Chair’s Foreword
Fiona McLeod

In March 2014 SLIC welcomed Aminia Shah as our new Chief Executive Officer. Aminia brings to the role a wealth of experience from previous posts across the library sector as well as a passion for libraries, which will significantly contribute to SLIC’s advocacy role moving forward.

Our Business Plan for 2013/14 sets out the four key work strands for the SLIC officers. These were: Quality, Standards and Evaluation; Innovation and Service Development; Coordination, Collaboration and Cooperation; and Workforce Development.

Throughout 2013/14 there have been significant developments across all of these areas, as well as a major new project to develop a national strategy for public libraries. The new Public Library Improvement Model, How Good is our Public Library Service? [HGIPLS] has also been launched.

Our study on ‘The Impact of School Libraries on Learning’ was published in October 2013 and has been widely used in advocacy for school libraries at a time of heightened pressure on services.

The two SLIC administered funding streams – the Public Library Improvement Fund (PLIF) and the Innovation and Development Fund (IDF) – have been instrumental in supporting a diverse range of forward-thinking projects across different sectors. It has been especially encouraging to see such high levels of engagement from our FE members in the IDF bidding process.

The past year has also seen an increased focus on partnership working in order to deliver our objectives more effectively. SLIC officers have worked to strengthen existing links and to form new bonds, both with internal partners within the library sector and with external agencies.

Our key strategic partnership with the Scottish Confederation of University and Research Libraries (SCURU) continues to enable us to support libraries in higher education institutions (HEIs) while ensuring that the sector’s needs are represented in SLIC activity.

This annual report covers these and many more examples of SLIC’s activity over the past year. SLIC Board and officers look forward to building on this existing body of work and to welcoming the new opportunities that 2014/15 presents.

Fiona McLeod
Chair

How Good is Our Public Library Service?
In 2012/13 SLIC commissioned Robert Gordon University [RGU] to undertake a review of the Public Library Quality Improvement Matrix [PLQIM], the self-evaluation framework for public libraries which has been in place since 2007.

The purpose of this review was to update the framework to ensure that the process remains robust and relevant, taking into account the many changes to library service delivery that have taken place since PLQIM’s inception.

The first phase of this project was completed in June 2013 when RGU submitted an initial evaluation report, which outlined a number of recommendations for the development of the framework moving forward. SLIC officers continued to work with RGU and the heads of public library services throughout 2013/14 to develop a new public library improvement model, How Good is our Public Library Service? [HGIPLS].

In 2014/15 officers will continue to work with the public library sector to implement HGIPLS and to develop the peer assessment process which supports it.

The Impact of School Libraries on Learning
In 2013 SLIC commissioned Professor Dorothy Williams, Director of the Institute for Management Governance and Society at RGU, to undertake research on the impact of school library services.

The research was scoped by a working party of school library representatives and the project benefited from the input of practitioners in the school library sector.

The final report, ‘The Impact of School Libraries on Learning’, was published in October 2013 and is available at scottishlibraries.org/school-libraries.

The report critically reviews a body of international evidence pertaining to the role school libraries play in supporting learning.

SLIC officers have continued to work with the school library community to develop this evidence base and to support school libraries moving forward.

A key output of this work will be the re-introduction of an expanded version of the school library quantitative indicators data collection to include a qualitative element, as discussed in the RGU report.

Towards a National Strategy for Public Libraries
In June 2013 SLIC officers were invited to present a vision of public library services for the 21st Century to the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) Sports, Arts and Culture Working Group (SACWG), which is chaired by Fiona Hyslop, Cabinet Secretary for Culture and External Affairs.

Following on from this meeting, SLIC was invited by COSLA and the Scottish Government to scope the development of a strategy for public libraries in Scotland.

SLIC officers subsequently presented the case for developing a national strategy to the SACWG in spring 2014 and the group was widely in support of taking forward this proposal. Further details of the project are available on the SLIC website at scottishlibraries.org/strategy.
Innovation & Service Development

- **IDF Awards 2013-14**
  
  At our 2013 AGM SLIC Chair, Fiona McLeod announced the re-launch of the Innovation and Development Fund (IDF) for 2013/14.

  A total fund of £40,000 was available for projects supporting SLIC’s four strategic objectives: quality, standards and evaluation; innovation and service development; co-ordination, collaboration and co-operation; and workforce development.

  The four successful projects were:

  - **Learning Lab - Dundee & Angus College**
    To develop an innovative Learning Lab to allow users to create technology and experiment with it.

  - **CLEAR – Copyright Licence Educational Authority Resource City of Glasgow College and New College Lanarkshire**
    To explore the potential of open source tools to redefine the library management system in line with learner needs and institutional needs.

  - **Policy Development for Acceptable Use in Libraries (PAUL) - University of Strathclyde**
    To research, develop and trial a draft common national acceptable use policy that fits the requirements of all public library services.

  - **Unlocking Libraries: U-Lib Project City of Glasgow College and Clyde College**
    To explore the potential of open source tools to redefine the library management system in line with learner needs.

  Progress reports on all of these projects will be presented at the AGM and Showcase event on 21st November 2014. Full details of these and all previously funded projects are available at scottishlibraries.org/innovation-and-development

- **PLIF Projects 2013-14**
  
  The Public Library Improvement Fund (PLIF) has supported innovation and development across Scotland’s public library network since 2006. The £150,000 fund is administered by SLIC on behalf of the Scottish Government through an annual competitive bidding process.

