of RHCS for Cessnock City Council

### 1.2.3 Strategic Framework

The balanced scorecard<sup>5</sup> methodology underpins the strategic planning process, and its four areas of focus should be considered in any decision-making or action planning associated with this plan.

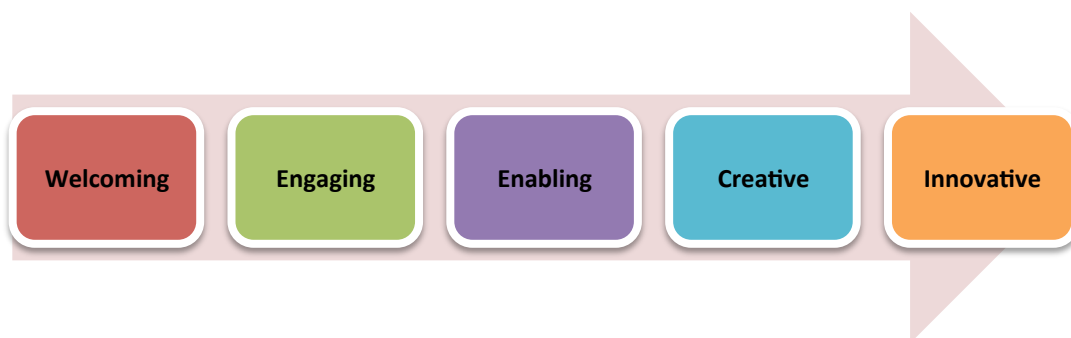
They are:

1. **Community/Customer:** Identifying and understanding what the library needs to achieve for library users, the community and other key stakeholders (our goals, strategies and actions)
2. **Learning and Growth:** Identifying and understanding what learning and training requirements are needed to support and sustain the library's desired strategic outcomes for the community, users, and library staff
3. **Governance:** Identifying and understanding the processes, policies and guidelines that we need to have in place to succeed and to support the delivery of our strategies
4. **Resources:** Identifying and understanding the resources required to guarantee or at least maximise success; and how the library will manage and monitor its performance

### 1.2.4 Statement of Vision and Purpose

#### Vision

*Cessnock City Library Service is a welcoming, engaging and enabling place; providing opportunities for creativity and innovation; and relevant and responsive to the needs of the local community.*



#### Description

The library will be a welcoming, creative and enabling place where people can meet, connect, access information, use and explore new technology, and enjoy learning and recreational activities; and a place to keep and share our history, stories and culture

<sup>5</sup> A Balanced Scorecard Approach – see also <http://www.balancedscorecard.org/> (accessed June 2013)

## Purpose

The following key principles underpin the library's future role, direction and core services:

### *A Meeting Place*

Beyond the book and the other roles normally associated with a library is its fundamental (and often overlooked) role as a community meeting place. That is, a neutral space open to all, where people (no matter their cultural background, beliefs etc.) can meet together informally and formally for purposes as diverse as talking to friends, educational programs and activities, recreational programs and activities, or a place to discuss and consider public issues.

### *A Keeping Place*

A place that recognises the importance of all our stories and histories, and records and documents those stories and histories so they are not lost to current and future generations.

### *A Sharing Place*

A place where everyone can share his or her stories, histories and ideas; and a place that helps us remember; a place that showcases our creativity e.g. art, music, stories and histories.

Strategically, the library has an opportunity to redefine and redevelop its role with the local community. The concepts of a meeting place; a keeping place and a sharing place are common to most communities and cultures and offer the library three key areas of community focus for the future. The nomenclature used when communicating these concepts will be of the utmost importance to their recognition and future success.

### *Catalyst*

Cessnock City Library will act as a **catalyst** for the local community to access Information, explore new technology, enjoy learning opportunities and recreational activities. It will also facilitate the creation of content that will enhance community knowledge, and the ongoing discovery of our past, present and future

### *Connecting the Community*

Cessnock City Library will act as a **connection and anchor** point for the local community through the delivery of targeted and interactive programs, activities and events; and through the provision of multi-functional spaces, access to innovative technology, reputable information sources and the Internet.

*A good local library is not just about borrowing books or storing physical artefacts. It is where individuals become card-carrying members of a local community. They are places where people give as well as receive. Public libraries are keystones delivering the building blocks of social cohesion, especially for the very young and the very old. They are where*

*individuals come to sit quietly and think, free from the distractions of our digital age. They are where people come to ask for help in finding things, especially themselves.*<sup>6</sup>

### ***Flexible and Adaptable***

Cessnock City Library will provide **flexible** and **adaptable** services, staff, spaces (buildings / infrastructure) and technology to support the diverse needs of the local community

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<sup>6</sup> <http://toptrends.nowandnext.com/2011/12/28/in-praise-of-libraries-and-librarians/>[accessed July 2013]



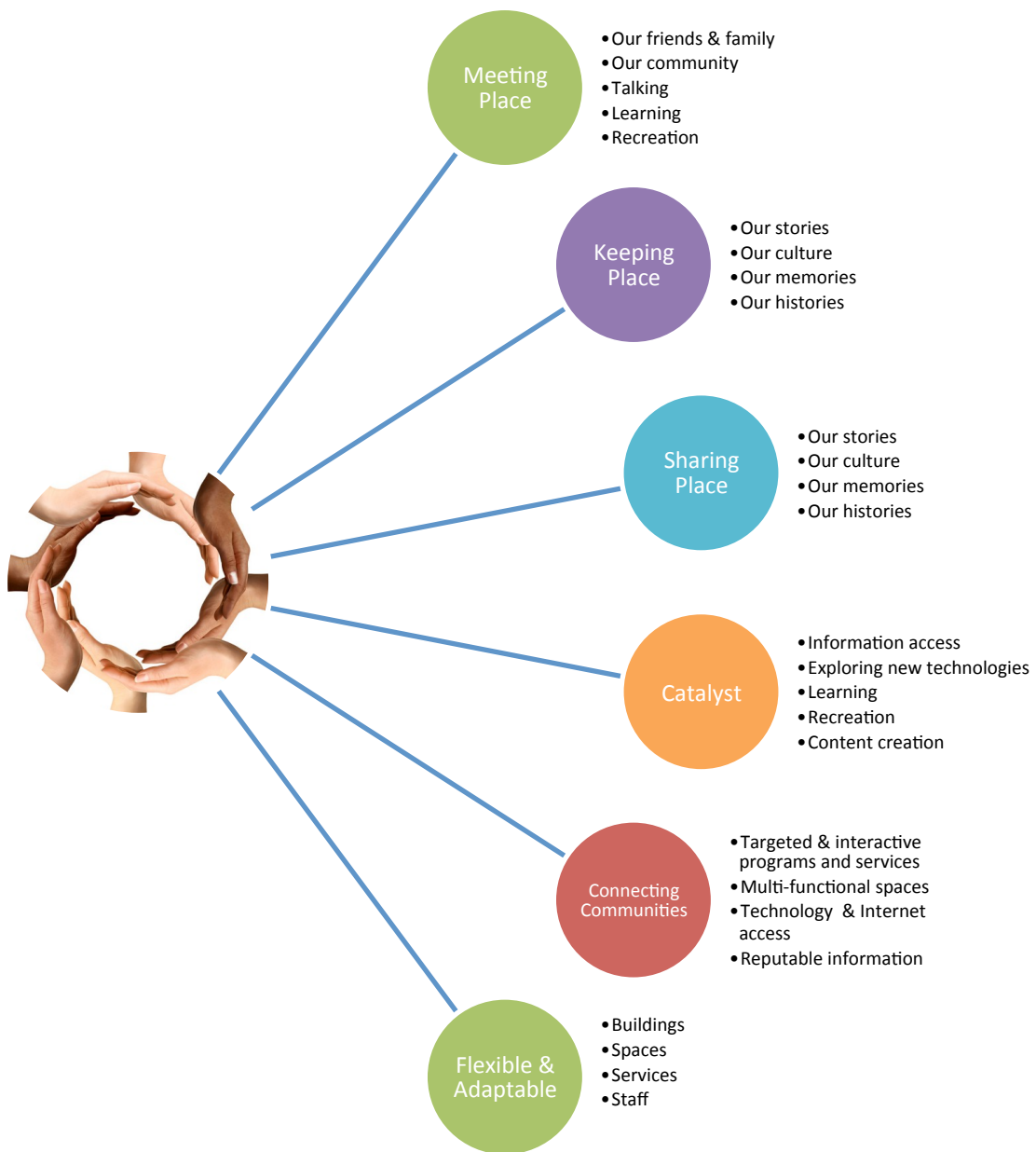


Figure 1 - Key Principles (Vision and Purpose)

## 1.2.5 Branch Infrastructure

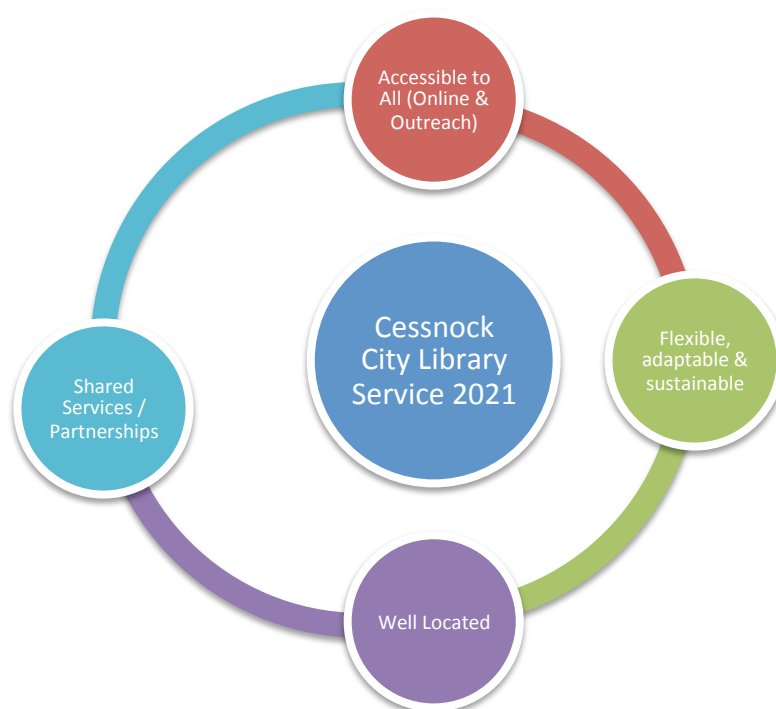


Figure 9 - Key Infrastructure Component

### ***Recommended Goal***

To provide welcoming and inclusive community spaces that are well used and accessible to all members of our community.

### ***Recommended Strategies***

Development of a Cessnock Library Service Building Master Plan, that includes:

1. A visioning brief for library facilities for Cessnock, Kurri Kurri and the proposed Huntlee town
2. Identification of possible sites, which may need to be acquired
3. A library design brief for each current and proposed site
4. Draft plans for costing and resourcing purposes e.g. applications for funding including grants, Council capital investment, partnerships (including commercial), and regional infrastructure funding

The consultation and review conducted as part of this project reconfirms the findings of the 2001 library service review<sup>7</sup> and again highlights the need for additional floor space at both Cessnock and Kurri Kurri libraries. New urban developments in the Greta-Branxton-North Rothbury area, and the likely need for additional library infrastructure highlight the importance of developing a library building master plan to better inform and design services. This would include:

<sup>7</sup> Lunn Consulting: Cessnock City Library Review 2001

- A visioning brief for library buildings e.g. a detailed statement of future purpose, and the image the buildings will project
- The development of a library design brief for each current site, and future site – this will flesh out specific needs
- The development of draft plans – these can be used for costing and eventually for resourcing purposes e.g. applications for funding including grants, Council capital investment, partnerships including commercial, and regional infrastructure funding<sup>8</sup>

## Service Delivery Model

When considering the future state of library buildings it will also be important to consider the library's operational service delivery model.

For example, a model based on a multi-tiered system of library facilities:

- a) District Library (Headquarters) - the central library facility, providing a full comprehensive range of library services, resources and features with extended hours of operation.
- b) Local Library - a substantially sized facility but smaller than the main library. Has extended hours of operation, and still provides a wide range of library services and resources.
- c) Village Library - with a focus on providing a limited but popular range of library services and resources with reduced hours of operation, and usually in co-location with or close proximity to a café or coffee shop.
- d) Express Library - a self-service facility that supplements the larger facilities by providing a community access point to a limited range of key library services and resources. Ideally located within a shopping centre or other key community facility or adjacent to a transport hub e.g. an eResource access Kiosk.
- e) Online Library - a dedicated online branch of the Library Service managed by staff based at the main or District Library. Staff will be available in real time via chat, text or email, and the site will use the latest online service delivery methods.

There are local examples of a tiered system of library branches i.e. Lake Macquarie and Newcastle public library services, that could be examined as part of a service delivery model review.

## Mobile Library

The Mobile Library was discontinued for reasons that remain valid, and there has been no real demand for its reinstatement. The cost associated with providing a mobile library service is not justified given the small number of users who would potentially be served. For example, a mobile library costs in the vicinity of \$250,000 plus collection stock, maintenance and running costs, technology and associated licencing, and staffing.

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<sup>8</sup> The Regional and Local Community Infrastructure Program <http://www.regional.gov.au/local/assistance/> [accessed June 2013]

It is worth noting that the library's Home Library Service is available to support and deliver library items to those who cannot access the library due to frailty, ill health or disability.

Current remote users of the library service usually access the library when shopping or visiting the major town centres of Cessnock or Kurri Kurri. Others (depending on their location within the Local Government Area or their work place) may choose to use library services in other Local Government Areas. There is an opportunity, however, for the library to explore alternatives when it comes to servicing remote users – as outlined in the next section.

## Rural and Remote Service Delivery

Rural and remote communities throughout Australia are facing hardship as more and more services and facilities are withdrawn from towns and villages, or increasingly, only available online. With the withdrawal of many services and agencies, including post offices, banks, medical and government services, one community facility remains constant, operational and open for business - the local public library. In Cessnock, this can be illustrated by the closure of the local cinema. In fact, the more that is taken away from rural communities, the more the public library becomes recognised as *the* community focal point, meeting place and access facility for a broad range of purposes.

In order to maximise library service provision to smaller, remote or distributed communities, it is necessary to develop innovative partnerships and creative methods of service delivery. Examples include libraries co-located with TAFE colleges and schools; library 'deposit stations' in news agencies, service stations and retail outlets; mobile libraries and home delivery of library materials in outback NSW.

The public library network in New South Wales has emerged as a leader in bringing technology access and solutions to remote, rural and regional communities. This has largely been due to the efforts of the State government and the rollout of Internet connectivity via NSW.net. This has ensured unparalleled technology infrastructure for local authorities today. Public libraries are an obvious choice as community technology access points and online information delivery points for all levels of government.

The population of the Cessnock Local Government Area is heavily dependent on private motor vehicles, with a large percentage of households owning two or more vehicles. Most residents visit Cessnock, Kurri Kurri or centres in adjoining Local Government Areas (e.g. Maitland or Singleton) on a regular basis. The two branches of Cessnock City Library should be reasonably expected to provide an adequate library service to all current residents. However, the provision of library and other community services needs to be an early focus of the major new development planned for the Huntlee area. See Attachment 2a for a map of the Cessnock Local Government Area.

It can be assumed that with more promotion and awareness building of the current library services throughout the Local Government Area, that there will be growth in library usage from the outlying towns and villages.

## Options

Include:

- A home delivery service, using couriers or Australia Post e.g. subsidised by Council
- Expansion of eBook collections
- A mini mobile library (sometimes referred to as a pop up library) that visits, for example, childcare centres or aged care facilities, offering library programs and a limited range of resources. An example is the service provided by the Geelong Library (Victoria) Community Library Service van, which visits communities bringing a small browsing collection of books, CDs and DVDs, and delivers library materials that members have requested and collects materials for return to the library. The van service also brings library programs, such as storytime sessions and workshops / lifelong learning programs<sup>9</sup>
- Bulk loans of library materials to aged care facilities, neighbourhood houses, community centres, clubs and other facilities. Bulk loan collections are customised to match the local needs
- eReaders / iPads pre-loaded with titles, for loan
- Library kiosks / deposit stations in outlying towns and villages. In future these may be 'download' kiosks for eResources (e.g. the 3M Discovery Station<sup>10</sup>)

## Recommended Service Delivery Model

Cessnock City Library will provide physical access to its services from three physical branches, the web and other online facilities, and externally via its outreach service e.g. Home Library Service.

6. Cessnock Library
7. Kurri Kurri Library
8. Huntlee Library
9. Web and online services
10. Outreach services (includes Home Library Service, and externally delivered library programming and selected services)

## Financial implications

While it is not possible to give exact figures, the rollout of three new library buildings over the next ten to twenty years (i.e. a new library at Huntlee, and refurbished / extended libraries at Cessnock and Kurri Kurri) will have a capital cost in the vicinity of \$15-30 million. Council will need to develop a financial strategy that will include S 94 plans, Federal infrastructure grants, loans, and a community rates levy.<sup>11</sup>

The ongoing operational costs, including staff, utilities, maintenance etc., will be additional to this figure.

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<sup>9</sup> <http://www.grlc.vic.gov.au/content/community-library-service#OLS> [accessed June 2013]

<sup>10</sup> [http://solutions.3m.com/wps/portal/3M/en\\_US/library-systems-NA/library-technologies/ebook-lending/](http://solutions.3m.com/wps/portal/3M/en_US/library-systems-NA/library-technologies/ebook-lending/) [accessed June 2013]

<sup>11</sup> For example, Gosford City Council Regional Library Levy of 0.00003127 cents rate in dollar



Figure 8 – Proposed Service Delivery Model

### Current Facilities

There are no standards determining the maximum distance community members should travel to access their local library, but a 30-minute trip by public or private transport is generally considered acceptable. The current location of libraries in Cessnock and Kurri Kurri meet this travel time for all but a few residents living in the south west of the Local Government Area. As is apparent from the distances below, residents of Branxton and Kurri Kurri are also within a 30-minute trip to Maitland and Singleton Libraries.

- Cessnock to Kurri Kurri                    14.7 km
- Cessnock to Branxton                    21.8 km
- Branxton to Singleton                    22 km
- Branxton to Maitland                    24.5 km
- Kurri Kurri to Maitland                    13.2 km
- Wollombi to Cessnock                    29 km

Current facilities are not meeting the contemporary needs or the demands being placed on them, particularly in the areas of program delivery, technology access, and specialist activities e.g. local and family history services. Consultation with key stakeholders clearly supports the need (and growing demand) for more and better-designed space, especially for the delivery of library programs, events, technology and reading i.e. children’s activities, quieter and better-appointed study/research/reading spaces, and technology space (for own devices and library technology).

The space occupied by both libraries has been reviewed<sup>12</sup> previously using the accepted guidelines set down in *People Places – a guide for public library buildings in NSW*<sup>13</sup>. The floor space recommendation regarding Cessnock branch is still valid, however the recommended increase in floor space increase i.e. an extra 768 square metres by 2008/9 (to 1817 square metres), has not been implemented. A further recommendation stating that “No additional built infrastructure for the delivery of library services outside of the Cessnock and Kurri Kurri areas be provided”<sup>14</sup> is no longer valid, due to the proposed major Huntlee development, and the predicted urban growth in Kurri Kurri due to the new Hunter Expressway interchange. When reviewed against NSW public library building guidelines in 2001 Kurri Kurri branch required a minimum of 991 square metres to meet space standards i.e. an increase of 322 square metres on its current 560 square metres area. With an expected growth of up to 7,000 people in the next 5 years the floor space requirements put forward in 2001 will need to be recalculated (as per the recommended Infrastructure strategy in Section 4).

The reduction in collection space required in the future due to growth in eBooks may free up some space for other purposes e.g. programs, study, technology etc. However, a reduction in collection space will not on its own, relieve the pressure imposed by an expansion of programs and the predicted population growth, or meet the design needs that support multiple and diverse use.

