

## **Research Support Libraries Group**

Minutes of the second meeting of the Research Support Libraries Group held on Tuesday 2 October 2001 at the British Library, St Pancras, Euston Road, London.

- Attendees:** Brian Follett (Chair)  
Mr Bahram Bekhradnia  
Ms Lynne Brindley  
Prof. Robert Burgess  
Dr Reg Carr  
Mr Andrew Green  
Prof. Ian Halliday  
Ms Mary Heaney  
Prof. Arthur Lucas  
Ms Karen Stanton
- Secretariat** Ms Vanessa Conte (HEFCE)  
Mr Mike Crump  
Mr Paul Hubbard (HEFCE)  
Mr Will Naylor (HEFCE)
- Apologies:** Prof. Michael Anderson  
Ms Leanne Holborn (HEFCW)

### **Introduction**

1. The Chair opened by welcoming members who were attending for the first time. The Chair also announced that Professor David Eastwood has joined the Group, although he had sent his apologies for this meeting.
2. The Chair invited members to consider the Group's broad strategic direction in the light of a discussion paper on the "hybrid library" circulated by the secretariat. The Group agreed that the broad thrust of their discussion so far was in the direction of a national virtual information service with robust global links. The Chair asked the secretariat to prepare a short statement outlining this strategy.

### **Minutes of the previous meeting - RSLG 01/09**

3. The Chair introduced the Minutes of the previous meeting and informed the Group that they would appear on the Group's website. The Group approved the Minutes and welcomed the website as an important forum for communicating with stakeholders.

### **Call for Evidence: analysis of responses - RSLG 01/10**

4. Paul Hubbard introduced the summary of responses to the Group's Call for Evidence, issued in June 2001. In discussion the Group agreed that the responses represented

valuable evidence about the needs of users and that some of the concerns merited further investigation.

5. The Chair requested that the secretariat should undertake further analysis of the responses, perhaps with the assistance of several Group members, and report back to the Group.

#### **British Library Document Supply Centre: Boston Spa history and services - RSLG 01/11**

6. Mike Crump introduced the paper, which provided a brief history of the DSC and an overview of its services to the UK HE sector. The paper prompted a lengthy discussion of the issues raised.

7. Members were particularly interested in overlaps in the resources purchased by UK HEIs, particularly serials. The Group discussed the potential impact of the serials union catalogue being developed on behalf of the British Library/HE Taskforce; and ways to reduce overlaps in purchasing, including collaborative purchasing. The Group was reminded that it would have a future presentation on the UK National Union Catalogue at its November meeting.

8. The Group welcomed the British Library's willingness to engage the HE sector in the discussion of the DSC and the progress towards closer co-operation that this engagement represented. It agreed that the DSC would continue to have a crucial role in research library provision. The secretariat was requested to undertake further investigation into the issues raised in discussion with the help of several Group members.

#### **Research studies progress report**

#### **Models of UK collaborative library provision – RSLG 01/12**

9. Will Naylor introduced the paper. The Chair expressed his disappointment at the low level of deep collaborative activity in the UK which this revealed. In a brief discussion, several members commented that, although the level of deep collaborative activity was indeed marginal, the value of collaborative schemes to many individual researchers should not be overlooked.

#### **Library statistics: UK/US comparisons and UK trend data – RSLG 01/13**

10. Will Naylor introduced the paper which highlighted, amongst other things, the high number of serials purchased by ARL research libraries in North America compared to SCONUL members in the UK. In discussion the Group agreed that, despite the contrast in funding levels between North American and UK HEIs, the figures might indicate the importance of the DSC in making available to UK HEIs serials that they might otherwise feel the need to buy themselves. The secretariat would bear the statistics in mind in its further work on the role of the DSC.

**Proposal for a research library costing study: draft specification - RSLG 01/14**

11. Paul Hubbard introduced the paper. In discussion the Group expressed concern about the possible burden on HEIs of a study of the kind proposed; and agreed that further enquiry was needed to establish whether relevant data had already been collected for the Transparency Review. The secretariat would investigate this before drawing up a revised specification.

**E-science sub-group update: Terms of reference and membership - RSLG 01/15**

12. The Chair introduced the membership of the sub-group, and emphasised the importance of keeping developments in e-science within the ambit of research library provision in general. In discussion the Group welcomed the sub-group but asked the secretariat to involve a further representative from the British Library if that could be arranged.

**JISC Scholarly Communications Group: update on remit - RSLG 01/16**

13. Reg Carr introduced the work of the JISC Group and assured the Group that it would fully engage with the RSLG agenda.

**Presenting the Group's work to stakeholders**

**Proposal for research librarian focus group sessions – RSLG 01/17**

14. The Chair introduced the consultation proposal and emphasised that it was crucial for the Group to engage with stakeholders as closely as possible. In discussion the Group echoed the Chair's sentiments on consultation and agreed that the research librarians invited to the focus group sessions should represent the full range of HE institutions. The Group also agreed that the timetable of the Call for Evidence exercise should be extended to enable as many stakeholders as possible to comment. The secretariat would take this forward via the Group's website.

**Next RSLG meeting: 27 November Draft Agenda - RSLG 01/18**

15. The draft agenda for the November meeting was noted.

**Date of next meeting:**

**Tuesday 27 November 2001, starting at 12.30pm at the British Library Boardroom, St Pancras, London.**