  In 2013/14 the priorities for bids were: Community Engagement, Health and Wellbeing and World War I commemorations. The fund also supported four national projects in support of the following themes: Digital Reference Services, Marketing and Promotions, Reader Development and Workforce Development.

  Update of existing table – details at scottishlibraries.org/2013-plif-awards

Coordination, Collaboration and Cooperation

- **ALMA UK**
  
  The key area of ALMA activity in 2013/14 was the development of a Return on Investment (ROI) study in public libraries.

  All Scottish public libraries were asked to provide information as part of the study and selected authorities were also asked to distribute user surveys to contribute to the process.

  The findings of the study were published in spring 2014 together with a toolkit for use in future ROI monitoring activity in libraries.

  For more information, please visit the ALMA website almauuk.org

- **SCURL**
  
  SLIC continues to support the work of the Scottish Confederation of University and Research Libraries (SCURL) through an ongoing funding stream, as well as participation at SCURL business meetings.

  This arrangement enables SLIC to support libraries in higher education institutions while ensuring that the sector’s needs are represented in SLIC activity.

- **Digital Champions**
  
  In 2013/14 SLIC received additional Scottish Government funding in support of digital participation.

  This work led to a network of Digital Champions being established, with representation from the 32 public library services.

  The group met for the first time in October 2013 and SLIC has since coordinated quarterly meetings. The Digital Champions will be instrumental in delivering digital initiatives moving forward.

- **School Library Network**
  
  In 2013 SLIC commissioned Professor Dorothy Williams of Robert Gordon University to undertake research on the impact of school library services.

  The research was scoped by a working party of school library representatives and the project benefited from the input of practitioners from across the school library sector.
The final report, The Impact of School Libraries on Learning was published in October 2013 and is available at scottishlibraries.org/school-libraries

SLIC officers have continued to work with the school library community to develop a robust evidence base and advocacy strategy for the sector, which has been badly affected by budget cuts in many local authority areas.

Further Education Network SLIC continued to work with the FE Librarians’ Development Network to develop the programme for the annual FE Conference and to undertake the annual FE survey.

The conference took place in Edinburgh on 28th November 2013 and was well attended by college librarians from across Scotland.

Results from the fourth FE survey are available at scottishlibraries.org/sectors-fe-survey

Royal Society of Edinburgh Inquiry The Royal Society of Edinburgh (RSE) published its interim report on Spreading the Benefits of Digital Participation in December 2013. There was some concern from the library community over the limited reference to the role of libraries or cognisance of the importance of information literacy.

SLIC officers subsequently met with the RSE Inquiry Panel to discuss these concerns before submitting a final response to the interim report. Professor Fourman, the panel chair, outlined the key findings of the final report at a meeting of the Cross Party Group on Digital Participation on Wednesday 2nd April 2014 and the final report clearly outlined the role of libraries and of information literacy in supporting digital participation.

Conferences SLIC officers attended the Edge Conference in Edinburgh on the 28th February 2014 and exhibited at the COSLA conference in St Andrews in March 2014. Both events offered an excellent opportunity for networking with stakeholders ahead of the development of the National Strategy for Public Libraries.

Scottish Government Digital Scotland The Digital Scotland database was launched in April 2014. Details of all courses and IT assistance in public libraries is available and moving forward, the Scottish Government is working with the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO) to further populate this with details of digital clubs and support from the voluntary sector. Public libraries and SLIC continue to work in close collaboration with SCVO and the Scottish Government’s Digital Team to help create a strong network of support for digital skills in Scotland and increase levels of digital participation and equality of access across the country.

WiFi funding Following an extended period of discussion with the Digital Participation team and colleagues in the Culture Division, SLIC was awarded an additional £300,000 to support WiFi improvements in public libraries. A bidding process opened under embargo pending an announcement by the Cabinet Secretary. Fifteen library services were successful and received funds to support WiFi in their area.

SLIC also committed to recruit a WiFi project officer to oversee these funding bids and make recommendations based on best practice on the provision of WiFi in public libraries in Scotland.

Training in New Technologies The Digital Participation landscape paper published in October of last year identified specific digital training needs in public library staff. In 2012/13, Inverclyde Libraries, in collaboration with North Ayrshire, developed an online training programme via the Moodle virtual learning platform. A presentation on this project was offered at the SLIC AGM and at the first Digital Champions meeting. Based on positive evaluation at local level and strong support from the Heads of Public Library Services (HoPLS), the Training In New Technologies (TNT) programme has been rolled out to a further 15 library services.

TNT includes modules on supporting new devices as well as web services and social media. Moodle offers an extensible platform, with scope for ongoing development to support staff training needs in this area. The SLIC website will be developed to support the Moodle platform which will not only allow staff to undertake these training modules, but will be useful for further developments in training and opportunities for collaboration.

Board and Staffing Developments There were several changes to the composition of the SLIC Board In 2013/14, but all office-bearers remain in post: Fionna McLeod, MSP for Strathkelvin and Bearsden, continues in her role as Chair; Helen Dumfie, University Librarian at Glasgow University remains as Vice Chair; and Moira Metheen continues as Company Secretary.

The full Board listing is available at scottishlibraries.org/board

In March 2014 Amina Shah took up post as Chief Executive Officer, replacing Moira Metheen who had held the post in an acting capacity since March 2013.