The staff survey highlighted buildings, design, layout, space, furniture and fittings as weaknesses (as highlighted in Fig. 6 & 7). For example, the limited space available for holding programs, activities and events in either branch restricted attendance and program range/development.



Figure 2: Kurri Kurri Library

<sup>12</sup> Cessnock Library Review 2001 Section 3.5, p.26

<sup>13</sup> See: [http://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/services/public\\_libraries/our\\_services/publiclibrarybuildings.html](http://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/services/public_libraries/our_services/publiclibrarybuildings.html)

<sup>14</sup> op. cit



Figure 3: Kurri Kurri Library

### Consultation Commentary

#### Staff Survey Comments

- Need for bigger libraries with more space – to study and use own devices e.g. notebooks
- Relocation to main population centres (consider Huntlee, Greta, Branxton and North Rothbury cluster)
- New buildings and/or refurbishment
- A library café / coffee machine
- Secure returns chute at back door of Cessnock Library
- Redesign floor space to create customer activity zones and reduce / control noise levels
- Although well located two branches are not enough to service the Local Government Area adequately
- The library service is available to anyone, no matter their circumstances
- Install kiosk for tourist information, information services, eResource access etc.
- Self-serve collections e.g. at the local pool
- Place all Council services in one location and/or shared services
- Need better service delivery for remote / rural users e.g. Greta, North Rothbury, Branxton
- Need more liaison with nursing homes

#### Focus Group Comments

- Not enough space
- Need more space for pram parking
- Not enough space for craft activity
- A fenced-in toddlers' area would be wonderful!
- Build a giant playroom for the kids upstairs!
- Some moveable walls to keep the kids and noise in
- Would like to change the layout of the local studies room
- Coffee shop next door will be vacant soon – opportunity for library?
- Library is too small. No really big meeting room
- Need a 21<sup>st</sup> century community hub. Retrofitting existing building not a good idea



- Huntlee – excellent opportunity to build a big new library – the central library of the future? Will probably share space with other council activities or commercial partners. If this is where the population is it needs infrastructure
- Council amalgamations? Likeliest place of greatest growth will be near Branxton
- Library needs a coffee shop!
- It's a social place – a meeting place. You can have a chat with a stranger! It eases isolation and feels like a safe and welcoming space. Help is there for everyone

### User Survey Comments

- No library in the Wollombi Valley and the mobile Library no longer visits Wollombi
- The possibility of investigating the return of the mobile Library to Wollombi, esp. to the schools and/or the villages of Wollombi and Laguna
- Kasper (4 year old): I would like the library to have trees inside and be like a forest with the trees and books together
- There's no other Public facility that satisfies so many Public needs
- I would like to see more computers and a JP. I would love to have some library services in Branxton as we have no public transport for people to access Cessnock or other library services
- I believe the library is very important especially in the absence of other indoor non-commercial community space in Cessnock
- Cessnock library needs more comfortable spots to sit and read
- If I get stuck down town in the rain I always come to the library. It is safe and warm and I can feed and play with my daughter here
- All that is needed is a fireplace and a hot cuppa
- Historically the library has been a place where due to its quietness and great resources, a person can take sanctuary, relax, study or just browse. I hope the library mostly stays this way - it really is not the best place to socialise or romance!
- I think Cessnock Library needs more physical space to live up to all these possibilities. Imagine a purpose-built, combined library and Art Gallery (and museum?) with park around it
- Coffee shop. This would attract and retain users and also be a great business venture!!
- There are no study areas apart from a large group table in centre of library - nothing for personal, "quiet space", low distraction style study
- More lounges and space for children would be awesome
- I usually park at back and find stairs difficult
- Often cannot get parking closer in Vincent St and going to back and upstairs is hard on my back and knees
- I would like to see a more open and modern library
- Please do not move Cessnock Library
- I used to love the rarefied air of libraries, but that has now been spoilt because the Sssh! policy no longer exists
- Space for activities and events is quite inadequate

## Cessnock Library



Figure 10: Cessnock Library Service Desk

Retail focus has shifted from Vincent Street to the Cessnock Plaza and Cessnock Marketplace shopping centres. However, the current Library is conveniently located to car parking and public transport. The current floor space is 1071 square metres. The 2001 Cessnock City Library review, calculated a population-based floor space of 1817 square metres, and a service based calculation of 1886 square metres (based on the publication *People places: A guide for public library buildings in New South Wales*). These will need to be recalculated based on new population and service need forecasts as part of the design brief process. This necessary expansion would not be easy to achieve if the Library remains where it is. Any relocation of the Library however should be within the main shopping precinct as it brings regular traffic to the retail centres, and take into account the design needs of a contemporary library space. Relocation or rebuilding of Cessnock Library also offers Council an opportunity to explore co-location with other Council services and or commercial services such as a café, to maximise cost efficiencies and potentially derive a commercial income.

### *Cessnock Branch Strategies*

Expand, relocate or rebuild Cessnock Branch Library i.e.

- Develop a vision and design brief that includes a service-based approach to developing the floor space quantum required to meet community needs for at least the next 20 years
- Develop draft plans for costing purposes
- Develop a funding strategy

### *Cessnock Branch Location Options*

The following options should be considered for the Cessnock branch, and would form part of the recommended and overall master planning strategy for the library services:

- a) Current location – expand floor space to meet service-based requirements
- b) Relocate – to an existing building that meets service-based floor space requirements and has meaningful and optimal proximity to the shopping precinct e.g. a suitable vacant building space
- c) Rebuild – a purpose built library space that is well located for residents, and which addresses the town’s shopping precinct

### *Cessnock Branch Recommendations*

Cessnock Branch Library to:

- Meet or better the NSW public library building guidelines requirements
- Allow for internal redesign to create an adaptive and flexible space i.e. to allow for a contemporary configuration and easier reconfiguration in the future (future-proofing)
- Better meet the expressed needs of current users, and feedback from non-users – especially to support the library’s delivery of targeted programs, activities and events; and the delivery of high quality technology and Internet services
- Better address the main shopping precinct i.e. visible and accessible
- Provide an opportunity for co-location with other services; and/or commercial services such as a café

### **Kurri Kurri Library**



**Figure 11: Kurri Kurri Branch Library**

The library's current location is convenient to schools and shops. The current floor space is 560 square metres. The 2001 Cessnock City Library review, calculated a population-based floor space of 882 square metres, and a service based calculation of 991 square metres (based on the publication *People places: A guide for public library buildings in New South Wales*). However with population growth predicted due to the proximity of the new Hunter Expressway, the size and location of the existing library will need to be reviewed to consider expansion, relocation or rebuilding within the next 5 years.

The current space is also due for refurbishment which will offer some opportunity to reconfigure the interior, at least in the short term.

### ***Kurri Kurri Strategy***

Expand, relocate or rebuild Kurri Kurri Branch Library i.e.

- Develop design brief that includes a service-based approach to developing the floor space quantum required to meet community needs for at least the next 20 years
- Develop draft plans for costing purposes
- Develop a funding strategy

### ***Kurri Kurri Branch Location Options***

The following options need to be considered for the Kurri Kurri branch, and would form part of the recommended and overall master planning strategy for the library services:

- a) Current location – expand floor space to meet service-based requirements
- b) Relocate – to an existing building that meets service-based floor space requirements and has meaningful and optimal proximity to the shopping precinct
- c) Rebuild – a purpose built library space that is well located for residents, and which addresses the town's shopping precinct

### ***Kurri Kurri Branch Recommendations***

Kurri Kurri branch library to:

- Meet or better the NSW public library building guidelines requirements
- Allow for internal redesign to create an adaptive and flexible space i.e. to allow for a contemporary configuration and easier reconfiguration in the future (future-proofing)
- Better meet the expressed needs of current users, and feedback from non-users – especially to support the library's delivery of targeted programs, activities and events; and the delivery of high quality technology and Internet services
- Better address the main shopping precinct i.e. visible and accessible
- Provide an opportunity for co-location with other services; and/or commercial services such as a café

## **Greta-Branxton-North Rothbury Planning Area (Huntlee)**

There is major development planned in the Greta-Branxton-North Rothbury Planning Area, including the new residential development, Huntlee. Population projections for the area range from 10,000 to 17,000, dependent upon the development of Huntlee. With a proposed medium density population exceeding 10,000, Huntlee will be considered an urban centre. There are no towns in NSW with populations greater than 10,000 that do not have a static public library building.

The presence of community venues such as libraries, childcare and recreational facilities are critical factors in the success of new residential developments. It is essential that a new town with a predicted population of 20,000 has local access to a modern library facility that offers a wide range of services and programs.

### *Huntlee Strategy*

Provision of library services for the community of Huntlee:

- Given the location of Huntlee, it would be desirable to have preliminary discussions with Singleton Council, regarding any new library facility in the area
- Develop design brief that includes a service-based approach to developing the floor space quantum required to meet community needs for at least the next 20 years
- Develop draft plans for costing purposes
- Develop a funding strategy
- Design and construct a purpose built library, co-located with other Council or commercial services e.g. a café
- Development of a Huntlee Library vision and design brief – this will be used to inform planning and resourcing processes. A vision and design brief template is available from the State Library of NSW website<sup>15</sup>
- Ensure that Library management is involved in all stages of the process to establish a library facility for Huntlee including site identification, space allocation, design and development of project brief
- Investigate partnership options, for example:
  - Co-location of library services i.e. with other Council services, compatible community type services or cultural facilities such as an art gallery or museum

**[See Attachment 4 for more detail regarding Huntlee]**

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<sup>15</sup> People Places, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Library Council of NSW  
[http://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/services/public\\_libraries/docs/people\\_places.pdf](http://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/services/public_libraries/docs/people_places.pdf) [accessed July 2013]

## 1.2.6 Services and Programs

### **Recommended Goal**

Relevant and inclusive, outcomes based quality services programs and events that meet the needs of the community.

### **Recommended Strategies**

1. Encourage and support a culture of reading within the community
2. Support and encourage the development of literacy skills in the community (including digital literacy)
3. Support and encourage life long learning (flexible and adaptive to meet locally identified and expressed needs)
4. Facilitate access to reputable information and content for all community members, in the libraries and online/web-based
5. Develop project briefs (outcomes-based) for library programs and key services
6. Realign existing roles to ensure that the Library's services and programs meet the needs of the community
7. Support the provision of quality service by the selection, development and support of skilled staff
8. Develop library systems and policies that support customer service (governance)

The number of programs and activities delivered by Cessnock City Library cannot continue to expand and diversify in the current facilities. The Library is experiencing increasing demand, and the range and diversity of programs offered by it will need to adapt to user needs and expectations. It is essential that all services and programs align to the Library's core business objectives and outcomes, and meet certain basic criteria, for example:

- Facilitate lifelong learning, including literacy
- Support children's education
- Support recreation, local culture and the arts
- Foster social cohesion



Figure 12: Children's Storytime Program

A planned approach to programming including scoped outcomes will ensure more efficient use of staffing and resources and better alignment with Council's strategic imperatives. It will be critical for the Library to identify partners / sponsors / volunteers to assist in delivering programs; and to assess identified potential sources of funding – fees and charges, grants, donations, sponsorship etc. - for their cost benefit.

The introduction of RFID across the Library will result in savings in staff time, which can then be reallocated to other duties, including the delivery and support of programs and events.

Public libraries are placing less focus on the more traditional information and reference services, largely as a result of online services such as Google. However, library staff still need to facilitate physical and remote access to information services; build and maintain information collections; and develop information services skills for all staff, as their users demand reliable, accurate, sourced information in an efficient and timely manner. The library also aims to promote user independence and information literacy.

Library users are increasingly demanding a range of new services, for instance, free WiFi; access via mobile devices; digital scanning etc.; and libraries are well placed to develop and publish their own information resources and content; and to source information from reputable / accredited information resources.

## Consultation Commentary

### Staff Survey Comments

- Limited resourcing available to improve, update or develop relevant programs
- Fund programming with grants

- Expand and develop new programs, including more outreach services / activities
- Develop new targeted programming e.g. indigenous, literacy etc.
- Places to use and recharge own devices e.g. laptops, tablets
- Scanning facilities
- A library App. and/ or a mobile library website e.g. for access via smart devices
- A review of database use
- Raise community awareness of library programs/events via social networking
- Look at programs as learning opportunities i.e. targeted communication technology training
- Redefine the library as a community venue / space, not just a place to access books
- Use programming as a means of building community capacity

The lack of community awareness of the Library's services and programs was also noted.

### Focus Group Comments

The community has expressed high satisfaction with the library service. There were many positive, complimentary comments about staff, and how valued the library is as a community asset.

- Storytime is excellent for socialisation skills for the children
- It's bloody marvellous!
- Storytelling classes for parents would be good
- More workshops on how to do things – preservation, oral history etc
- All local school kids should do a family history / local studies project and have to use the library
- Hold a photography contest – a day in the life of Cessnock – and the library the owns the images
- More displays etc. in collaboration with library
- More technology training, workshops on photography etc., mobile technology for loan (iPads, tablets, eReaders), and technology for making music, films, artworks and so on (media labs, editing software)
- I like walking into the library and seeing all the activities going on

### User Survey Comments

- It's a very important part of my life and I would hate to be without it
- Libraries are a vital resource in communities - they are underfunded given their importance
- Cessnock Library is vital to me as part of our weekly routine. Vital for all children in Cessnock, from pre-schoolers onwards. Library can be a community hub - with lifelong benefits of community, reading, books introduced from a young age
- Backbone of community
- A wonderful local asset that suits my needs
- Cessnock library has been an important part of my life for nearly 70 years. With no theatres left in Cessnock and the sometimes expensive tickets to the Performance Centre, older residents only have the library



- It's a place to go that helps me out and it's free
- It makes us smile! Thank you!
- Central role in community - engenders lifelong community engagement for individuals, especially if the library has a range of activities/resources/physical spaces for different life stages
- I'm not sure 'happening place' is a term which appeals to our demographic. Perhaps 'friendly', 'welcoming', 'important' and 'cultural' appeal
- Great staff and a very friendly atmosphere - almost "intimate"
- Top mob - these girls at Kurri
- I couldn't imagine not coming to the Library
- We've just lost our local Cinema, if the Library goes then I think I will too
- Great place to go with little kids when partner/Dad on shift work. Help introduce little kids to reading enjoyment
- I don't have a desktop computer. I research a lot and they have a lot of material for me to use otherwise I could not research
- Children's programs and events very popular - more space required

There were a number of suggestions from users of the Library about programs and activities they would like to see in the Library.

- Maybe reading and writing programs for adults
- An after school club one day a week for preteens to learn how to use the library and follow their own interests - school libraries are small and often kids share resources to get through a class. Just knowing where to find information and not use libraries for computer games would be great
- Meditation - children and adults. Coffee facilities would be welcome
- Foreign language classes
- Maybe more authors who come to the library to discuss their books
- Could be more author talks

## 1.2.7 Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

### Recommended Goal

Customer focused and relevant information technology and support services

### Recommended Strategies

1. Information technology research and evaluation (ongoing watch on, and evaluation of, ICT based innovations for adoption or adaption)
2. Develop a digital service delivery model (including in-house and remote; mobile and web based)
3. An information technology plan, including marketing strategy
4. Information technology training and awareness (staff)
5. Information technology training and awareness (users / community)
6. Development of apps for smart devices and/or a mobile website

7. Content aggregation and publishing by the library i.e. local studies, family history, and other locally produced materials, including music, art and writing
8. Review Library Management System and its capacity to meet future needs

Technology based products and services are changing rapidly, which means libraries will be able to expand their services to users. To do this the library will need to keep up to date with the latest developments to better design / develop services for users. There are four main components for strategic consideration. They are:

1. The library's website
2. Digital services and products
3. The Library Management System
4. Learning (staff and community)



Figure 13: Public Access Technology

## Website

For the library's website to remain relevant to users it will need to be redeveloped. This would include (as a minimum):

- Clear library service branding
- Stand alone access (this is achievable while also remaining part of Council's overall site)
- A mobile version i.e. for smart device access (phones and tablets)
- Feedback mechanism
- Connection to social media
- Events Booking
- Connection to library created content e.g. online databases, photographic databases; HSC resources etc.

## Digital Services and Products

The library as a content developer and aggregator will require the ongoing development and implementation of easy (user friendly) access via the web (as above), the development of library apps, and online access points (hardwired and wireless) within the library and via well-located kiosks.

This approach will encourage greater usage, maintain simple but effective access, and meet the contemporary expectations associated with eService delivery.

## The Library Management System (LMS)

The LMS is an expensive but indispensable part of library operations; and includes online customer access e.g. to the Library's online catalogue, and membership account / loans information. LMS vendors are in most cases redeveloping their products to provide the end user options that meet their changing access expectations e.g. selective dissemination of information (SDI)<sup>16</sup>, member cloud space, interactive services such as rating and discussion of materials, library app access etc. Any LMS provision should consider contemporary digital access expectations, and linkages with social media. The library may also wish to consider the benefits associated with operating a shared LMS with other public libraries.

## Learning and Training

### *Staff*

The increasing range and complexity of ICT in libraries is placing heavy demands on staff, to learn how to use it themselves, and in turn, on-train library users. It is necessary for the Library to provide training and / or recruit staff with the required skills set. In addition, there is a massive growth in eResources. For Library staff to get the most out of the eResources they hold and ensure they are equipped with the knowledge to use them effectively for the benefit of their communities, it is vital that staff training plans are put in place.

### *Community*

To participate fully in the digital world community members need to develop ICT skills as well as having access to technology and the Internet. The Library also has a key role in supporting both lifelong learning and formal education. The Library can achieve this by:

- Expanding the provision of ICT skills training to the community
- Online training including "how to" style videos
- Use of volunteers to provide face to face training

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<sup>16</sup> **Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI)** is a service that consists in routing to readers, on a regular basis, news alerts corresponding to their readers' profiles. It is a documentation watch tool. SDI makes it possible to inform readers of new acquisitions by particular authors, on particular subjects or issues. One can equally refer to it as a "documentation profile" or a "personalized profile" or even a "search profile".

- Drop in one-on-one training
- Technology Petting Zoo of mobile devices
- Lending of mobile devices
- Raising awareness of free or low cost online training services e.g. iTunesU, TED, U3A online etc

## Consultation Commentary

Technology was *extensively* commented upon in the staff survey.

### Staff Survey Comments

- Currency and capacity of public access technology and peripheral equipment i.e. printers
- Filtering of staff computers prevents access to 'legitimate' sites necessary for library staff and limits their ability to undertake training e.g. Web 2.0
- No access to Council network drives at Kurri Kurri, and slow connectivity, Resolvable with an additional ADSL connection
- Poor staff technology knowledge and training impacts on staff ability to troubleshoot and understand / operate new and popular technologies (relates to relevance)
- Low use of databases provided by the State Library, Databases viewed as being of limited use to customers (exceptions included *Britannica* and *Grove Art*)<sup>17</sup>
- Need to upgrade website to contemporary standards e.g. library.lakemac.com.au
- A library branded website with an easier URL, links to library social media / social media feeds etc
- Digitisation e.g. local studies / family history
- Expanded public access and training
- Training/re-training of staff (staff awareness)
- Design and delivery of library and community published content
- More people owning mobile devices and expecting support, Wi-Fi access, and access to content via their library (including remote access to the library via the web)
- Servicing outer areas of large Local Government Area with new technologies as well as more resources within the library
- How to serve those in the community who don't have access to computers / smart devices etc. e.g. via public access computers and associated support programs
- Council's current social media policy negatively impacts on the library's ability to deliver accessible web / information services to users
- Slow Spydus response time during circulation process
- Need for a Council social media person to keep it up to date and monitor usage etc  
These are new and different jobs – maybe more important than some existing duties?
- How about smart tables / big digital screen to show stories?

