

11.4 Library Services - Quarterly Report

REPORT BY THE MANAGER LIBRARY SERVICES

TO 16 AUGUST 2023 ORDINARY MEETING
 GOV400103, F0620020

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receive and note the Library Services - Quarterly Report by the Manager Library Services.

Executive summary

This report seeks to inform Council of the activities undertaken by the Mid-Western Regional Council Library Service, under the broad themes of Customer Visits, Library Borrowings and Purchased Items, and Sustainable Organisations. This report covers the period April-June 2023.

Disclosure of Interest

Nil

Detailed report

CUSTOMER VISITS, LIBRARY BORROWINGS, & PURCHASED ITEMS

Visits to our Library branches during the April-June 2023 period are slightly higher than the number of visits during the previous quarter:

Period	Visits
April – June 2023	18,445
January – March 2023	17,673

Across the Library Service, loans of physical and online library items are also slightly higher compared to the previous quarter:

Period	Loans
April – June 2023	21,085
January – March 2023	20,731

Loans from the Mobile Library during April-June 2023 were higher compared to the previous quarter (*Note: a lower figure in January can be attributed to the service not operating*):

Period	Loans
April – June 2023	1,174
January – March 2023	679

The use of library eResources (library subscribed databases) and web presence accesses (website, catalogue, app and Facebook page) have slightly increased when compared to the previous quarter:

Period	Accesses
April – June 2023	28,907

January – March 2023	28,719
----------------------	--------

The Library continues to purchase new items in both print and electronic formats in line with the Collection Development Policy. These items include fiction and non-fiction titles (incl. large print), magazines, graphic novels, DVD's, tabletop games & puzzles, and audiobooks:

Period	Purchases
April – June 2023	5,283

SUSTAINABLE ORGANISATION

The Library hosts several in-house book groups, and also facilitates six community book groups. Throughout April-June 2023 we held 6 book group sessions with a total of 42 attendees. The Afternoon Book Group and Gulgong Book Group were reinstated, and we are currently gauging interest for a group at Kandos. Due to customer demand we have started two new programs – Unplugged Gamers, a monthly tabletop gaming group for adults, as well as Friday Night Book Group for those specifically interested in reading dystopia, sci-fi, fantasy, and cult classics. Unplugged Gamers has proved extremely popular so far with 12 attending the first session and 14 attending the second.

Three Monday History Talks were held over April-June 2023 with a total of 54 attending. During this period, we also hosted 2 author talks, one with Gordon Smith (author of *Conversations with No-One*), and another with Sharyn Munro (author of *Peeping Through My Fingers*), which saw 15 people attend in total. The Library also hosted the Warrabinga Art Competition, receiving over 40 entries. A morning tea and craft activities were also held on the morning of the judging, with around 30 people attending.

The Library continues to foster a lifelong love of books and reading through its early literacy initiatives. During April-June 2023, our children's services team delivered an impressive 91 storytime sessions, reaching 1,017 children. On Wednesday 24 May, we partnered with Mudgee Performing Arts Society (MPAS) to deliver a special storytime event in the Town Hall Theatre to celebrate National Simultaneous Storytime (NSS), 67 attended this event. Kids Chess Club remains hugely popular, meeting every second and fourth Wednesday of the month. Last quarter our external trainer facilitated 6 sessions, with a total of 66 children attending.

Thanks to a grant from Telstra and the State Library of NSW, we were able to expand our digital literacy initiatives by offering 6 Tech Savvy Seniors sessions to 31 participants during May. We continued our partnership with NBN Co and delivered 4 one-on-one specialised tech help appointments. During June, our Library Management System (Spydus) also underwent a minor upgrade, giving us access to the latest features and enhancements.

In order to improve ease of use for our members we consolidated our online platforms from four into two, with BorrowBox and IndyReads remaining. BorrowBox now has an extensive collection of eMagazines available in addition to eBooks and eAudiobooks. This was a cost-effective exercise and allowed us to subscribe to a new video streaming service – Kanopy (incl. Kanopy Kids). Kanopy provides our members with access to over 23,000 (and growing) movies, series, documentaries, foreign films, classic cinema, independent films and educational videos for free.

Lastly, we have been working closely with our main book supplier James Bennett to create a profile for the labelling and cataloguing of new purchases. This will mean a significant decrease to our workload, as labelling and cataloguing will be outsourced, and staff time can be redirected towards other projects. This will also improve consistency, and most importantly, will generate a faster turnaround time from the ordering stage, to an item being made available for members to borrow. Standing Orders have also been put in place with James Bennett and other suppliers to streamline selection processes and achieve value for money.

Community Plan implications

Theme	Looking After Our Community
Goal	A safe and healthy community
Strategy	Maintain the provision of high quality, accessible community services that meet the needs of our community

Strategic implications

Council Strategies

The Library Services Quarterly Report has been developed in line with the 2022/23 – 2025/26 Delivery Program.

Council Policies

Collection Development Policy

Legislation

Not Applicable

Financial implications

Not Applicable

Associated Risks

Not Applicable

RACHEL GILL
MANAGER LIBRARY SERVICES

SIMON JONES
DIRECTOR COMMUNITY

11 July 2023

Attachments: Nil

APPROVED FOR SUBMISSION:

BRAD CAM
GENERAL MANAGER