### User Survey Comments

- Colour photocopying a bit prohibitive but photocopying is never cheap these days
- Online Catalogue is limited - I can't reserve a book unless I have a pin set up

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<sup>17</sup> Note: Actual database usage is high and increasing i.e. 2012/13 39,299 uses, up from 23,777 in 2011/12

- Computers are a fact of life. If you can't afford Internet, the only option is to use time-limited facility at library. This is off putting and highly unsatisfactory for people with limited computer skills
- I believe the Internet has made libraries less relevant and any increase in budget allocations is unwarranted
- I mainly come to use computers
- More computers or loan laptops with GPS tracking chips
- A larger computer area would be advantageous in Cessnock. The current site is quite congested and close
- Should try and get double sided photocopying, eg. resume, medical papers for job interviews
- It is redundant to have time, speed and MB limit on WIFI. The 200MB limit is all that is required to fairly share resources
- I don't use the library's website because there are no e resources. Couldn't Maitland and Cessnock combine?
- Have not used the site but will now look at it
- I cant stand Council's website - it is unprofessional and ugly, has an un-intuitive navigation, I can never find anything and the library looks the less because of it. I suggest you look at Upper Hunter Library's
- It's great being able to access the catalogue from home to see if the books I am looking for are available
- Appears to be a mess at times. Loss of book club connections/not enough access
- There is room for major improvements in offering local studies material
- Two kinda sites is kinda confusing
- Low connection speeds are a major problem in outer areas of Cessnock Local Government Area with Telstra uncooperative and Optus not interested. According to the ombudsman, Telstra is not obliged to provide ADSL or higher ADSL2, only telephone
- Have looked up library web pages, a bit annoyed by them

Many of the user comments related to a need for more training and assistance in the ICT area.

- More in the line of computer services for the older users. So much has changed and at such a frantic pace that anyone over 30 feels a bit left behind. We don't need to learn all the ins and outs, but there are some things that would benefit older people. This computer age has the ability to isolate people who aren't computer savvy, so we need somewhere that is not too challenging to hold classes, preferably at low cost, to help us to keep up with changes in society in regards to computer use
- Computer training. For adults and seniors - people require basics! Without this people are discouraged and give up in in disgust, feel alienated. I most definitely do! If there are programs where are the pointers??
- Training in the use of digital economy for the elderly
- I particularly like the range of IT sessions which are helpful to explain how modern technology works to seniors
- Computer training i.e. computer use for dummies online or disc. We all have to start somewhere. Not enough basic computer courses. Have put name down for courses and never been contacted (Kurri)
- More computer and assistance in how to operate various programmes

## 1.2.8 Marketing

### Recommended Goal

Targeted and effective marketing strategies that build community recognition, knowledge, and usage of services, programs and facilities

### Recommended Strategies

1. Staff marketing planning training
2. Situational analysis (target group based analysis, including non-users) \*
3. Engaging partners in the marketing planning process e.g. educational partners
4. Develop and adopt targeted marketing strategies and tactics (the marketing plan)

\* The review and community consultation data produced by this project will inform the situational analysis

Community and staff feedback indicates the need to better communicate the breadth and depth of the library's service, collections and programming to its customers and the community. Marketing plans give libraries the opportunity to analyse their current situation and to identify any service and programming gaps. Marketing plans also drive a higher level of resourcing analysis i.e. financial and human resources needs / costs, and the development of communication and promotional tactics (engagement strategies).

The community tended to view libraries as just being about books and borrowing (albeit an important role but one under threat from eBooks) or as just a place to find information (becoming redundant now due to the growth of and use of Internet search engines for information). The contemporary reality however, is that public libraries provide a plethora of services, programs and activities aimed at meeting the diverse needs of their communities.

Cessnock City Library needs to develop targeted marketing strategies to better understand the diverse needs and demands, and requisite promotional / communication strategies that inform and attract users. This is especially important when one considers the global (commercial and government) push to put everything online. People who do not have access to the Internet and without the necessary skills and knowledge will increasingly become disengaged and disconnected.<sup>18</sup>

As part of its marketing plan, the Library will identify targeted marketing and promotional strategies. It will also need to:

- Develop a social media policy and associated procedures (that align with Council's social media policy) as a promotional tool for the Library
- Investigate automated emails and SMS to alert customers of coming events and new books (this system is already in place for overdue)
- Implement an online events booking system, with capacity for electronic payments

<sup>18</sup> Phil Bradley, CILIP President [The Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals], from CLIP News 18 June 2013: *Limiting access to online information is "dangerous and damaging"*. <http://www.cilip.org.uk/cilip/news/limiting-access-online-information-dangerous-and-damaging> [accessed June 2013]

- Further develop and maintain the Library's website to offer an interactive 24/7 online library

## Consultation Commentary

### Staff Survey Comments

- The depth and breadth of library services etc. not widely known or understood by the community
- Suggest an eNewsletter, a new Library website and targeted promotions
- Need a marketing plan including promotional strategies

### Focus Group Comments

- People don't know what's happening in the library – need more advertising
- Freegal is great, but not many people know about it
- The library is the venue for all kinds of fantastic events and programs, and should tell everyone
- Schools are great place to promote library
- How about a Facebook page for library - I would like them for sure!
- Does library collect emails / mobile numbers at registration? Could use these to stay in touch with customers
- Time for a mobile website and an App
- No sign outside to say there is free WiFi

### User Survey Comments

- These (computer course) should be advertised in the Cessnock Advertiser in the same place you advertise strategic plans and integrated DAs because I suspect your best audience often read the Advertiser from cover to cover
- I don't think I really know the full extent of the library resources
- I think it should be publicised more that there is more than just what is on the shelves.
- This question is giving me the impression that I may be able to access to ebooks through the library. If this is the case then I am unaware
- Did not know about some of these services until now (fax, wifi, home library service presumably just for the infirm) so although I plan to begin using some of them now (wifi)
- Didn't know about Freegal or Your tutor so will have a look
- I think your community education should be a permanent feature in the drop down lists rather than hidden away under News and Events. I suppose under "Services and Facilities" would be fine too but more easily found as a separate item directly under Libraries

## 1.2.9 Partnerships

### Recommended Goal

Collaborative partnerships that benefit the library service, its customers, Council and the community

### Recommended Strategies

1. Formalising existing and potential networks (key stakeholder groups and organisations), particularly in the education sector (school and TAFE)
2. Share new (or existing) library premises with a local business, Council or community partner e.g. a cafe, a bookshop, gallery, community centre etc
3. Commercial developments / partnership that enhance and / or support the ongoing delivery of library services and programs
4. Establishment of partnership and collaboration guidelines
5. Establishment of sponsorship guidelines
6. Optimised use and support of volunteers

Creating a range of partnerships is essential if the Library wishes to continue to be relevant and viable into the future. The combining of skills and resources gives partners a greater capacity to deliver mutually agreed to goals than either party on its own. 'Partnerships' is a broad term encompassing a wide range of options - ranging from large multi-national corporations to small local community organisations. Partnerships can also be developed with sponsors, volunteers and library supporters and advocates (e.g. Friends of the Library).

Partnerships must be outcomes-focused to ensure a best match between the library and potential sponsors and partners. This process can be facilitated by:

- Developing a set of guidelines for seeking, accepting, establishing and maintaining a wide range of partnership options
- Developing a sponsorship prospectus
- Identifying specific partners to match the Library's strategic outcomes e.g. If desired outcome is for example, to *Foster informed and connected communities*, an approach may be made to a local retailer to provide iPads for technology workshops for older people

### Types of Partnerships

- Internal – with other departments of Council
- Education sector
- Friends and advocates –including volunteers



- Professional – including Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA); Public Libraries Australia (PLA); Public Libraries NSW; Local Government and Shires Association (LGSA); State Library of NSW and other public libraries, for example the member libraries of the Central East Zone. These organisations share a common interest, support and involvement in public library service delivery for community development; and partnerships could include national or statewide programs, for example, Love2Read and Summer Reading Club; access to grants; enhanced buying power through consortia arrangements etc
- Business – from local to global

### Benefits of Successful Partnerships

- Availability of additional funds for collections and programs and events
- Potential for an expanded range of collections and programs and events
- A wider community reach via sponsors and partners
- A higher level of community awareness and advocacy for the library
- Staff skill development
- Sustainability of library service

Cessnock City Library should investigate the following options (now and into the future):

- Internal partnership projects - joint submission writing for grant funding, or shared events (e.g. Hunter Valley Food and Wine Month, Australia Day celebrations etc.) and staff secondment or exchange
- Partner with neighbouring libraries to provide an enhanced benefit to potential sponsors e.g. a Hunter-wide community health initiative including public talks, resources, and workshops provided to member libraries, sponsored and branded by for example, a pharmacy or health-related company
- Share new (or existing) Library premises with a commercial partner e.g. cafe, bookshop
- Collaborative agreements with other Library services to produce cost-savings and efficiencies, for example, bulk purchasing and processing of large print titles
- Explore co-locating with a major development partner e.g. office or residential property with the library as tenant. This may be an option for a new facility in Huntlee

In addition to partnering with organisations, the Library can benefit from the use of a range of volunteers. Their roles and responsibilities must be clearly defined so as not to conflict with or detract from the roles, responsibilities and opportunities available to paid staff. The recruitment, training and induction of volunteers should be done in collaboration with Council.

Cessnock City Library will also benefit from the development of a community engagement strategy. This should encompass opportunities for collaboration, sponsorship and networking. Such a strategy will inform the ongoing design, development and delivery of library services, and could specifically involve the education sector (school and TAFE representatives) or other community partnerships.

## Consultation Commentary

### Staff Survey Comments

- Need to look at partnerships/sponsorships as sources of revenue
- The Library is good at networking especially with the local education sector
- Could be more collaboration with other Council departments

### Focus Group Comments

- Great local knowledge of [family history society] members – how to share this with other library users
- The education sector and the library complement each other perfectly. Lots of opportunities for cross promotion
- Need to breakdown the silos and share expertise and resources and ideas for community advantage
- Joint ventures – TAFE provide staff, library the space – e.g. for HSC classes, resume / job skills training etc
- Interagency group could be established – *Let's get together and meet each other and work on some joint ventures.* Cost savings are possible – author / illustrator visits across the region, workshops etc
- Visitor info centre and library can cross promote. Close to one another and in the same business!

## 1.2.10 Collections

### Recommended Goal

Maintain current, balanced, well-organised and managed collections that meet and reflect the needs of customers and the community.

### Recommended Strategies

1. Comprehensive and focused collection development planning (including eCollections) i.e. the development of collection profiles, resourcing, promotion, and community engagement strategies
2. Develop a collection management plan (i.e. how the library will manage the life cycle of its collections)
3. Creation of eBrowsing areas e.g. touch screen kiosks<sup>19</sup> and tables
4. An online Readers' Advisory service
5. Re-allocation of former hard copy collection space for other purposes including study, programming and technology (pending take up of eResources)
6. Purchase of eReaders etc. for loan to customers.
7. eServices for the house bound i.e. a focus on accessibility to ensure people with vision impairment have the benefit of suitable eTechnology and format

<sup>19</sup> Example: 3M Cloud Library Service, including multi-platform apps, lendable eReaders, and Kiosks for browsing and lending. See: [http://solutions.3m.com/wps/portal/3M/en\\_US/library-systems-NA/library-technologies/ebook-lending/](http://solutions.3m.com/wps/portal/3M/en_US/library-systems-NA/library-technologies/ebook-lending/) (accessed June 2013)

While Cessnock City Library performs well against some NSW standards in its collections area – expenditure per capita and age of collections – it is underperforming against a number of other standards, with fewer items and acquisitions per capita and lower than average turnover and circulation per capita. This raises some concerns, and indicates that the collection may not be adequately meeting customer needs. Further analysis of what clients are using will help collection planning.

Collection development is critical in an increasingly competitive budget environment - every item purchased must be something that the Library's users want. The Library needs to gather and review collection usage data on a regular basis.



Figure 14: Browsing the Library's Collection

## Collection Display

Libraries are no longer only places to access collections of books and other items, but community spaces where people can gather, study quietly, relax, read, and attend events. This means collections of hard copy items will in future no longer be given the floor space and prominence afforded to them in a traditional library. There is a trend towards higher use of recreational items, with customers increasingly using technology for their reference needs.

Many libraries are using retail style presentation techniques and this trend is set to continue.<sup>20</sup> Key features to note are the decreasing floor space which will be given over to collections; arrangement of easy to browse collections with increasing face out display; and placing popular collections where they can more easily be seen. The floor space constraints at Cessnock City Library have led to the need for higher shelves to accommodate stock, which impacts on visibility and ease of access.

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<sup>20</sup> Retail innovation in libraries - <http://www.alia.org.au/groups/topend/2004.symposium/retail.innovation.html>

## eResources

With electronic collections set to replace hard copy collections in increasing proportions (estimates vary, but there is some agreement at about 50% electronic collections in 10 years), libraries will need the ability to effectively promote these collections to customers, who will expect to be able to browse them in the same way they do hard copy collections. Early versions of online browsing tools are being developed which allow customers to see eBooks on a shelf, and view surrounding titles.

There are, however, challenges constraining libraries from meeting the demand for e-items. Publishers either refuse to supply eBooks to libraries at all, charge inflated prices for the right to loan them to customers, or insist on restrictive models of circulation.

There are also concerns that libraries cannot purchase outright copies of e-items and own them in the same way as physical items, such as books. When a Library purchases an e-item, it is a licence to use the item while an agreement, usually with an aggregate supplier, is in force. Traditional models of lending are changing due to the publishing world's focus on digital rights management, and the publication control of aggregators. The library will need to change its approach to collection development, ownership and lending; and also work through aggregators such as Overdrive, 3M and Bolinda.

Many customers will need additional support in transitioning to using e-collections, as they may be initially daunted by the new technology. All libraries of the future will need space to provide this service.

On the positive side, there will be no insurance and depreciation costs for eResources.

## Consultation Commentary

### Staff Survey Comments

- The collections were recognised as a strength of the Library although the need for increased numbers of eResources was noted
- Some collections are becoming redundant, evidenced by reduced rates of usage
- Collection processing i.e. Items are over-processed and the way in which items are covered should be streamlined to not only to save on staff time but also the cost of materials
- Greater analysis required of collection usage versus buying patterns/expenditure needed (a collection development / collection profiling issue)
- Concern about the impact of subscription based services versus ownership on collection management, digital rights management / responsibilities, and operational / capital budgets

### Focus Group Comments

- Would love to have some parenting resources
- Would be good to have musical instruments / toys for loan as well
- Is the library a potential 'publisher' of local studies / family history documents?

- Library is a safe place to store and preserve local studies
- Audio books – great collection
- Impressed with range of resources
- Staff quick to purchase and make available suggested titles. Inter library lending works well
- Great opportunity for schools to contribute to local studies resources in the library – music, writing, art, photography and so on
- Library acting as venue and content creator / preserver. Made easier with digitisation

### User Survey Comments

Many of the comments from this section of the User Survey were highly personalised, i.e. requests for more items on specific subjects. This is possibly an indication that there is a need for greater community awareness of services such as suggesting items for purchase or Inter Library Lending. Another area much commented upon was the lack of eBooks in the Library.

- Very interested in the eBook section but had none when I asked staff
- My only pleasure is to read large print library books
- Could not afford to buy the amount of books we borrow and could not imagine not having my half hour read each day (sometimes longer) at lunch time
- I could not afford to buy the books I read. It is good to know there are research facilities
- The videos, magazines and children's book are excellent
- I borrow books on CD (audio books) and feel I would have trouble keeping working at my job without the great stories to listen to
- I am a little disappointed by the latest choice of books. Too many dungeons and dragons and romances for me. Would like some of the better novels (Booker winners, etc.) and more science books to be included
- I would like to see more magazine collections at Kurri Kurri Library
- Would like access to books on release or near release
- Would like more new novels such as Miles Franklin and Booker winners - New experimental fiction
- Maybe a few new non-fiction books for the little ones
- DVDs and CDs - I have stopped borrowing because they are unreliable
- I always find quality books for my 4 year old granddaughter and they are a great encouragement towards reading
- Music CDs My main borrowing interests are classical - international - instrumental - relaxation - I feel that an increase in these categories could be beneficial and rewarding
- A larger and better organised DVD collection would be great, especially for foreign films. At the moment a specific title is very difficult to find
- Children's non-fiction needs more appealing signage
- Not enough new release music
- As I only have sight in one eye, large print and talking books are essential to me. There is very little light romance or light intrigue. I didn't know you had eBooks, I would love this as I have an iPad ereader
- Would be great to get more audio books. Different authors and to have a sticker on them for classification i.e murder, spy, love
- I have recently purchased a kindle and would like to see more eBooks.

- Love audio books, new titles are great
- Could be a greater variety of children's non-fiction DVDs - science, history, geography etc
- Your Ancestry.com service is good, but you only have Australian FindMyPast.com.au
- Adult non-fiction is very restricted and often comprise of older texts are sometimes no longer relevant to topics. Very hard to find resources to study HSC level topics, as often no books on the subjects held by the library
- Ebooks should be a priority
- Don't know about kids and Young People's fiction. New releases of Classical music have gone down the gurgler. Fiction gets poorer as do audio books (American crap rather than Bolinda and other excellent local audio books.) Too many romances, etc. Possibly due to price? Or is it general dumb-downed demand? I usually find better books and audio at Kurri and often get them sent through
- The library should collect and retain the classic books of western civilisation. And the list should be regularly brought up to date to ensure 20th and even 21st century titles (at least provisionally) are present. They should be on the main shelves; not in stack, not eBooks
- It would be preferable if Cessnock joined with Maitland Library to give access to a wider collection
- Love the puzzles and local history pictures!
- Easy to keep reading the same authors all the time so would be helpful - book reviews like Tuesday Book Club on TV
- More read-along books for young readers. Very important
- A wider variety of youth collections. Also, full series, instead of only one or two books from a series. That would be great
- Should try and get *Singleton Argus* and Lake Macquarie newspapers
- Christian non-fiction
- More variety of magazines
- A DVD film library: a collection of movies from over a century of cinema with the best films from every decade, genre and country put together by someone who really knows their film history
- Full World-wide "Find My Past" (not just Australian) database
- Online access to the family history resources (Ancestry, Find my Past etc ) other libraries offer this and it would much better suit my schedule. Online resources for local family history would also be appreciated
- I would use eBooks if you had them

## SECTION 2: CURRENT OPERATIONAL REVIEW



## 2. Current Operational Overview

Information in this section is based on *Living Learning Libraries: Standards and Guidelines for New South Wales Public Libraries 2012*,<sup>21</sup> an evidence-based guide to the development of library services in NSW. Comparative review of the Library against these standards and guidelines indicates that Cessnock City Library is in some instances, below the baseline standard, almost certainly due to its low levels of funding for staff. Expenditure on staff per capita is well below baseline and has impacted on the library's total expenditure per capita ranking i.e. according to the *Public Libraries Statistics 2011/12* Cessnock ranks 94<sup>th</sup> out of the 99 NSW public library services for expenditure per capita.

It is important however, to note that comparison with other public libraries is not a straightforward process due to the lack of consistency around comparative data collection i.e. there is no one service model for all NSW public libraries e.g. in areas of operational policy, opening hours, funding etc.

The areas reviewed are indicated below in Figure 4.

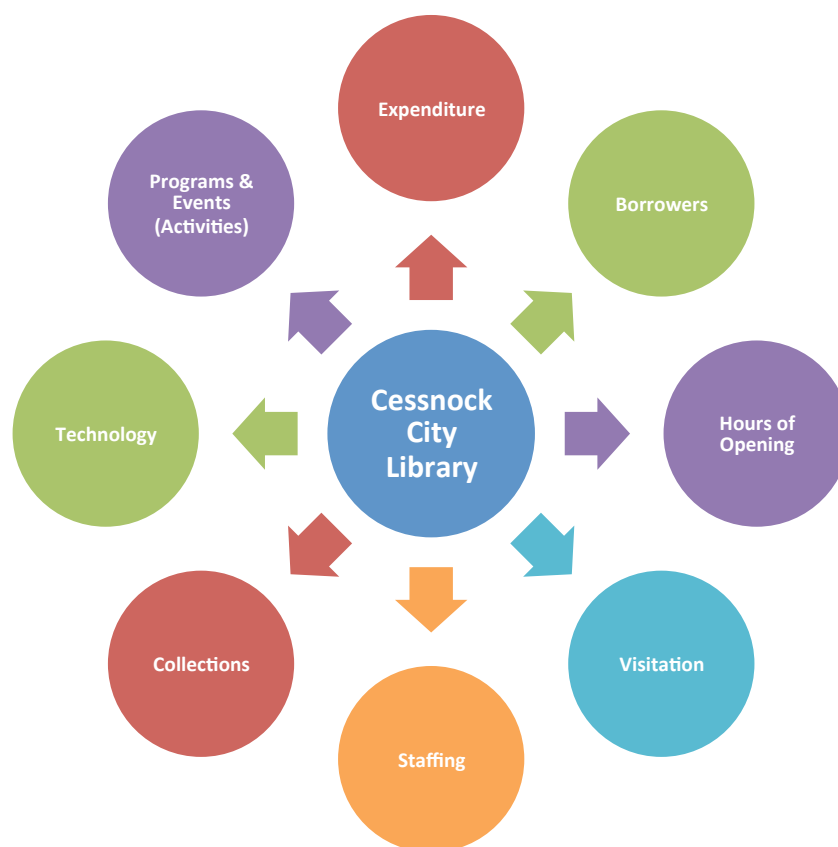


Figure 4 - Areas of Internal and Comparative Assessment

<sup>21</sup> *Living Learning Libraries: standards and guidelines for NSW public libraries 2012* 4<sup>th</sup> edition  
[http://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/services/public\\_libraries/living\\_learning\\_libraries/index.html](http://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/services/public_libraries/living_learning_libraries/index.html) [accessed May 2013]



## 2.1 Comparative Review Against NSW Public Library Standards

*Living Learning Libraries* provides local government library services throughout New South Wales with the tools and guidance to measure performance comparatively against statewide data. It should be noted that evidence based data does not necessarily reflect the local practice of a particular library service.

There are three evidence-based measurement guides that are applied to all nominated standards. They are, Baseline, Enhanced and Exemplary:

- Baseline: This is judged to be a reasonable minimum target for libraries, and is the median of all NSW public libraries
- Enhanced: This target indicates the minimum enhanced level that higher performing libraries might achieve
- Exemplary: This target indicates the minimum exemplary level that leading libraries might achieve

The following is an analysis of Cessnock Library's performance against *Living Learning Libraries* 4<sup>th</sup> edition. The evidence base for the target figures is derived from *NSW Public Library Statistics 2010/11*<sup>22</sup> and New South Wales public libraries' Bibliostat data (Bibliostat is web-based software that provides easy access and manipulation of multiple years of New South Wales' public library data, available via the State Library of NSW website).

**NOTE: Section 2.8 below contains data from the 2011/12 Public Library Statistics.** Full analysis and benchmarking of these figures cannot be completed at the time of writing, as it is dependent on the publications of the next edition of *Living Learning Libraries* in 2014.

### Current Situation in Brief

- Collections are of a reasonable age and currency
- Collection turnover is below the median NSW standard
- Current acquisition levels per capita are above the NSW median
- The library is under-staffed, when viewed both in terms of absolute numbers and the percentage of qualified staff. In future, more focus should be placed on specialist areas e.g. servicing the aged and increased programming which will require a phase-up of staffing numbers within a revised organisational structure
- Total opening hours exceed the minimum standard
- The number of library programs and events has experienced growth between 2010-11 and 2011-12. Programs focus on children's activities and the areas of lifelong learning, author talks, local history lectures, technology classes and craft activities
- Attendance at Library programs and events has increased by over 40%
- There is good access to public technology and WiFi

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<sup>22</sup> NSW Public Library Statistics 2010/11

Comparative detail and commentary follows, with further analysis and discussion later in the report.

## 2.2 Library Management Standards

### Objective

To provide the community with a library service that is equitable, accessible, cost effective and efficient.

#### S1. Library expenditure per capita

Cessnock City Library	\$30.67
Baseline	\$45.19
Enhanced	\$52.74
Exemplary	\$57.86

#### Measurement Parameters

Library expenditure includes operating expenditure and library materials (print and non-print) expenditure by library service and excludes all capital expenditure except library material. Library materials are defined in the Library Act 1939 as: **Library material** includes book, periodical, newspaper and any other printed matter and also includes map, music, manuscript, picture, photographic plate and film and any other matter or thing on or by which words, sounds or images are recorded or reproduced.

#### Commentary

Cessnock City Council is well below the baseline standard for expenditure per capita on library services. This means that Cessnock is in the bottom half of all NSW councils in library expenditure per capita.

#### S2. Borrowers (registered library members) as percentage of population

Cessnock City Library	18.9%
Baseline	44%
Enhanced	50%
Exemplary	59%

#### Measurement Parameters

Borrowers are those members of the community who have joined their local public library and hold a membership card. National and state standards recommend that member records are monitored every three years and that any member not using a card for a three-

year period is not counted as a member for reporting purposes.

Cessnock City Library has a significant hidden membership, that is, customers who, without registering as members, visit the library to use materials, computers or library spaces, or attend events. These customers are counted in the 'visits' statistics, but not in the membership tally.

### Commentary

The number of registered borrowers at Cessnock City Library is well below the baseline standard, although the percentage has increased to 22.4% in 2011/12. There are several possible explanations for this low figure, for example, the use of libraries in adjoining Local Government Areas, including Maitland, Lake Macquarie, Singleton and Newcastle. 7% of non-users of Cessnock Library reported using public libraries in other Local Government Areas. However, it would appear from the survey results that the major reason for the low membership rate is simply a lack of awareness of the Library's services and programs. Over 50% of non-users stated they didn't use the library because 'they hadn't thought of it' and 'didn't read much'.

### S3. Central Library opening hours

Cessnock City Library	51
Population 20,000 – 50,000	48
Population 50,000 – 100,000	53

### Commentary

Cessnock City Library is slightly below the standard for the recommended number of opening hours at a central library for its population. However, considering the population is only just over 50,000, it could be argued that opening hours are above the standard. This should also be considered in the context of when people visit.

### S4. Total opening hours for Central and branches

Cessnock City Library	96
20,000 – 50,000 = 48+ (no of branches x 27)	75
50,000 – 100,000 = 53+ (no of branches x 31)	84

The longer opening hours for Kurri Kurri branch mean that Cessnock City Library exceeds the standard for the recommended *total* number of opening hours for its population.

### 55. Visits to library per capita

Cessnock City Library	3.93
Baseline	4.9
Enhanced	5.3
Exemplary	5.9

#### Measurement Parameters

'Visits' is visits in person, and includes all visits to Central and Branch libraries.

Many more people use public libraries than are registered members. This standard includes the use of library services by customers who consult the reference collection and information resources, read newspapers and magazines, use computers and Internet in the library, attend library events and programs, as well as borrow library materials.

#### Commentary

Cessnock City Library's visits per capita are below baseline. Across NSW, visits to public libraries have increased 24% over the past 10 years, so it is worth considering possible reasons for Cessnock's low visitation figures. This figure reflects the low proportion of membership (S1), and is almost certainly related to the general lack of awareness of library services and programs in the community.

## 2.3 Staffing Standards

### Objective

A library service's commitment and responsiveness to its community is reflected in the mix of library staff selected to offer library programs and services. It is assumed that in any library, responsibility for reference services and technical services is assigned to appropriately qualified staff. In addition, responsibility for special and targeted services is also explicitly assigned.

The standards S10 and S11 are recommended as the minimum requirement for numbers of staff (S10) and qualified staff (S11), to encourage consistency of service delivery across the state.

### **S6. Staff members**

Calculated using eligible population of 51,706

Minimum number of staff members per 3,000 eligible population	Cessnock City Library current EFT = 11.75 staff	
Baseline	1	17
Enhanced	1.1	18
Exemplary	1.3	22

#### **Measurement Parameters**

Staff members means paid staff; ancillary staff (e.g. attendants and cleaners), casuals and volunteers are not included.

#### **Commentary**

Cessnock City Library is currently (May 2013) operating with a staff of 11.75 EFT, which is well below the baseline standard for the population served. The pool of casual staff is not included in these figures.

### **S7. Qualified staff members – minimum level**

Calculated using eligible population of 51,706	Cessnock City Library current EFT = 3 qualified staff	
Baseline for populations >50,000 For every 10,000 people, one of the full-time equivalent staff should be a qualified staff member.	5.2	

#### **Measurement Parameters**

‘Qualified staff members’ means paid members who are eligible for professional membership of the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA). Staff members with specialist responsibilities (see S8 below) are included in this count.

It is acknowledged that many rural libraries have significant difficulties in recruiting qualified staff members. Local authorities should seek to employ the most appropriate mix possible of professional and paraprofessional library staff.

#### **Commentary**

Cessnock City Library is currently operating with fewer than the minimum number of qualified staff.

## ***S8. Staff members – special responsibilities for targeted services***

It is assumed that in all libraries reference and technical services will be assigned to appropriately qualified staff. In addition the following services should be assigned to suitably qualified specialist staff:

- Young people's services (children and young adults)
- Older people's services
- Home Library services
- Marketing and promotion
- Digital services
- Outreach
- Programs and events
- Information technology / library systems

### **Commentary**

Libraries are moving beyond having only reference and technical services staff qualified, and Cessnock City Library must do likewise. The Library currently has staff with responsibility for young people's services (a library technician), Home Library Services (a library assistant) and IT (a librarian) but could benefit from assigning responsibility for additional services and services to segmented client groups to specific staff members.

A review of current staff roles and position descriptions should be undertaken to ensure that the existing staffing resources are aligned to deliver the optimum contemporary services outcome as proposed in this Plan. This would ensure that more emphasis is given to children's services, literacy support, digital services, information technology, local studies, planning of programs, outreach and their promotion

## **2.4 Collection Standards**

### **Objective**

To provide access to a current and relevant collection which meets the needs of the community.

Note that S10, S11, S12, S13 and S14 are related measures and should be used in conjunction with each other to assess collection quality and performance. 'Items per capita' alone is not a sufficient measure of quality. Items per capita may be artificially inflated if the collection is not regularly weeded and the age of stock drifts out, or if the library maintains a large 'stack' collection. Given that the strength of a collection usually lies with its currency rather than its size, stock turnover (S13) and circulation (S14) are important measures of the appeal of collection items.

### **S9. Expenditure on library materials per capita**

Cessnock City Library	\$4.85
Baseline	\$4.59
Enhanced	\$4.92
Exemplary	\$5.48

#### **Measurement Parameters**

‘Library materials’ is defined as any book and non book material, including but not limited to videos, talking books, DVDs, computer games, toys, magazines, CDs, newspapers, CD-ROMs, maps, plans, manuscripts. Expenditure on licensed access to electronic resources is not included. This exclusion is made in line with the definition used in statistics collection for *Public Library Statistics*.

#### **Commentary**

Cessnock Council’s expenditure per capita on collections is between baseline and enhanced standard.

### **S10. Items per capita**

Cessnock City Library	2.16
Baseline	2.2
Enhanced	2.6
Exemplary	3.3

#### **Commentary**

Cessnock Library has a low number of items per capita. This may be a result of the lack of space / shelving in both branches, and a recent ‘weeding’ blitz in the stack and main collections. This figure also needs to be examined in respect of Standards 12 to 14 below.

### **S11. Acquisitions per capita per annum**

Cessnock City Library	.22
Baseline	.25
Enhanced	.28

Exemplary	.34
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**Commentary**

The acquisition per capita rate of 0.22 is below baseline. This could be explained by disproportionately high numbers of large print, audio books, adult non-fiction and hardcopy easy readers (all expensive items) in the collection.

**S12. Age of collection**

**Percentage of library collection purchased in last 5 years**

Cessnock City Library	47%
Baseline	50%
Enhanced	52%
Exemplary	55%

**Percentage of library collection purchased in last 10 years**

Cessnock City Library	87%
Baseline	75%
Enhanced	80%
Exemplary	85%

**Commentary**

Cessnock City Library exceeds the exemplary standard for age of collections when looking at items purchased in the last 10 years. However, the number of items purchased in the last five years is below the baseline standard.

**S13. Turnover of stock**

Cessnock City Library	2.24
Baseline	3.5
Enhanced	3.9



Exemplary	4.8
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**Measurement parameters:**

Turnover is obtained by dividing the total circulation by the total library lending stock

**Commentary**

Turnover of stock and circulation per capita provide an indication of how well the library’s collection is used. Cessnock’s collection when measured against other libraries has a low stock turnover rate (2.24).

The lower than expected usage of collections at Cessnock City Library raises some concerns, and indicates that the collection may not be adequately meeting customer needs. Further analysis of what clients are using will help collection planning. With limited shelf space, it is critical that every item purchased is something that the Library’s users want.

*S14. Circulation per capita*

Cessnock City Library	4.5
Baseline	6
Enhanced	7
Exemplary	8

**Variables to Consider**

This figure is related to a number of variables including a certain lack of consistency in measurement by NSW libraries of, for example, transient and seasonal populations; the length of the circulation period; the number of items allowed to be borrowed at one time; and renewal policies.

**Commentary**

The circulation per capita is below baseline, due in part to low membership levels, but may also indicate that the collection is not adequately meeting customer needs.

## 2.5 Information Technology Standards

*S15. Provision of multiple use public Internet workstations*

Cessnock City Library	20
Minimum standards: 1 PC for public access to the Internet per 3,000 residents or part thereof.	17

## Commentary

Public PCs for Internet access and other uses are provided in each branch. The number of PCs required per branch is dependent on the population served.

Both public and staff PCs should be less than 3 years old, as should application software. There needs to be at least one printer accessible from each public workstation; and wireless Internet provision and power outlets so that customers can use their own personal devices in the library. Cessnock City Library performs well against this standard.

### *S16. Measuring electronic service usage*

Given the accelerating take-up rate for electronic services and the growing proportion of total library use they represent, it has become increasingly important to be able to refer to a core set of performance indicators which measure access and use.

The following datasets are collected through the annual statistical returns completed by NSW public libraries but for many of these datasets there are as yet no widely agreed metrics.

- Number of public workstations connected to the Internet in the library
- Numbers of items digitised by the Library
- Number of full text journal, book and video titles available on databases
- Number of e-book and e-audio titles
- Proportion of expenditure on digital resources by comparison with print materials
- Number of visits to the library website per annum
- Number of unique visitors to the library website per annum
- Number of Internet hours used on public workstations per annum
- Number of Internet sessions on public workstations per annum
- Number of wireless sessions in the library per annum
- Number of wireless hours used in the library per annum
- Number of downloads of e-book and e-audio titles
- Number of database searches per annum
- Number of views and/or downloads of full text items from databases and other external or commercial content such as music downloads per annum
- Number of downloads and/or views of items digitised by the Library per annum

## 2.6 Program Standards

### *S17. Library programs*

Cessnock City Library	607
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Population 50,000+ A mix of library programs to meet population demographics and other variables, including storytime, programs suited to young adults, seniors and adults, reader education, and lifelong learning.	
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**Objective**

To provide the community with a range of activities related to library services and collections that enrich the lives of community members who choose to attend. A library program is an ongoing series or sequence of activities provided by library staff or library staff in partnership with other community or business organisations and usually related to a particular library service, library collection or population demographic. Library programs are usually delivered in library buildings but can be conducted in other community spaces e.g. schools or senior citizen centres.

**Commentary**

Cessnock City Library is delivering a wide, varied and targeted range of programs to its community. With an ever-increasing demand, it is essential that all services and programs align to the library’s core business objectives and outcomes. A planned approach to programming including scoped outcomes will ensure more efficient use of staffing and resources and better alignment with Council’s strategic imperatives.

**2.7 2010 – 2012 Statistical Comparison – Cessnock City Library**

Cessnock City Library – key statistics	2010/11	2011/12
Population	51,706	52,610
Borrowers as a percentage of the population	18.9%	22.3%
Number of library visits	202,989	206,485
Library material held	111,667	102,502
Library material borrowed	234,726	234,218
Library expenditure per capita	\$30.67	\$30.77
Visits per capita	3.93	3.92
Expenditure on library materials per capita	\$4.85	\$4.25
Items per capita	2.16	1.9

Acquisitions per capita	.22	.24
Turnover of stock	2.24	2.3
Circulation per capita	4.54	4.45
No of programs	607	616
Number attending programs	12,543	17,802

## 2.8 Comparative Review Against Other Library Services

**Note:** Data used in this section (2.8) is from *Public Library Statistics 2011/12*, and differs from the 2010/11 data analysed in sections 2.1 to 2.6 above.

The libraries used for comparison were:

- Maitland
- Singleton
- Albury\*
- Greater Taree\*

\* Stand alone library services in similar sized towns.

Note: When Albury City withdrew from a regional library arrangement with Upper Murray Regional Library in 2009, it handed back to UMRL over 35,000 stock items. This accounts for the very high percentage of new items, relatively low total stock numbers, high circulation and turnover of stock.

**Comparative statistics are taken from *Public Library Statistics 2011/12*.<sup>23</sup>**

### Population

Cessnock	Maitland	Singleton	Albury	Greater Taree
52,610	71,653	24,331	51,359	49,453

### Registered members

Cessnock	Maitland	Singleton	Albury	Greater Taree
11,745	31,968	7,576	27,348	18,449

### Borrowers as % of population (NSW median = 44%)

Cessnock	Maitland	Singleton	Albury	Greater Taree
22%	45%	31%	53%	37%

<sup>23</sup> *Public Library Statistics 2011/12* [http://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/services/public\\_libraries/statistics/docs/2011\\_12statistics.pdf](http://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/services/public_libraries/statistics/docs/2011_12statistics.pdf) [accessed May 2013]

**Total expenditure per capita (NSW median = \$49.82)**

Cessnock	Maitland	Singleton	Albury	Greater Taree
\$30.77	\$48.64	\$81.16	\$58.04	\$57.27

**Expenditure on library materials per capita (NSW median = \$4.46)**

Cessnock	Maitland	Singleton	Albury	Greater Taree
\$4.25	\$3.71	\$4.52	\$4.03	\$5.02

**Items per capita (NSW median = 1.99)**

Cessnock	Maitland	Singleton	Albury	Greater Taree
1.95	1.57	1.66	1.49	1.75

**Total opening hours**

Cessnock	Maitland	Singleton	Albury	Greater Taree
96 (+1 branch) Baseline = 84 hrs.	187 (+3 branches)	58 (1 service point)	94 (+1 branch)	155 (+3 branches)

**Total visits**

Cessnock	Maitland	Singleton	Albury	Greater Taree
206,485	258,534	99,888	296,967	265,824

**Visits per capita**

Cessnock	Maitland	Singleton	Albury	Greater Taree
3.92	3.61	4.1	5.78	5.37

**Population per staff member (Baseline = 1 per 3,000 eligible population)**

Cessnock	Maitland	Singleton	Albury	Greater Taree
4,458	3,285	2,093	2,547	3,429

**Population per qualified staff member (Baseline = For every 7,500 people one of the fulltime equivalent staff should be a qualified staff member)**

Cessnock	Maitland	Singleton	Albury	Greater Taree
17,536	11,023	6,931	12,839	8,991

**Acquisitions per capita (NSW median = .22)**

Cessnock	Maitland	Singleton	Albury	Greater Taree
.24	.22	.26	.21	.24

**% purchased last 5 years (NSW median = 48%)**

Cessnock	Maitland	Singleton	Albury	Greater Taree
56%	58.6%	59%	64%	57%

**% purchased last 10 years (NSW median = 78%)**

Cessnock	Maitland	Singleton	Albury	Greater Taree
84%	n/a	89%	97%	84%

**Turnover of stock (NSW median = 3.46)**

Cessnock	Maitland	Singleton	Albury	Greater Taree
2.45	4.32	3.62	6.17	5.20

#### **Total circulation**

Cessnock	Maitland	Singleton	Albury	Greater Taree
234,218	469,546	134,235	413,240	441,902

#### **Circulation per capita (NSW median = 5.94)**

Cessnock	Maitland	Singleton	Albury	Greater Taree
4.45	6.55	5.52	8.05	8.94

#### **Total stock**

Cessnock	Maitland	Singleton	Albury	Greater Taree
102,502	112,237	40,393	76,769	86,607

#### **Public Internet workstations (Baseline = 1 PC for public access per 3,000 residents)**

Cessnock	Maitland	Singleton	Albury	Greater Taree
20	33	18	24	33

#### **Number of Internet bookings**

Cessnock	Maitland	Singleton	Albury	Greater Taree
59,690	51,438	15,940	57,958	22,801

#### **Number of programs**

Cessnock	Maitland	Singleton	Albury	Greater Taree
616	851	339	1,079	434

#### **Number attending programs**

Cessnock	Maitland	Singleton	Albury	Greater Taree
17,802	10,397	10,184	22,467	6,145

## **2.9 Library Expenditure**

**Note:** Data used in this section (2.9) is from *Public Library Statistics 2011/12*, and differs from the 2010/11 data analysed in sections 2.1 to 2.6 above.

### **Total expenditure per capita**

Cessnock City Library expenditure per capita (\$30.77) is well below the NSW median (\$49.82) and significantly lower than both Maitland (\$48.54) and Singleton (\$81.16). Cessnock also performs poorly when compared with library services in similar sized towns, e.g. Albury (\$58.04) and Greater Taree (\$57.27).

Low expenditure on salaries contributes to this figure. At \$15.93 per capita Cessnock ranks 91 out of the 99 NSW public libraries. The NSW median is \$23.93.

### Capital Expenditure (Book vote) per capita

Cessnock City Library Service's capital funding for materials (books etc.) at \$4.25 per capita is slightly lower than the NSW median (\$4.46), and exceeds that of both neighbouring library services and Albury. However, acquisitions per capita are above the NSW median.

The User survey indicates a high level of satisfaction with the selection of material, though there was a demand for eBooks, and more audio books, talking books and DVDs and CDs.

**[See the *User Survey Report and Analysis* for more detail – attachment 4]**

## 2.10 Library Operations

**Note:** Data used in this section (2.10) is from *Public Library Statistics 2011/12*, and differs from the 2010/11 data analysed in sections 2.1 to 2.6 above.

### Hours of Opening

- Cessnock City Library opening hours exceed the minimum standard
- Baseline opening hours per branch are set at 31. Kurri Kurri Branch is open 45 hours per week. Of the surrounding libraries Cessnock, at 96 hours, has more opening hours than Singleton (a single service point library) but fewer than Maitland with four branches. Albury Library with one branch is open 94 hours

### Borrowers

Review of Cessnock City Library borrowers as a percentage of the Local Government Area population against current NSW public library standards indicates that:

- Cessnock City Library at 22% is well below the NSW median, exceeded by the surrounding libraries (Singleton 31% and Maitland 44%) and Albury (53%) and Greater Taree (37%). There has, however, been an increase on the 2010/11 figure of 18%

The results of the non-user survey appear to support the hypothesis that the reason for the low membership is the use of libraries in surrounding Local Government Areas by residents of Branxton, Heddon Greta and Kurri Kurri; and a lack of awareness of the range of resources and services available from Cessnock City Library.

### Visits Per Capita

- Cessnock is well below the NSW median of 4.9 with a result of 3.92. This is directly related to the low membership levels. The figure is higher than Maitland's (3.68) but below Singleton (4.1), Albury (5.7) and Greater Taree (5.4)

## Staffing

- Cessnock City Library has less than one staff per 3,000 population which is below the baseline level. In terms of this standard. Cessnock performs poorly against both the neighbouring libraries and Albury and Greater Taree
- Cessnock City Library has less than one qualified staff member for every 7,500 people, in fact only one qualified staff member for every 17,000 people. This is well below the baseline and once again Cessnock performed the most poorly against all the comparison libraries
- In relation to staff members with special responsibilities for targeted services, Cessnock City Library has identified the need for more specialist focus in servicing young adults and older persons

## Collections

- Age of collection (2011-12): 56% of Cessnock City Library's collection was purchased in the last five years, well above the NSW median (48%), and 84% in the last ten years (NSW median 78%). This would indicate that stock is being refreshed and weeded regularly
- Turnover of stock: Cessnock City Library's figures are below the NSW median at 2.45 and well below the comparison libraries; Albury (6.17), Greater Taree (5.2), Maitland (4.32) and Singleton (3.62). This figure could indicate that the collection is not adequately promoted (i.e. non-users are not aware of the range of the resources available) or that it is not adequately meeting the community's needs, although the User Survey does not suggest this. See Appendix 1, User Survey Report Analysis and Summary
- Circulation per capita: Cessnock's figures are below the NSW median (5.94) at 4.54. Again, Cessnock is the poorest performer when compared with the other libraries, probably due to its low membership levels
- Acquisitions per capita per annum were above the NSW median (.22) at .24, an improvement on the 2010/11 figures; and compared favourably with all sampled libraries

## Technology

- Provision of multiple use public Internet workstations: (a standard set at 1 PC for every 3,000 residents) is exceeded by Cessnock with one for every 2,360 people
- Electronic usage: There are currently no standards established for the collection and comparison of eResource usage. However, it is useful to note that there were 39,299 uses of Cessnock City Library's suite of databases including Your Tutor (online homework help) and Ancestry.com – up from 23,777 in the previous year
- Free wireless (Wi-Fi) access is available in both branches



## Programs and Events

Cessnock City Library has an active (and growing) programs and events schedule, with particular emphasis on learning and recreational activities - in 2011/12 there were 616 events with a total attendance of 17,802; an increase of nearly 40% on 2010/11 figures. The growth and demand in this area is placing pressure on staffing and facilities, and will be unsustainable in the future.

Programs are provided to inform, encourage social interaction and entertain. A higher emphasis by the library on programming reflects alignment to current library practice, and importantly the need to be socially inclusive, build community capacity, and to obtain best value for the community from its investment in library services and infrastructure.

## SECTION 3: STRATEGIC CONTEXT and BACKGROUND



### 3.1 Australian Public Libraries – National Snapshot

Australia's public libraries provide quality information services that support lifelong learning to the Australian community, significantly impacting on the cultural and information industry.<sup>24</sup>

- 1,505 public library service points with 1,429 fixed point libraries and 76 mobile libraries
  - One public library service point for every 15,000 people
  - More than one third of all public libraries are open more than 45 hours per week
  - Almost 181 million loans to 10 million public library members
  - Over 110 million customer visits annually, or more than 9 million per month
- More than 40 million items (1.8 items per person) were made available for the use of the community and over \$118 million was spent on ensuring that these collections remain up to date and relevant (more than half the collections are less than 5 years old)
- Total expenditure on public libraries has increased from \$815 million in 2007-2008 to over \$1.01 billion in 2011-2012, representing a 26% increase. Expressed on a per capita basis, funding for public libraries has increased by 17% over the same period to \$44.55
- Library visits were up 4.25% over previous year and 17.5% over past five years.<sup>25</sup> Children aged 12 to 14 years were the least likely to have visited a public library (50% attendance rate) compared with younger children, and in the 12 months to April 2012, one and a half million children visited a public library<sup>26</sup>
- The total annual benefit provided by public libraries to Australians is approximately \$3 billion<sup>27</sup>
- Public libraries regularly attract frequent repeat visitors. Almost three quarters (71%) who had visited libraries in the past 12 months had gone more than 5 times<sup>28</sup>

### 3.2 Policy and Strategic Context

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<sup>24</sup> National and State Libraries Australasia: Australian Public Library Statistics 2011-2012

<sup>25</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics, Cat. No 4921.0 *Participation in Selected Cultural Activities*  
<http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mediareleasesbytitle/88E41B646F258441CA2579AA000F2E61?OpenDocument>  
(accessed May 2013)

<sup>26</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics, Cat. No. 4901.0 *Children's Participation in Cultural and Leisure Activities, Australia, Apr 2012*  
<http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/4901.0> (accessed May 2013)

<sup>27</sup> ALIA (2013) National Welfare and Economic Contributions of Public Libraries  
<http://www.alia.org.au/publiclibraries/Contribution%20of%20Australian%20Public%20Libraries%20Report.pdf> (accessed May 2013)

<sup>28</sup> ABS 4172.0 - Arts and Culture in Australia: A Statistical Overview, 2008 (First Edition) Australian Bureau of Statistics  
<http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/mf/4172.0> (accessed May 2013)

Public library services in Australia operate locally within a global context. A number of key documents provide the basis on which public library policy is determined. These are outlined below.

### 3.2.1 International

#### UNESCO Public Library Manifesto

Australia is a longstanding member of UNESCO and a signatory to its *Public Library Manifesto*<sup>29</sup>, which states:

*The public library, the local gateway to knowledge, provides a basic condition for lifelong learning, independent decision-making and cultural development of the individual and social groups. This Manifesto proclaims UNESCO's belief in the public library as a living force for education, culture and information, and as an essential agent for the fostering of peace and spiritual welfare through the minds of men and women. UNESCO therefore encourages national and local governments to support and actively engage in the development of public libraries.*

The following key missions, which relate to information, literacy, education and culture should be at the core of every public library services:

- creating and strengthening reading habits in children at an early age
- supporting both self conducted education and formal education at all levels
- providing opportunities for personal creative development
- stimulating the imagination and creativity of children and young people
- promoting awareness and appreciation of cultural heritage, the arts, and scientific achievements
- fostering inter-cultural dialogue and favouring cultural diversity
- supporting the oral tradition
- ensuring access for citizens to community information
- providing adequate information services to local enterprises, associations and groups
- facilitating the development of information and computer literacy skills
- supporting, participating and initiating literacy activities and programs for all age groups

#### IFLA (International Federation of Library Associations) Public Library Service Guidelines<sup>30</sup>

*The primary purpose of the public library is to provide resources and services in a variety of media to meet the needs of individuals and groups for education, information and personal development including recreation and leisure. They have an important role in the development and maintenance of a democratic society by giving the individual access to a wide and varied range of knowledge, ideas and opinions.*

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<sup>29</sup> <http://www.unesco.org/webworld/libraries/manifestos/libraman.html> (accessed March 2013)

<sup>30</sup> IFLA Public Library Service Guidelines  
<http://www.degruyter.com/view/product/43971> (accessed March 2013)

## 3.2.2 National

### ALIA Public Libraries Summit 2009<sup>31</sup>

The Summit looked at how public libraries contribute to a wide variety of government agendas, including health, economic prosperity, digital citizenship, social inclusion, lifelong learning, literacy, stronger communities, wellbeing, supporting families, multiculturalism and the environment. Several clear themes emerged:

- Children, early reading and a literate Australia
- Encouraging the digital economy and digital citizenship
- Social inclusion and community partnerships — safety, fairness and participation
- Health and ageing

Several key submissions proposed a strategic framework for Australia's public libraries.

- *Creating the future: the strategic direction and sustainability of Australia's public library system*<sup>32</sup>
  - A submission by *Public Libraries NSW - Metropolitan Association (PLM)*
- *Towards a policy framework for the Australia public library system*<sup>33</sup>
  - A submission by *Friends of Libraries Australia (FOLA)*
- *Creating a national public library service delivery model*<sup>34</sup>
  - A submission by *Public Libraries Australia (PLA)*

## 3.2.3 State

### Library Act 1939

Cessnock City Council is a signatory to the Library Act 1939. The Act requires signatory Councils to provide reasonable library service to their communities. Basic library service requirements include:

- Free membership for any resident or ratepayer
- Free use of, and access to, the library service whether a member or not
- Free borrowing of library material

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<sup>31</sup> ALIA Public Library Summit (2009) <http://www.alia.org.au/governance/committees/public.libraries/summit09/> (accessed March 2013)

<sup>32</sup> Creating the future (2009)

<http://www.alia.org.au/governance/committees/public.libraries/summit09/pdfs/creating.the.Future.pdf> (accessed March 2013)

<sup>33</sup> Towards a policy framework for the Australian public library system (2009)

<http://www.alia.org.au/governance/committees/public.libraries/summit09/pdfs/FOLA.Towards.system.pdf> (accessed March 2013)

<sup>34</sup> Creating a national public library service delivery model (2009)

<http://www.alia.org.au/governance/committees/public.libraries/summit09/pdfs/PLA.Summit.paper.rev.pdf> (accessed March 2013)

- Free home delivery service to members of the community unable to visit the library due to ill health or disability
- Free basic reference services

The Act also requires a Council considering the cessation of library services to their community to hold a community referendum/poll; and any subsidy paid to a local authority (Council) under the Library Act 1939 must be expended in providing library services that are provided free of charge.

Under the Library Act local authorities are entitled to a subsidy, determined by a formula taking into account population and a Disability and Geographic adjustment. The per capita component of total State funding has remained at \$1.85 since 1995.<sup>35</sup> In 1980 the State government contributed 23.56% of the cost of operating libraries; this is now less than 8%, the lowest of any Australian state.<sup>36</sup> Static State funding is occurring at a time when libraries are experiencing increased demand.<sup>37</sup>

The subsidy and Disability and Geographic adjustment amount received by Cessnock City Library for 2012/13 was \$97,329 and the Local Priority grant funding was \$43,416.

## Public Libraries NSW

Cessnock City Council is a member of the Central East Zone of Public Libraries NSW<sup>38</sup>, one of two public library associations in NSW. The Association has a vital interest in improving library services and access to information resources for all people living in New South Wales through a range of initiatives, joint ventures and partnerships.

### 3.2.4 Local

The library is well positioned to be the public face of Council and must strive to reflect its corporate values and strategic priorities. The following is an outline of the library's strategic alignment with Council's principle planning documents, in particular the *Cessnock 2023 Community Strategic Plan*<sup>39</sup> and the *Social and Cultural Plan 2009 – 2014*.<sup>40</sup>

## Council Vision

### *Thriving, attractive and welcoming*

<sup>35</sup> NSW Public Library Associations Vision and Values <http://www.plnsw.org.au/docs/NSWPLA-EnablingCommunities-WEB.pdf> (accessed March 2013)

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Public Libraries NSW <http://plnsw.org.au/aboutus.htm> [accessed June 2013]

<sup>39</sup> Cessnock 2023 Community Strategic Plan

[http://www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au/resources/file/Publications/CCC\\_Community%20Strategic%20Plan%202023\\_Adopted%2019%20June%202013.pdf](http://www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au/resources/file/Publications/CCC_Community%20Strategic%20Plan%202023_Adopted%2019%20June%202013.pdf) [accessed July 2013]

<sup>40</sup> Cessnock Social and Cultural Plan 2009-2014

<http://www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au/comcul/community/plan> [accessed July 2013]

Cessnock will be a cohesive and welcoming community living in an attractive and sustainable rural environment with a diversity of business and employment opportunities supported by accessible infrastructure and services which effectively meet community needs.

The Cessnock City Library supports the Cessnock City Council Vision in all aspects of its operations – it is:

- valued as a trusted, safe and democratic space
- a place to connect and learn
- a flexible and adaptive space with a virtual presence
- the heart of digital innovation where people can experience, experiment with, and master new technologies
- a place to engage in creative and cultural activities

### ***Cessnock 2023 Community Strategic Plan***

#### **Desired outcome 1 - A connected, safe and creative community**

##### ***Objective 1.1 - Promoting social connections***

###### **Strategic directions**

- Our community is aware of and has access to community services
- We are connected to others in our neighbourhood and across the Local Government Area

*The Library is an essential community hub – welcoming and inclusive – offering a wide range of information, activities and events, across the two branches, and online.*

##### ***Objective 1.2 - Strengthening community culture***

###### **Strategic directions**

- Our residents show pride in our Local Government Area
- Our community organisations have opportunities to work together to develop and deliver services
- Our facilities are utilised by community groups

*The Library is one of the most visible and appreciated of Council's services.  
The Library welcomes and fosters partnerships with community organisations.  
The Library has community spaces and programs for all age groups.*

##### ***Objective 1.4 - Fostering an articulate and creative community***

###### **Strategic directions**

- We have thriving cultural precincts throughout the Local Government Area that celebrate our heritage and culture
- We have a diverse program of cultural and heritage activities

*The Library collects, stores and promotes local heritage resources and also encourages the community to explore its own culture and creativity.  
The Library functions as a community gallery space.*

*The Library provides leadership in Council's cultural program.*

## **Desired outcome 2 – A sustainable and prosperous community**

### **Objective 2.1 - Diversifying local business options**

#### **Strategic directions**

- Our Local Government Area is attractive and supportive of business

*The Library is a source of reliable, current information of all kinds. Many people base their decision to move to an area on the availability of good facilities, including libraries.*

### **Objective 2.2 - Achieving more sustainable employment opportunities**

#### **Strategic directions**

- We have learning opportunities for people of all ages
- We have employment opportunities on the local area

*The Library is a recognised and respected venue for lifelong learning – 'the street corner university'.*

*The Library makes a major contribution to a child's path to reading – we are all 'born to read'.*

*The Library provides opportunities for community training in technology and knowledge management.*

*The Library can offer traineeships and student work placements; and provide a venue for showcasing young people's talents.*

### **Objective 2.3 - Achieving more sustainable employment opportunities**

#### **Strategic directions**

- We have a range of diverse visitor experience across the entire Local Government Area
- Our Local Government Area is attractive to visitors

*The Library can partner with existing tourism / visitor centres to provide a wide range of local information. Opportunities exist to create mobile apps (e.g. local history walk), upload photos and expand the information on Pinterest or Flickr, and create a social media presence (e.g. Facebook or Twitter).*

*The Library offers a range of activities and events.*

## **Desired outcome 3 – A sustainable and healthy environment**

### **Objective 3.1 - Protecting & enhancing the natural environment & rural character of the area**

#### **Strategic directions**

- Our community is aware of the value of natural resources and biodiversity

*The Library collects and preserves information relating to all aspects of the local community.*



*The Library can partner with environmental agencies to deliver themed activities, and generate awareness.*

**Objective 3.2** - Better utilisation of existing open space

**Strategic directions**

- We have high quality, centralised multi-purpose sporting and recreation facilities

*The Library could have a presence in new recreation facilities, (e.g. Stanhope Gardens Library in Blacktown (NSW) is co-located in the aquatic centre).*

**Desired outcome 4 – Accessible infrastructure, service and facilities**

**Objective 4.3** - Improving access to health services locally

*The Library offers a Home Library Service for aged and housebound customers, which could partner with other health support services.*

*The growth of digital services will provide greater access to information and resources for housebound customers.*

**Desired outcome 5 – Civic leadership and effective governance**

**Objective 5.1** - Fostering and supporting community leadership

**Strategic directions**

- We have well-trained and qualified leaders in our community and in our workforce
- Our young people have aspirations to become leaders

*The Library is well managed and run by qualified staff.*

*The Library offers a range of volunteering opportunities for all ages.*

*The Library partners with many community organisations.*

**Objective 5.2** - Encouraging more community participation in decision-making

**Strategic directions**

- We are informed about our community
- We are involved in decisions affecting our community

*The Library is an ideal venue for consultation, with a significant percentage of the population already Library users.*

*The Library is a neutral and democratic space.*

*The Library engages in regular consultation with its users.*

*The Library provides free and assisted access to e-government at all levels.*

### **Objective 5.3 - Making Council more responsive to the community**

#### **Strategic directions**

Our Council is responsive to the community

Our Council's processes are efficient and transparent

*Library staff offer excellent customer service and are responsive to the community's needs. The Library provides dedicated PCs that can be used to access Council information and services.*

*It is possible to co-locate a Council customer service centre within the Library.*

### **The Cessnock Local Government Area of the Future<sup>41</sup>**

The following comments were among those made by community members during the consultation process for the *2023 Community Strategic Plan*. The Library can play a significant role in addressing these issues, now and into the future.

#### **Services**

- More equitable distribution of services across the Local Government Area
- Cluster 'like' services together
- Ensure services provision grows as the population of the community grows

#### **Health care**

- Support services for elderly

#### **Community and lifestyle**

- Provide more affordable cultural activities/facilities available for all age groups
- More and improved community celebrations including multicultural events and Australia Day
- Maintain local identity and improve sense of community pride
- Better early intervention services
- Raise awareness about the community activities and facilities available
- Use existing spaces and facilities more effectively
- Active and vibrant arts community
- Engage and celebrate the local Aboriginal community's heritage
- Encourage engagement of youth
- Maintain current village lifestyle

#### **Communication and community participation**

- Council website should be a forum for the community to provide comments
- Appropriately notify ratepayers about community events and consultation meetings
- Greater feedback to community from Council

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<sup>41</sup> Appendix 2, *Cessnock 2023*

## ***Social and Cultural Plan 2009 - 2014***

*Council's Social and Cultural Plan 2009 – 2014* includes a section entitled *State of the art – cultural facilities for our communities* (Pages 102-103).

In this section, in relation to its Libraries, Council commits to:

- Develop a Library Strategic Plan which will include consideration of possible and preferred locations for a new Cessnock Library.
- Incorporate plans for the construction of a new Cessnock Library into its future capital works program.
- Be mindful of the impact on cultural services, in particular library services, of the numerous proposed major residential developments across the LGA and plan for expansion of services and facilities accordingly. This includes the need to provide a new library for the Greta/Branxton/North Rothbury district.
- Ensure that appropriate provision is made for contributions to cultural facilities through Section 94 Plans and Voluntary Planning Agreements.

### **3.2.5 Policies and Guidelines**

Internal Library and Council policies reflect current practice, and provide guidelines and information for staff and customers. There needs to be a schedule of review for all such documents to ensure they remain timely and relevant. The strategic review has also identified a number of areas where additional focus is required, for example, staff induction and training in Library procedures.

#### **Current Cessnock City Library Policies, Guidelines and Procedures**

- Borrower registration procedure
- Cash handling procedures
- Chubb fire alarm procedure
- Collection development selection guidelines
- Community notices, community displays and exhibitions and hosting of petitions in Cessnock City Library guidelines
- Connecting library training PCs to private and public VLANs procedure
- Creating a list of titles a borrower has read procedure
- Display and exhibition agreement
- Disposal of needles procedure
- Emergency evacuation procedure for Cessnock City Library
- Emergency evacuation procedure for Kurri Kurri Library
- Guidelines for use of the new telephone system
- Instructions for fire control cabinet
- Instructions for automatic doors

- Instructions for morning circulation notices
- Instructions for Inter Branch Requests
- Internet policy
- Lost and paid for procedure
- New employee handbook
- Overdues and fines
- Procedure for deleting Items
- Procedure for Inter Library Loans
- Reserving an item which has multiple records
- Reservation procedure
- Start of day procedures
- Temporary membership procedure
- Wii gaming system procedure
- Workplace inspection checklist

### 3.3 Demographics – Current and Future Trends

Note: Unless otherwise stated, figures in this summary are from the profile id<sup>42</sup> and the draft Cessnock Community Strategic Plan 2023.<sup>43</sup>

#### 3.3.1 Cessnock Local Government Area

The Cessnock Local Government Area covers approximately 1,950 square kilometres, a large proportion of which is dedicated state forest and national park. Most of the rural area is used for grazing, farming, timber-getting and viticulture. The area's previous major industry, mining, has declined significantly, which contributed to higher than average unemployment rates, and declining populations in the 1980s and 1990s.

#### 3.3.2 Population projections

Population projections can be of some assistance in forecasting the potential service needs of future communities. However despite the best attempts to accurately forecast using sound methodology, it must be advised that there are many variables and hence projections may not always be a reliable indicator. Given this, please note that the below population projections within this section are a guide only.

The Department of Planning in 2013 issued preliminary data forecasting that the Cessnock Local Government Area population in 2031 could be 67,400. However, based on historical growth trends of the past seven years, Cessnock City Council estimates the minimum growth to be slightly higher at 68,364 people. However, if all lands within the Cessnock Local

<sup>42</sup> Cessnock City Community Profile 2011 <http://profile.id.com.au/cessnock/home> (accessed March 2013)

<sup>43</sup> Draft Cessnock Community Strategic Plan 2023

<http://www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au/resources/file/OnExhibition/Draft%20Delivery%20Program%20and%20Operational%20Plan/Final%20Draft%20v1%20-%202023%20Community%20Strategic%20Plan.pdf> (accessed May 2013)

Government Area zoned residential were to be developed and housing stock subsequently constructed, the maximum growth scenario could be approximately 101,987.

Population Projections for Library Catchment Areas

The table below (sourced from Cessnock City Council, Community Planning Unit) forecasts the population change between Census 2011 and 2031 for three geographical catchment areas. It is acknowledged that at the present time, the Branxton and Greta areas does not have a library however given it is a growth corridor there are long term plans for a library to be constructed in time within the catchment. Hence, the below table demonstrates the proposed population for the three future library catchment areas.

Planning Area	Census 2011 Population	Projected 2031 Population	Projected 2031 Population
		Minimum Growth	Maximum Growth
Cessnock Library Catchment Includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cessnock and surrounding townships</li> <li>• Millfield, Paxton and Ellalong</li> <li>• Wollombi, Bucketty and Laguna</li> </ul>	26,356	33,470	46,682
Kurri Kurri Library Catchment Includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kurri Kurri and surrounding townships</li> <li>• Heddon Greta and Clifftleigh</li> <li>• Abermain and Weston</li> <li>• Mulbring</li> </ul>	17,954	20,877	26,305
Branxton and Greta Area Library Catchment Includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Branxton and East Branxton</li> <li>• Greta</li> <li>• North Rothbury</li> </ul> <p><i>Please note: this projection does not take into account neighbouring townships located within the Singleton Local Government Area and hence the wider catchment population is likely to be higher.</i></p>	5,937	14,017	29,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>50,247</b>	<b>68,364</b>	<b>101,987</b>

Analysis of age groups of Cessnock City in 2011 compared to Regional NSW shows that there was a higher proportion (25.5%) of people in the younger age groups (0 to 17 years) and a lower proportion of people (20.5%) in the older age groups (60+ years).

In common with the rest of NSW Cessnock Local Government Area has an ageing population. Growth in population is evident in the following age groups: the 60 to 64 age bracket increased 34.2% from 2006 to 2011, and similarly, the 65 to 69 age bracket increased 35.2% over this period. It is anticipated that the percentage of the population over 65 years will increase by more than 50% in the coming years from 13.4% in 2004 to 21.3% in 2022. Another significant growth in population has shown an increase of 25 to 29 year olds by 21.8% from 2006 to 2011. A small baby boom has welcomed a 24.3% increase of 0-4 years.<sup>44</sup>

#### **The impact on the library:**

- A need to plan for an increase in services and activities for pre-schoolers and those aged 65 and older
- Libraries are also likely to become favoured meeting places for children and teenagers

### **3.3.3 Cultural and Linguistically Diverse (CALD)**

Only 880 people indicated in the 2011 Census that they spoke a language other than English at home. At 1.7% of the population this is significantly lower than the NSW state average of 5.1%.

#### **The impact on the library:**

- The numbers of CALD residents is not currently of significance to the library's collections, services etc. Demand for non-English materials could be reasonably met by the use of the State Library of NSW's multicultural bulk loan collection

### **3.3.4 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders**

4.8% or 2,457 people identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, well above the State comparison rate of 2.5%.

#### **The impact on the library:**

- There may be some need in future for targeted services, particularly to young people in the Local Government Area identifying as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander

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<sup>44</sup> Economic profile of Cessnock City 2012

<http://www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au/resources/file/Economic/Economic%20Profile%20of%20Cessnock%20City.pdf> (accessed May 2013)

### 3.3.5 Education

Only 12% of people aged 15+ in Cessnock City have a tertiary qualification, well below the NSW state average of 19%, although a further 25% have a vocational qualification. 57% of the population left school at Year 10 or below. Only 24.2% of the Cessnock population aged over 15 in 2011 had completed year 12, compared with the regional NSW average of 34.5%.

Federal Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations administrative data also shows that Cessnock Local Government Area's percentage of Year 9 government school students who did not meet the minimum standard for reading in 2011 was more than double that of NSW at 13% versus 6%.

Cessnock has two TAFE colleges (one in Cessnock and one in Kurri Kurri), 23 public schools, five Catholic schools and one independent school.

#### The impact on the library:

- The library will need to work collaboratively with other agencies in the Local Government Area to provide resources and services aimed at improving literacy levels in the community
- There may be increasing pressure on the library to offer study spaces and homework help support / classes; and to develop information literacy programs
- An increase in the use of library service by people studying for higher education qualifications may impact on the quality of the collection with regards to content level, for both print and electronic material

### 3.3.6 Access to Technology

According to the 2011 Census, 67% of private dwellings in Cessnock City had Internet connections, with over 60% of these being broadband.

#### The impact on the library:

- The large number of households with broadband Internet access may have implications for the need for Wi-Fi accessibility and the bandwidth provided by the library service i.e. increased expectation of access to connectivity outside the home, school or work; opportunity to deliver value-added services e.g. specific content or database access over library Wi-Fi and within the library via public computers
- There will be an increasing need for technology services provided to older persons to enable them to maintain a place in the wired world or to be able to access it on a needs basis e.g. Internet tutorials for seniors. Staff are likely to have an on-going role as tutors in the use of technology and Internet searching using the facilities provided in the libraries
- The library may play an increasing role for the 18 to 24 years age group in the provision of technology services, e.g. Internet tutorials, workshops, as a source of knowledge for technology development, or as a place to be exposed to new technology

- Online purchasing by individuals may have an impact on the future development of the collection. Given the most common types of goods purchased over the Internet are CDs, music, DVDs, videos, books or magazines, the library may stop lending films and music due to online competition and copyright issues with digital material **or** investigate online lending / streaming services for members (an access and equity initiative)
- The library will need to provide greater open access to certain websites and downloads with implications for ongoing connectivity costs, and the possible need to charge for use of online resources and devices
- Some schools pay students to run IT support - can libraries do the same?
- There will be greater user interaction as the eCollections expand - library shelves will become fully digitised and include online readers' recommendations and reviews

### 3.3.7 Economic indicators

Analysis of household income levels in Cessnock City in 2011 show that overall 13.8% of households earned a high income (\$2,500 or more per week), and 25.5% were low-income (less than \$399 per week) households.

#### The impact on the library:

- Lower income households rely more on public libraries for educational and recreational reading material; are less likely to have access to the latest technology, and may have an increased need to access Government websites. Their capacity to pay for value-added services or programs is limited

### 3.3.8 Key industries

The reduction in jobs in the mining sector has contributed to Cessnock's urban decline, its level of unemployment and a lower than average tertiary educated population. However, this has been largely offset by the parallel growth in both the wine industry and tourism. This sector employs over 7,000 people and has resulted in the Hunter Valley being NSW's second most visited tourism destination after Sydney.

A number of future employment growth opportunities are now emerging in the Cessnock Local Government Area, in part as a result of the completion of the Hunter Expressway, which has reduced travel times between the Hunter Valley and Newcastle by up to 28 minutes. This will provide significant population growth and economic stimulus to the Local Government Area, and in particular to the towns of Kurri Kurri, Branxton and Greta.

Further economic growth will arise from the development of Huntlee town which, with a projected population of 18-21,000, near Branxton, will have a major impact; and also from proposed industrial locations such as Hunter Industrial Ecology Park (HIEP) and the Hunter Economic Zone (HEZ).



### 3.3.9 Employment

The size of Cessnock City's labour force in 2011 was 22,338 persons, of which 7,537 were employed part-time and 12,730 were full time workers.

The most common industries in Cessnock City (accounting for 45% of the workforce) were:

- Manufacturing
- Retail trade
- Healthcare
- Mining

As a consequence there are more technicians, trades workers and machinery operators in Cessnock City than any other occupation.

The Australian Government, Department of Employment advises that the unemployment rate as at the December Quarter 2013 (Small Labour Markets) for the Cessnock Local Government Area was 7.3% (compared with 6.0% for regional NSW.)<sup>45</sup>

#### The impact on the library:

- The planning / timing of activities will need to take into account working hours to attract more users into the library
- As a majority of the population are employed in industry, as well as health care, and retail trade, this may need to be considered when developing collections, programs and services to support these groups. In addition to this is the opportunity to develop collaborations, partnership and potential sponsorship
- Libraries may become workplaces for telecommuters and small business operators

### 3.3.10 Volunteers

In Cessnock City 12.5% of the population report doing some form of voluntary work. The number of volunteers in Cessnock decreased slightly between 2006 and 2011. The NSW average is 16.7%.

#### Opportunities for volunteers in the library:

- Home library services / delivery of books to people who are housebound
- Sharing of knowledge through assistance with, or provision of, tutorials, workshops or lectures on a regular or occasional basis
- Assisting with family and school holiday programs, book talks, and other library events
- Assisting with homework help and adult literacy classes
- Friends of the Library group
- Local studies projects

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<sup>45</sup> *Small area labour markets* December 2013

<https://employment.gov.au/small-area-labour-markets-publication> (accessed May 2014)

### 3.3.11 Disadvantage and Need for Assistance

Cessnock City scored 936.4 on the *SEIFA Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage*, indicating a relatively high level of socio-economic disadvantage, greater than the surrounding Local Government Areas of Singleton, Maitland and Lake Macquarie. However, several localities primarily in the wine growing / tourist parts of the Local Government Area such as Wollombi, Pokolbin and Lovedale, scored much higher indicating a lower level of socio-economic disadvantage.\*

*\*(The Socio-Economic Index for Areas (SEIFA) measures the relative level of socio-economic disadvantage based on a range of Census characteristics including income, educational attainment, unemployment and occupations. A score higher than 1,000 means a lower level of disadvantage and a score lower than 1,000 means a higher level of disadvantage).*

3,322 people or 6.5% of the population in Cessnock City report needing help in their day-to-day lives due to disability.

#### The impact on the library:

- An increased need for resources / programs to improve literacy and numeracy levels, both early childhood and adult
- An increased need for lifelong learning programs relating to, for example, technology; resume writing / job readiness; small business opportunities etc
- New or refurbished library buildings will need to address accessibility

### 3.3.12 Community Health and Wellbeing

There are two hospitals and two community health centres located in Cessnock and in Kurri Kurri. There has been a downsizing of health services in the area, which has resulted in the need for some people to travel to Maitland and/or Newcastle for specialist services. There is a higher than average incidence of psychological distress, asthma, cardio-vascular disease and obesity.

#### The impact on the library:

- An opportunity to work closely with health care workers in providing resources and activities that support a healthy lifestyle

Malicious damage has been the most recorded area of crime in Cessnock, with youth and young adults representing the highest proportion of offenders. Boredom from the inadequate provision of youth activities and high youth unemployment rates are considered as possible contributory factors.

However, residents in the Local Government Area have expressed pride and a strong sense of community and identification with the areas in which they reside. Possible ways to address the social challenges include:

- Additional provision of services for both youth and the elderly
- Inter-generational programming and activities
- Events, festivals and celebrations that may improve integration and inclusion within the community
- Improved accessibility to education and health services
- Improved engagement in decision-making processes for those in more remote rural locations<sup>46</sup>

### 3.3.13 Households with Children

There were 3,058 couples with young children (15 and under) in Cessnock City in 2011, comprising 16% of households. Altogether, 44% of Cessnock households have children (0-18 years), higher than the regional NSW average of 38%.

#### The impact on the library:

- A growing demand for resources and services for children, and the need for more space to deliver programs

### 3.3.14 Number of Cars per Household

54% of households in Cessnock City had access to two or more motor vehicles, and only 6.2% of households did not have access to a vehicle.

#### The impact on the library:

- Any new library (or changed location) will need adequate car parking spaces
- The location of any new library buildings will need to be carefully considered in relation to co-location with other services / retail / recreation facilities etc.; and the availability of public transport for those without cars
- Rural and remote populations are more likely to travel to access community services

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<sup>46</sup> Cessnock 2023 Community Strategic Plan, appendix 2

## 3.4. Emerging Trends

### 3.4.1 Background

How do we define a public library in the 21<sup>st</sup> century? One thing is clear, public libraries should no longer be considered, or defined as, lending and reference centres. It has been convenient for some, in the context of the advances made in technology and online access to information, to pigeonhole libraries as no longer relevant or as mere repositories for books. This context has placed public libraries in a position of defensiveness, with many battles being fought over their ongoing relevance and value to the community and access to resources. The 21<sup>st</sup> century public library, of which Cessnock City Library is a good example, provides a large number of services, programs and activities via a network of well-designed service points in a context of exponential technological growth, social change and shrinking budgets.

### 3.4.2 Visitation and Lending

Visitation numbers to public libraries nationally are stable and not in decline; however public libraries are experiencing a general reduction in demand for some physical collections, especially non-fiction materials and reference materials i.e. over the past five years the national loans per capita has declined (-7.7%), with only Tasmania reporting a small increase (3.7%), and with South Australia consistently reporting the highest per capita loans during the period.<sup>47</sup> The reasons for decreases in lending are many, and arguably have little to do with the advent of eBooks, as many public libraries are lending material in this format now. Rather, these decreases may be related to the amount of time people have available to read, a higher emphasis on collection development by libraries, which means people are finding what they want to read more often, and thus are not over inflating loan figures by borrowing large numbers of books in order to find one or two worth reading; and unfortunately, to the poor levels of functional literacy evident across Australia.

In this context, the public library as a lending institution would be greatly concerned at the downward or fluctuating trend in loans. However, the contemporary public library is much more than just a lending institution i.e. they are learning and study venues, they provide programs, events and activities that support both the informational and recreational needs of their communities, they are at the forefront of providing equitable access to technology and the Internet, and they are considered safe, neutral and democratic spaces.

### 3.4.3 Identified Trends

The diagram below shows the emerging trends and challenges identified by Cessnock City Library staff that are impacting, or will impact, on the library; and will in particular influence

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<sup>47</sup> National & State Libraries Australasia (NSLA) Australian Public Libraries Statistical Report 2010-2011 (Compiled June 2012)

their ongoing design, development, service modelling viability and planning strategies (strategic, operational and marketing strategies).

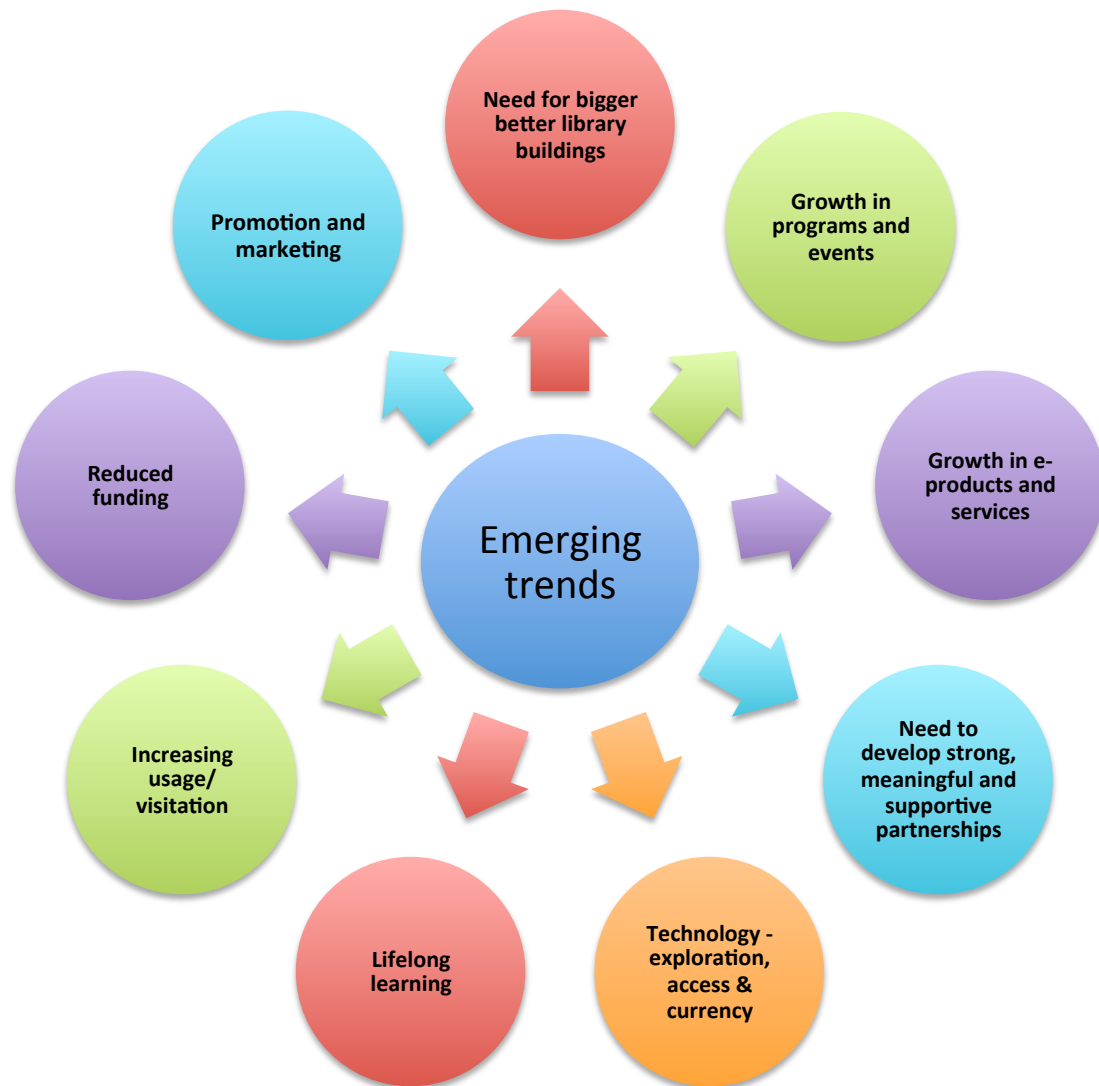


Figure 5 - Emerging Public Library Trends / Challenges

The above individual trends have been grouped under the following headings:

- Service Delivery Model
- Infrastructure
- Community Development / Programming
- Digital Technology
- Collections
- Partnerships / Networks
- Resourcing
- Professional
- Economic

## Service Delivery

The contemporary public library service requires flexibility, agility, and adaptability, and also needs to engage more meaningfully with its users and its community. Indeed it must reflect both the needs of its users and the expectations of the community it serves. This new model requires public libraries to:

- focus more on their internal effectiveness and efficiencies
- have a stronger policy base
- plan strategically
- meet professional standards and guidelines
- keep abreast of new service delivery innovations
- form collaborative partnerships, and
- consult more widely with users and potential users

This model also involves public libraries developing services, systems and processes that allow for delivery of services beyond the physical boundaries of the branch i.e. via online delivery, and outreach services and programs.

## Infrastructure

### *Size and Focus*

Growth in usage of libraries, general recognition of the library as an important community focal point, hub or *community living room*, and the establishment of public library building standards and guidelines (*People Places: a guide for public library buildings in NSW*<sup>48</sup>) have led to an overall increase in the size, and design of public library buildings. Cessnock and Kurri Kurri libraries are not purpose-built buildings and are not easily transformed into model 21<sup>st</sup> century libraries. They do not meet contemporary floor space standards, and although well located for easy community access, their internal spaces are not adaptable or easily reconfigurable. They have both wired and Wi-Fi access to library and personal technology and provide targeted community programming and events, although neither has adequate community meeting room space.

The growth in library spaces and capital investment by Councils, and via state government grant funding recognises the positioning and strength of the public library as a community venue, with a diverse but compatible range of uses and services.

*People Places* identifies the following key trends for consideration when designing or redesigning a library i.e. they should be:

- Cultural and community hubs
- Both functional and multi-purpose (adaptable / flexible spaces)
- Enable access to the latest technologies

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<sup>48</sup> *People Places: a guide for public library buildings in NSW* - an important planning tool for New South Wales public libraries. This publication, endorsed by the Library Council of New South Wales, and contains practical advice and tools to assist in the planning of public library buildings to meet the needs of your community. [[http://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/services/public\\_libraries/our\\_services/publiclibrarybuildings.html](http://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/services/public_libraries/our_services/publiclibrarybuildings.html)] Accessed March 2013

- Places of lifelong learning

### *Shared Services and Building Development / Location Models*

It is becoming more common to find libraries being co-located with other services. While this may be primarily an economy of scale for Councils it also provides, or potentially provides, the opportunity for libraries to partner with other services. For example, public libraries have been co-located with school libraries, community centres, youth centres, aged care facilities, museums and galleries etc. Public libraries have also been utilised for the delivery of Council services e.g. as one stop shops. While there have been mixed reviews of some co-located services, the overall trend is a positive one for the community, offering both convenience and reducing overall running costs.

A more common trend has been to locate services such as coffee and book shops within or attached to a library, and these could operate as a social enterprise or commercial model. This model provides an additional service to library users, and often creates a revenue stream via leasing arrangements.

Other examples include a mixture of commercial services (Library Café), commercial location (close to or within a major shopping complex) and real estate sales (apartments located in the library building) to offset the cost of a new library, for example The Hills Library Service (NSW).

### *Flexibility*

A trend emerging across public libraries, particularly those that are new or have recently been redesigned, refurbished, or rebuilt is flexible design. For example a contemporary public library should include moveable display modules, shelving and furniture. It should also have flexible meeting room spaces e.g. moveable walls / partitions to open up meeting space, or reconfigure to particular need.

### **Community Development / Programming**

The emerging trend of public libraries playing an active role in community development and capacity building is based on the widely held view that libraries are:

- informal spaces
- non-threatening places
- non-judgmental
- neutral and democratic spaces
- safe places
- supportive places

The delivery of targeted programming, events and activities is a major area of growth across the Australian public library network. Programs are traditionally delivered in four major areas:

- Adults

- Children
- Literacy
- Digital literacy

The broad areas of focus in this regard typically are:

- learning and capacity building
- shared / interactive programs
- recreation

The growth in the area of lifelong learning in particular has seen libraries move from a more passive role i.e. as a trusted and neutral place for self education, to a more defined, facilitated, and outcomes-based role i.e. hosting, facilitating or running learning programs and activities for specific purposes. In this they contribute to community capacity building, social inclusion and lifelong learning.

## Digital Technology

### *e-Materials*

*The transformation of the media market and the emergence of eBooks are causing great changes to library models worldwide. The answers libraries find to the challenges emerging, and the positions and models developed moving forward will be crucial to their future.*

*Over hundreds of years libraries decided what books to buy and use for public lending in accordance with their collection development policies or plans. In the world of eBooks libraries no longer have such a right. It is a significant - and in the view of libraries unacceptable - change that today the acquisition policies of libraries may be decided by publishers and not by libraries themselves. Library Associations both nationally and internationally have taken up the challenge is to find solutions to this problem, with the hope of coming up with a solution or model that protects both libraries and importantly e-access by library users.<sup>49</sup>*

The rapid growth of ePublishing and the availability of eBooks could see eBook sales sharing the market 50/50 with hard copy sales within the next 10 years.<sup>50</sup> While there is no way to accurately predict the ratio, it is safe to say that eBooks are growing in popularity, and are here to stay.

Many public libraries throughout the world and Australia have started lending e-materials (predominantly eBooks, with some eAudio). Most of the e-content purchased or subscribed to in Australia is delivered through content aggregators such as *Overdrive* or *Bolinda* – this is done to handle the plethora of lending and licensing conditions placed on these items by publishers. This new format brings with it the need for both library staff and customers to be trained in use of e-readers, the software / device requirements and steps needed to borrow material. As with other technological innovations used by libraries, staff require a new suite of troubleshooting skills.

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<sup>49</sup> E-books in libraries: A global question of survival? [<http://www.cilip.org.uk/ifla-mlas-seminar2013/pages/default.aspx>] (accessed March 2013)

<sup>50</sup> Pesche, Mark (Digital Consultant): ABC TV 7.30 report 18 March 2010



### The impact on the library:

- Libraries will need to ensure access to e-material to meet the reading needs of their community i.e. the popularity of a format may change, but the demand for access to reading materials still remains
- This additional format places pressure on the library's resourcing budget, as it still needs to maintain its traditional and popular hard copy collections
- Borrowers may prefer to access material online (remotely) rather than in-person (which may impact on physical visitation numbers over time) and this will impact how the library records usage and visitation
- Traditional book distribution channels are changing, making it more difficult for libraries to develop collections of sufficient breadth and depth i.e. traditionally libraries have developed collections that expose their readers to a broad range of authors and topics, not just popular materials

From an access and equity viewpoint, the rise of e-materials presents a challenge to both public libraries and readers generally, as it requires the purchase or hire of a reading device and access to a computer. Public libraries have tried to tackle this issue in a variety of ways, for example by purchasing and lending eReaders or tablet devices. Other libraries are reliant on the borrower having access to their own devices. When compared with the standard book one can see that these new formats are potentially more expensive for both the public library and the borrower.

### Digital Information

The rapid uptake of mobile and smart devices; and the way people like to access information and entertainment, and interact with each other, with business, at work, and with government will all have an impact on the design and delivery of public library services.

The exponential growth in digitisation, the production of digital information and digital publishing has in many ways made the role of the public library more important than ever. The public library's recognised and core role of providing free access to reputable information (content) is being impacted in many ways including:

- The commercial aggregation of digital products, and the ensuing copyright and varying usage models associated with aggregation e.g. ownership versus subscription, or limited usage / lending
- Search engine optimisation (SEO) by commercial entities to drive their data / products to the top of search lists e.g. Google
- Growth in 'Big Data' – the library's ability to locate, reference and or catalogue accredited data to meet the needs of users
- Access technologies i.e. the growth in smart technologies / devices, and commercially driven access applications and information sources
- Growth in need to access resources and information electronically (internally and externally), while still maintaining access to more traditional hard copy resources
- Convergent interfaces and access models i.e. Internet, search and social networking, and messaging
- A move from being information providers to being content developers

- Changing expectations of users / community on how they can access information
- Expectation that library staff are skilled (and willing) to assist
- The growth in information available via the Internet has increased the adeptness of the community in accessing information, which has and will continue to impact on how public libraries provide and market information resources and content
- Libraries will need to focus on the easy and intuitive provision and development of tailored and reputable content, rather than merely being an access point for information i.e. as per the traditional reference service model

### *Wireless Access*

The growth in public library Wi-Fi hotspots has emerged as an important customer service trend, in that it supports users on their own devices, and brings people into the library where they can access other complementary services. This service has the potential to free up time on the more traditional hardwired public access terminals, and reduces the demand for additional terminals. Libraries will have to monitor the quality of their Wi-Fi service to ensure the provision of a competitive service, and explore ways of using this service for marketing purposes e.g. pop up advertising; Wi-Fi page useful links etc.

The creation of a Wi-Fi 'cold spot'<sup>51</sup> has recently been put forward as alternative to Wi-Fi i.e. a specially prepared space that is shielded from wireless connection - a wireless free oasis for those who wish to escape ubiquitous smart devices. This type of thinking / initiative builds on the public libraries innate role as a neutral and relaxing space.

### *Public Access Technology*

Libraries need to offer their customers technology access that is up to date i.e. there is a strong expectation that users are able to access up to date operating systems, software, connectivity, social media and browsers. If this does not occur, users may experience issues with software or browser incompatibility. Public computer security images should allow for easy updating of software.

### **The impact on the library:**

- Cost to maintain public access terminals to a contemporary standard
- Varying operating systems i.e. between public and staff machines, will impact on staff skill development and ability to troubleshoot
- Need to match availability of technology / numbers of PCs to high usage rates

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<sup>51</sup> Brady, Ben *WiFi Cold spot* [Library Test Kitchen]: [http://librarylab.law.harvard.edu/librarytestkitchen/?page\\_id=464](http://librarylab.law.harvard.edu/librarytestkitchen/?page_id=464) (accessed June 2013)



Figure 6: Public Access Technology at Cessnock Branch

### *Establishment of the National Broadband Network (NBN)*

The NBN is an Australian Federal Government initiative aimed at building Australia a new communications network, to give personal, business and government users access to fast broadband (fast download, and importantly, faster upload speeds). This has been done to ensure Australia can compete internationally and to enable the development of services that will support Australians into the future.

#### **The impact on the library:**

- Variable access to the NBN will impact on consistency of online service delivery across the branch network (The NBN is not being rolled out across the Cessnock Local Government Area evenly, which will leave some areas of Cessnock better serviced than others, at least in the short to medium terms)
- High download and upload speeds will allow public libraries to provide a higher standard of public access, and allow the development of additional and value-added services, for example teleconferencing, live streaming or video and podcasts of events and programs, development of service applications that take advantage of the NBN's speed; and the opportunity to evaluate and utilise the many new products that will be developed for the new Internet platform. The NBN will be an enabler of entrepreneurial activity and services
- Higher costs of Internet provision via the NBN (at least in the short term) that may impact on the level of download occurring over the network i.e. download allowances for customers
- Potential need for computer hardware upgrade (cost to do so)

- Increased ability for the community to conduct business online due to speed of the network and the ability to transfer and receive large amounts of data at a higher speed. This also provides an opportunity for libraries to explore positioning themselves as 'public office' points i.e. a secure place for people to conduct business online

### ***Technology Petting Zoo (TPZ)***

Building on the public library role of informing and creating learning opportunities, the advent of the TPZ has allowed library customers and other interested people the opportunity to handle and discover a wide range of devices such as eReaders, tablets, smart phones etc. in a non-sales environment. This TPZ approach can be done by the library purchasing these devices or in partnership with local commercial providers.

#### **The impact on the library:**

- Costs associated with purchase of devices and training of staff
- Governance issues associated with technology partnerships
- Updating of staff position descriptions to include a technology component

### ***Web Design***

An emerging trend that is yet to have a major take up by Councils or their public libraries is the advent of mobile websites, smart apps, and e-news communications developed for reading on mobile devices e.g. smart phones or tablets. It is very likely that public expectation of being able to access Council services (including library services, catalogue etc.) via mobile websites or targeted apps will increase, and accordingly development work on this needs to occur soon. This trend offers Councils and their libraries an opportunity to rethink the way information is presented and accessed – the mobile world expects quick and intuitive access to information, services and interactive communication.

#### **The impact on the library:**

- Cost and time to redesign the website – would need to be done in tandem with Council's website but could operate as a standalone mobile site / access point
- Costs and expertise associated with app development and maintenance
- Costs associated with content design for delivery via mobile web and apps

### ***Community / User Expectation***

The rapid escalation in take-up of emerging technologies such as smart phones and tablets and the millions of smart applications and mobile websites available is changing the world's expectation of how services are delivered, and how people can interact / engage with each other, business and government. From a public library perspective this offers the opportunity to explore more self-serve options, and also gives the user an opportunity to create and interact with their own personal data. The Library's online management system and website already offers a level of self-service and personal interaction with the Library, but will need to focus more on meeting user expectation in this regard now and into the

future, as will the suppliers and designers of library support products e.g. library management systems and web presence.

## Collections

Our public library buildings are getting bigger, despite the fact that physical collections are not experiencing any real growth and in some cases are decreasing (particularly non-fiction), due to the move to digital / Internet based information retrieval and resources.



Figure 7: Library Collections

It is worth noting the following trends and challenges around public library collections:<sup>52</sup>

- The growing need to more carefully manage and monitor the composition of collections i.e. due to technological changes and the digital publication of material, the physical versus digital composition of collections will change. This will also impact on investments in collections, and as stated above changes to ownership and usage models
- Development of targeted and in-demand collections. Library users will expect the latest format
- More emphasis on collection display and arrangement e.g. face-out bookshop type display and thematic displays and more attractive shelving
- Reference resources increasingly being incorporated into non-fiction lending collections
- Greater attention to creation of living room/ reading / study spaces by furniture and shelving placement (genre and / or subject based)
- Increase in recreational collections

<sup>52</sup> Ministerial Advisory Council on Public Libraries (VIC) discussion paper Tomorrow's Library (2012) [http://www.dpcd.vic.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0009/95283/Tomorrows-Library-Discussion-Paper.pdf](http://www.dpcd.vic.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0009/95283/Tomorrows-Library-Discussion-Paper.pdf) (accessed March 2013)

- More frequent 'weeding' to keep collections vibrant and relevant
- Unique collections which tell the story of our community – local history, indigenous etc
- Less reference material and more 'how to....' resources
- Books may become 'retro-cool' and demanded by youth
- Lowering procurement costs via collaborative purchasing arrangements and outsourcing
- Need for an equitable approach to the delivery and development of multicultural collections

Cessnock City Library is responsive to user demand for materials and formats, and has adopted some elements of the bookshop model for the display of its collections, utilising retail 'hot spots' to showcase new and in-demand items, and providing comfortable lounge furniture. The reference collection has also been significantly reduced and many resources have been interfiled in the non-fiction lending collection.

However, public libraries are now clearly moving into a very challenging period due to fundamental changes in the publishing sector brought on by e-publishing, and the move of aggregators such as Amazon to heavily control and regulate the digital market place, which from a public library viewpoint is creating publishing silos, which are much harder to navigate for collection development purposes than the more traditional hardcopy publishing models.

Collectively Australian public libraries spend close to \$1 billion dollars annually on library materials. It will be sometime before there is clear picture of how the digital publishing trend will affect libraries, especially in the areas of digital ownership, lending and access.

An emerging trend to watch is the public library as e-publisher and / or aggregator of local and independent e-publications, perhaps in partnership with independent publishers or groups<sup>53</sup>, for example local and family history societies. Public libraries will also need to consider how they can then collectively aggregate their e-published materials – rather than operating in local silos.

Hard copy materials are still in strong demand, with the emerging eBook trend adding yet another reading format to those already available through the public library. The market will essentially drive the hardcopy to e-copy ratio in the future, and this will eventually filter through to how public libraries develop and operate their collections. Public libraries will still have an obligation to balance the needs of all users i.e. to create equitable access to collections.

The impact on the library:

- Greater attention will be required to digital rights management
- E-collection development costs
- Reduction in collection insurance and depreciation costs i.e. due to increase in digital materials
- Opportunity to participate in consortia purchasing arrangements
- Opportunity to explore ePublishing and other publishing partnerships
- Reduction in need for traditional inter-library lending due to growth in e-materials

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<sup>53</sup> For example, Douglas County Library (USA) <http://www.writersonthebrink.com/tag/douglas-county-public-library> [accessed March 2013]

## Partnerships

Public libraries need to consider developing project and program based partnerships and sponsorships, including the development of Return on Investment business cases for potential partners and sponsors. The trend emerging in this regard is for public libraries to take a much more planned and formal approach to attaining and maintaining partnerships and sponsorships. These partnerships can be internal i.e. with other sections of Council, or external e.g. with the public library network, business, government, NGOs, local community groups etc. While it has been common in the past for libraries to achieve small ad hoc sponsorships for various activities, it is clear that in a climate of tight budgets and competing local government priorities libraries need to focus on developing key partnerships.

Beneficial partnership models already exist that can inform the thinking and planning of Cessnock City Library, for example:

- Hume Libraries in Melbourne are involved in a strategic partnership with other organisations such as learning centres, local business, education institutions and employment agencies. Called the *Hume Global Learning Village*, the network combines the collective resources of the 700+ membership of individuals and organisations to improve learning opportunities for the local community<sup>54</sup>
- Sydney's Northern Beaches *Inside Break* (HSC Resources website) *is an innovative service originally available to secondary schools in Sydney's northern beaches region and is a cooperative venture between Manly, Pittwater and Warringah library services whose three Local Government Area represent a collective population of 250,000 people*<sup>55</sup>
- The University of Western Sydney, in partnership with a number of large western Sydney Councils including Bankstown, Parramatta, Fairfield, Camden and Campbelltown, has a partnership with Tutoring Australasia which provides financial support to assist with the delivery of its online homework help service *Your Tutor*, which is available to local primary and secondary school students through public libraries<sup>56</sup>

It is important to also consider practical community partnerships through strategic connection with selected community organisations and groups, and through the development of a library Friends' or Champions' strategy. Friends of Library groups are common across the public library network, providing varying degrees of practical benefit to libraries. Lack of success is most often due to poor scoping, and a lack of clear policy and focused management. The potential for a successful partnership with the community via a Friends group though does have great potential if handled correctly and responsibly.

Stakeholder consultations undertaken as part of the Library's strategic review have also clearly demonstrated the benefits of expanding the Library's consultation network to obtain a broader view of the issues and needs of various groups such as schools and TAFE (libraries, teachers and students) to better inform those groups of the Library's services etc.; and to develop mutually beneficial partnerships and collaborations.

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<sup>54</sup> [www.humelibraries.vic.gov.au/hume\\_global\\_learning\\_village](http://www.humelibraries.vic.gov.au/hume_global_learning_village) (accessed 7th Feb 2013)

<sup>55</sup> [www.lgma.org.au/downloads/File/Robert%20McIntyre%202011%20LGMA20RECENT.pdf](http://www.lgma.org.au/downloads/File/Robert%20McIntyre%202011%20LGMA20RECENT.pdf) (accessed 8<sup>th</sup> Feb 2013)

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

Opportunities for the library:

- Partnerships with the local education sector (in line with focus on lifelong learning)
- Selected project / program based partnerships
- Development of a partnership / sponsorship prospectus
- Development of a Friends of Cessnock City Library group

## Resourcing

### *Operational Funding*

The focus on library resourcing cannot truly be considered an emerging trend, as libraries have always been under pressure to do more with less, despite being one of local government's most used and most loved services. There is however, an emerging trend around developing more sustainable resourcing models for public libraries i.e. beyond access to rates, loans, Section 94 and Grant funding. The additional pressures on funding levels brought on by years of cost shifting to local government by successive State Governments has added to this issue and continues to be a lobbying point for both Local Government associations and Public Library associations. Currently, the shared cost of public libraries in NSW is approximately 93% Local Government and 7% State Government (subsidy and grants program).

Public libraries, including Cessnock City Library will need to focus more attention on how services are resourced in the future. Beyond beneficial partnerships the Library and Council will also need to consider how it generates service income – income that can at least partially offset operational costs.

### *Income Models*

A stronger focus on public library resourcing and income has emerged over the last decade. This is due in part to growth in library services, competition with other Council services, and shrinking state government funding (in real terms). The following provides an overview of possible income streams for libraries.

Income and Expenditure – this model is cost neutral to Councils i.e. expenditure mirrors income. This is usually a service-based initiative, for example fees for training programs and meeting room hire incomes offset expenditure in nominated areas.

Community Levy – best for capital projects such as the building of a new library, for example Gosford City Council, NSW places a levy on all residential rate notices for the building of a new Central Library. A community levy can be in addition to funds collected via Section 94 Plans.

Joint Agreements - some Councils and public libraries have regional or consortia agreements with other adjoining Councils regarding shared costs of public library services, for example the Shorelink shared Library Management System; or on a larger scale as evidenced by regional libraries.



Fee Structures - the focus of library fees has generally been around overdue material, lost material, photocopying and printing, and the reservation of materials. The staff time and costs involved in collecting this type of fee are, in most cases, higher than the revenue raised. Libraries need to put more focus on value-added income initiatives, for example room hire, leased space in new or existing library developments, programs and events.

Deductible Gift Register (DGR) Status – a growing number of public libraries have obtained DGR status through application to the Australian Tax Office. This status allows tax deduction for financial gifts and donations to the library. To date public libraries have yet to obtain any serious income from this status. DGR status however would attract greater levels of sponsorship, and be an added attraction for potential business partners. It is worth noting that many philanthropic grant programs are only available to organisations with DGR status.

## Professional

When reviewing and considering emerging trends in the public library sector it is useful to consider the work being done by the library profession and its associations in creating useful and meaningful standards and guidelines for the operation and performance measurement of public library services.

### *Evidence Based Standards And Guidelines*

Public libraries are under constant scrutiny and review (by their governing bodies and/or by the profession), with a particular emphasis on streamlining services, modernising service delivery models and reducing costs. The library profession has a long history of collecting statistical data on library operations, for example loans, visitation and per capita expenditure – mostly for local and state reporting purposes. In more recent times however the profession (through its associations and with support of State Libraries) has collaborated to produce evidence-based standards and guidelines to provide a clearer picture of a given library's performance and how it compares at a state and national level. It also provides goals for attainment (to enhanced or exemplary service delivery levels), and best practice standards that are intended as suggestions for the operational improvement of library performance. These standards also underpin the equitable access of public library services and programs.

The two documents referenced here are:

- *Living Learning Libraries: standards and guidelines for NSW public libraries*<sup>57</sup>
- *Beyond a Quality Service: strengthening the social fabric. Standards and guidelines for Australian Public Libraries*<sup>58</sup>

## Economic

With the multi million-dollar investment in Australian public libraries and growing pressure on local and state government budgets, efforts have been made over the last five years to quantify the return on investment achieved by public libraries.

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<sup>57</sup> [http://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/services/public\\_libraries/living\\_learning\\_libraries/index.html](http://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/services/public_libraries/living_learning_libraries/index.html) (accessed March 2013)

<sup>58</sup> [http://www.alia.org.au/publiclibraries/PLSG\\_web\\_110407.pdf](http://www.alia.org.au/publiclibraries/PLSG_web_110407.pdf) (accessed March 2013)

With libraries involved in many activities, which positively influence communities in a number of ways, quantifying all the impacts of libraries on their communities can be difficult. Nevertheless, international and Australian studies have attempted to identify the return on investment of public libraries.

Three Australian studies into the economic value of public libraries have been commissioned and published. They are:

- *Enriching communities: The value of public libraries in New South Wales* (2008)
- *Dollars, Sense and Public libraries: The landmark study of the socio-economic value of Victorian Public libraries* (2011)<sup>59</sup>
- *The Library Dividend: a study of the socio-economic value of Queensland public libraries* (2012)<sup>60</sup>

It is clear from all these Australian studies that public libraries provide an economic return on each dollar invested in their services, and there is also work underway to create a national report on the value of public libraries.<sup>61</sup>

Study	ROI*
Enriching communities (NSW)	\$2.83
Dollars, sense and public libraries (VIC)	\$2.30
The Library Dividend (QLD)	\$3.56

\*ROI = Return on Investment

A new report from SGS Economics, an independent firm of economists, has found that Australia's public libraries deliver benefits that are worth nearly three times the cost of running them, a \$290 return on every \$100 invested.<sup>62</sup>

The findings of several international studies of the Return on Investment for every dollar invested in public libraries show similar results, and are included as Attachment 1. The context of these documents is important to note, as they are the outcome of libraries one, having to justify their existence and importance in a tight economic climate, two, the legitimate need to demonstrate return on community investment and best value for dollar invested; and three, to provide a local, state and national basis on which to lobby all levels of government regarding the growing importance, and economic worth of the public library.

## Community Development Role

It can be strongly argued that public libraries have now formalised their historic role of helping their users develop and learn i.e. the public library service delivery model now includes a stronger emphasis on educational support for students, life-long learners and other specific target groups. Libraries are redesigning and redefining themselves as

<sup>59</sup> [http://www.slv.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/dollars-sense-public-libraries-summary-report\\_1.pdf](http://www.slv.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/dollars-sense-public-libraries-summary-report_1.pdf) (accessed April 2013)

<sup>60</sup> <http://www.plconnect.slq.qld.gov.au/manage/championing> (accessed March 2013)

<sup>61</sup> A cooperative project between ALIA and state public library associations

<sup>62</sup> National Welfare and Economic Contributions of Public Libraries (2013)

<http://alia.org.au/sites/default/files/documents/advocacy/Contribution%20of%20Australian%20Public%20Libraries%20Report.pdf> [accessed May 2013]

promoters and facilitators of independent learning, as well as being providers of information content, and being a public work, study and recreational space.

Impact on the library:

- Need for an outcomes focused approach to planning and delivering library programs, events and activities
- Need to undertake both quantitative and qualitative measurement of programs, events and activities
- Need for a marketing plan to support the library's community development activities

## **Attachment 1: Quotation for Consultancy Services for Supply of Cessnock City Library Strategic Plan**

Attached as separate document

## Attachment 2 – Return on Investment of Public Libraries

### Summary of results of international studies on Return on Investment (ROI) of public libraries<sup>63</sup>

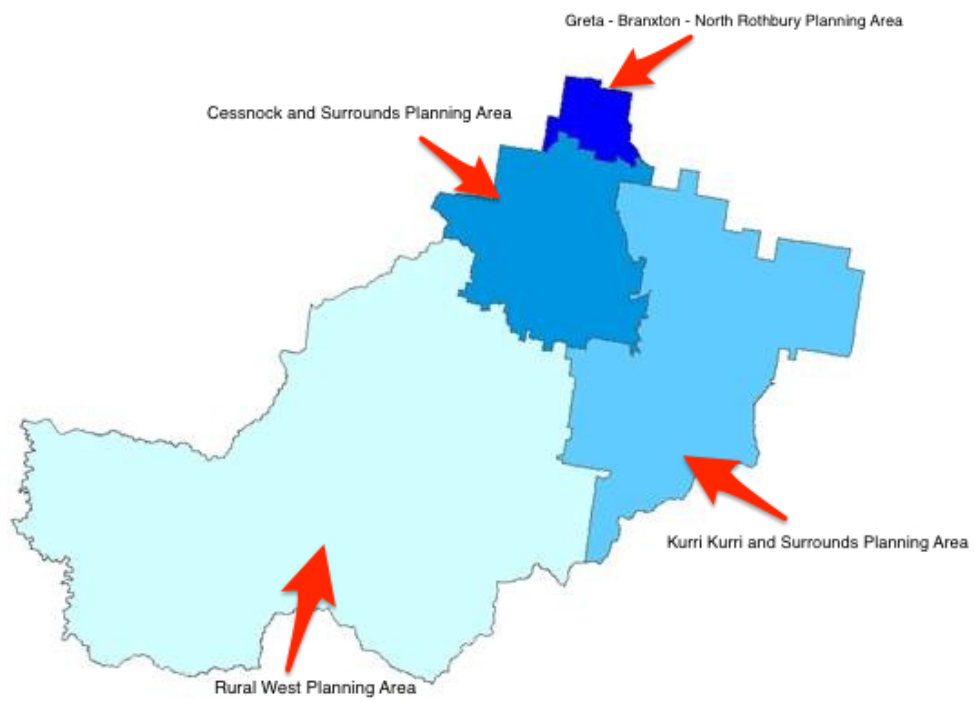
Study	ROI*
Fort Morgan Public Library, Colorado	\$8.80
Taxpayer Return on Investment in Florida Public Libraries	\$6.54
Tax Payer Return on Investment in Pennsylvania Public Libraries	\$5.50
Montrose Library District, Colorado	\$5.33
Douglas County Libraries, Colorado	\$5.02
Denver Public Library, Colorado	\$4.96
Rangeview Library District, Colorado	\$4.81
Placing Economic Value on the Services of the Middle Country Public Library in Suffolk County, New York	\$4.59
Mesa County Public Library District, Colorado	\$4.57
Economic Impact of Public Libraries in South Carolina	\$4.48
Eagle Valley Library District, Colorado	\$4.28
The Economic Value of the Port Jefferson Free Library in Suffolk County, New York	\$4.14
Placing an Economic Value on the Services of Public Libraries in Suffolk County, New York	\$3.93
Economic Benefits of Public Libraries: Value for Money, Ohio	\$3.81
Placing Economic Value on the Services of the Northport-East Northport Public Library in Suffolk County, New York	\$3.30
Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh: Community Impact and Benefits	\$3.00
Placing Economic Value on the Services of the Mastic-Moriches-Shirley Community Library in Suffolk County, New York	\$2.97
Best Bang for the Buck: Calculating the economic benefit of Sunshine Coast Libraries	\$3.66- \$5.45
Enriching communities (NSW)	\$2.83
Dollars, sense and public libraries (VIC)	\$2.30
The Library Dividend (QLD)	\$3.56

\*Values indicated in this column are the calculated Return on Investment (ROI) for every \$1 invested in the operation of library services.

<sup>63</sup> *Worth Their Weight: An Assessment of the Evolving Field of Library Valuation*, <http://www.ala.org/research/sites/ala.org.research/files/content/librarystats/worththeirweight.pdf>  
*What's It Worth to You? A Return on Investment Study of Selected Colorado Public Libraries*, <http://www.docstoc.com/docs/2389092/What%EF%BF%BDs-It-Worth-to-You-A-Return-on-Investment-Study-of-Selected>  
*Best Bang for the Buck: Calculating the Economic Benefit of Sunshine Coast Libraries*, <http://librarytraining.wordpress.com/2009/02/26/best-bang-for-the-buck-the-economic-benefits-of-sunshine-coast-libraries-queensland/>



## Attachment 3b: Cessnock Planning Areas Map



## Attachment 4: Development of a Library for Huntlee

### Huntlee Library Development

With the proposed medium density population exceeding 10,000, Huntlee town will be considered an urban centre. There are no towns in NSW with populations greater than 10,000 that do not have a static public library building.

The early development of a vision and design brief for a new Huntlee library will better enable Council to seek commercial or other partners, and apply for Federal and State infrastructure funding. This will help to ensure the community's access to a high quality, purpose built facility.

A number of the residential lots due to be developed in Huntlee town will be in the Singleton Local Government Area (approximately 33%). It is recommended that Council investigate a joint agreement with Singleton, regarding the delivery of library services in the area.

### Shared Services

Public libraries in mixed use or residential developments contribute to quality of life and safety. They help build a community's capacity for economic activity and resilience. Long-term tenancy of public libraries reduces some of the financial risk associated with building mixed-used developments. Public libraries attract foot traffic and can serve the 'anchor tenant' function in commercial areas without directly competing with local businesses.

*Libraries add to the authenticity of a town ... they make it less of a shopping centre and more of a town centre.*<sup>64</sup>

### Recommendations

- Development of a Huntlee Library vision and design brief – this will be used to inform planning and resourcing processes. A vision and design brief template is available from the State Library of NSW website<sup>65</sup>
- Ensure that Library management is involved in all stages of the process to establish a library facility for Huntlee including site identification, space allocation, design and development of project brief
- Investigate partnership options, for example:

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<sup>64</sup> From Public buildings keep town centers alive; in *Public commissioners journal* 49 Winter 2003

<sup>65</sup> People Places, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Library Council of NSW

[http://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/services/public\\_libraries/docs/people\\_places.pdf](http://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/services/public_libraries/docs/people_places.pdf) [accessed July 2013]



- Co-location of library services i.e. with other Council services, compatible community type services or cultural facilities such as an art gallery or museum
- Commercial opportunities i.e. commercial leasing of space within or attached to the library, for example a café

## **Planning Considerations**

As a minimum the following should be considered when developing the Cessnock City Library Building Master Plan. More details regarding planning considerations are included in the standard public library vision and design brief template.

### *Access and Address*

- High visibility from the street
- Unencumbered access for pedestrians, from car parking, or public transport
- One main entrance and exit i.e. located to ensure safe and convenient access for pedestrians to the facility and around the site; and to avoid pedestrian/vehicle conflict
- A safe and secure staff entrance / exit within easy reach of car parking
- A goods entrance / delivery bay

### *Accessibility*

All areas of the Library must be safe and accessible to all potential customers, regardless of any physical or sensory disability. This is a requirement which will influence the design of every part of the building, from the provision of convenient parking spaces for people with disabilities, level access to the entrance, right down to the appropriate height and stability of furniture and equipment.

### *Community Consultation*

During any planning and design process there will need to be a program of consultation with the community, coordinated by Library/Council staff. As well as more general presentations at strategic times to the community as a whole, the consultation process will include key stakeholders, including major client groups of the Library.

### *Ecological Sustainability*

The Local Government Act 1993, Section 7, requires council, councillors and council employees to have regard to the principles of ecologically sustainable development (ESD) in carrying out their responsibilities. ESD is a pattern of development, which improves the quality of life, both now and in the future, by maintaining the ecological processes upon which life depends. The principles underlying ESD include:

- Integrating economic, social and environmental goals in policies and activities
- Ensuring that environmental assets are appropriately valued
- Providing for equity within and between generations
- Dealing cautiously with risk and irreversibility; and

- Recognising the global dimension

ESD issues and proposed initiatives relating to the library and any associated spaces are to be thoroughly canvassed and discussed with the appropriate Council officers during the early stages of any planning and costing of new, extended or refurbished library premises. Initiatives that might be considered include but are not limited to storage and use of rainwater, solar water heating, photovoltaic cells, and appropriate landscaping materials.

### *Flexibility and Adaptability*

The interior of the Library must be able to adapt easily to suit future changes in service provision. There should be a minimum of built-in items. Modular loose furniture should be used extensively. Permanent partitions should be minimised. Lighting, power and air conditioning should be able to cope with changes in layout without major service reconfiguration.

Inflexible elements, such as services ducts and toilet blocks must not be located where they will have a major impact on future adaptability or flexibility of layouts.

### *Floor Space Allocation*

The size of the proposed Huntlee Library will be dependent on a number of issues:

- Population (actual at time of construction, the ten-year population forecast for the local catchment and the non-resident workforce in that catchment in ten years time)
- Range of services to be delivered (refer to section 3.5 Service Delivery Options)
- Number of library items (refer to section 3.5 Service Delivery Options)
- Commercial opportunities e.g. meeting rooms or other venue hire; café; retail space etc.
- Co-location with Council services e.g. a customer service centre
- Co-location with other cultural or recreational facilities e.g. gallery or youth centre

If the Huntlee Library is the designated district (central) library the following calculations will need to be made:

- The total ten-year Australian Bureau of Statistics projection for the population of the whole Local Government Area
- The forecast non-resident workforce in the Local Government Area in ten years time

When calculating the size of a new public library building in NSW, it is recommended that Councils use the spreadsheets and calculators available in *People Places*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition. These guidelines have been endorsed by the Library Council of NSW and must be adhered to, to ensure eligibility for state government funding. *People Places* provides two methodologies that should be used to determine the size of a new or expanded building (the parameters). They are the service-based benchmark and the population-based benchmark that are fully described in *People Places*, with templates and spreadsheets (to assist with design briefs and space calculations).

Based on a population of 20,000 residents in Huntlee (plus population growth for Branxton, Greta and North Rothbury, and non-resident workforce taking the projected population to 30-35,000), an approximate floor space of 2,000 square metres would be required.

However, it is recommended that a service-based population assessment be completed as part of the design brief approximately two years prior to building.

### *Parking*

Library customers will require convenient access from parking areas, with designated parking for people with disabilities as close as possible to the entrance.

Spaces will be required for staff within easy reach of the staff entrance, together with a convenient delivery bay.

Bicycle parking must also be provided somewhere in the vicinity

### *Public Art*

Opportunities exist for public and community art and crafts to be incorporated in the design and decoration of the Library. This should be discussed early during the planning phases with Council officers to identify the kinds of contributions which local artists, craft workers or members of the community might be able to make to the project.

## **Attachment 5: User Survey Results and Analysis**

Attached as separate indexed document

## **Attachment 6: Non-User Survey Results and Analysis**

Attached as separate indexed document

## **Attachment 7: Home Library User Survey Results and Analysis**

Attached as a separate indexed document