**A focus on the Student Experience: realigning library services across Divisional thematic areas: Presentation to the CAVAL Professional Development Interest Group Forum 15th July, 2015**

**Slides 1-3**

1. **Political and University wide background and drivers**

Over the last 12 months there have been many conversations held across the media about the potential impact of proposed changes to higher education legislation, in particular the deregulation of the Australian system. In a December 2014 opinion piece in the Launceston Examiner, our VC Peter Rathjen wrote, “that in the midst of changes designed to promote specialisation, the University of Tasmania occupies a position unique within Australia and possibly the world, with responsibility for the full breadth of Higher Education in Tasmania. Our operating context is defined by the state. Tasmania suffers high levels of unemployment, a serious education deficit in schools and higher education, poor social mobility and regional disadvantage. The university experiences a higher than average attrition rate, a higher than average rate of mature age enrolments and many first in family students. “The University maintains campuses at Launceston, Hobart and [Burnie] in the face of economic inefficiencies, a different challenge to the centralised approach taken by mainland universities but essential to providing equity of access across the state where the educational challenge is greatest.

In 2012, a number of the university’s professional divisions went through major change, as part of the Professional Services Review and there had been a wide spread reduction in staff numbers. The University’s maintenance backlog was one of the highest in the country and concerns were staring to emerge about us living beyond our means. This combined with concerns about changes to funding models in the higher education sector, led to the University initiating a program of change, including a review of both academic and professional services, in order to position itself to “achieve the aspirations articulated in the strategic plan, *Open to Talent”*. The PSR process focused on how to improve the costs and efficiencies of the professional support structure and processes. The Library was largely protected from the process, although we did lose 10 positions through voluntary redundancies. The Library took the opportunity in 2013, with the aid of a consultant, to begin work on our own internal restructure. This however was overtaken by the *Enabling our Future* Divisional WPC, which got underway in late 2013, at about the same time that our University Librarian resigned.

**Slides 4-5**

1. **Enabling our Future: Workplace Change in 2014**

The Library sits in the Division of the DVC Students and Education. During 2014, a number of Divisional projects took place, that were designed to deliver a range of objectives including, greater efficiency within the Division; improving levels of service; accommodating the introduction of new technology and adjusting how things are done in line, with changing student expectations. There is no denying though, that the primary driver was a large cut to the Division’s budget. For the Library, the key changes were a move away from a location based model to a functional one. We had lost our Associate Librarian as part of the previous change and needed to be able to refocus our Branch Managers on important portfolio areas, such as Research, Learning and Teaching, our repositories and website. Our Resource Management Team was reviewed by an outside consultant. Our Client Services staff were being transitioned into ‘management’ of our locations, with support coming from our Senior Librarian, Client Services and our Corporate Services Manager. We started to explore ways of co-locating our client services with those of the Student Centre and how our Learning Librarians could work more closely with the Student Centre’s Learning Support staff. We began to explore options with the TAFE for a single joint Hobart city library, to replace the three branch libraries we currently support there. Also at this time, the separate restructure of our Liaison Team was implemented, with half becoming Research Support Librarians and the other half, Learning and Teaching Librarians.

**Slide 6**

1. **Refocusing the Division : Workplace Change in 2015**

Towards the end of 2014, the university identified that the required savings target had not been met and the changes that were planned would not be sufficient to produce a structure that would achieve either the required savings, or the radical reshape of services that would bring real benefits for the longer term. The key driver though, was the need to improve the student experience, to put the student at the centre of everything that the Division did. This re-focus came from a series of visits that the VC and other senior staff had made to overseas universities. This contributed to a new agenda to attract and retain students though partnerships with TAFE and councils and though the introduction of associate degrees, particularly focused in the north of the state, to better enable pathways into the University. The new WPC was released mid-December 2014 and was developed by the Divisional Executive, who communicated that it was based on best-practice models both nationally and internationally. This change, divided the Division into (initially) five theme areas (later reduced to four), with a supporting Divisional Administrative Team.

The stated objectives were:

* The ability to be flexible and responsive
* To improve cohesion and be less siloed
* To remove duplication
* To ensure that students remain at the centre of our thinking and our focus
* To embrace the data and evidence based approach that was needed

and

* To be able to operate within the Universities funding capabilities

**Slide 7**

1. **Theme areas – where to the Library staff fit now?**

The Library is now part of the theme area, called Library and Student Services, or LASS. The theme area is co-headed up by the Executive Director, Student Experience and the University Librarian. Both of these positions sit on the Divisional Executive. As the Associate Director, I attend the Divisional Managers Meetings and the Student Experience Managers meetings. Also part of this theme area, is the Student Services and Information Centre, a team made up of the ‘Front of House’ or Client Services staff from both the Library and Student Services. All the Library’s CS staff, including the Senior Librarian, now report up through to one of the Associate Directors in the Student Centre. There is a ‘dotted’ line to me. I am consulted and represent the Library’s interests but have no direct reports.

Our Learning Services Librarians are now part of the theme area Student Experience, Retention and Success and will be reporting to a new senior academic position that has only just been appointed. There is no ‘dotted’ line to this team and we rely now very much on relationships previously established with this group through other collaborative activities, to ensure that what we see as essential services are maintained.

Our Senior Librarian, Policy and Planning is now part of the central Divisional Administration team.

**Slide 8**

The total EFT in the ‘Library’ is 27 staff now. The University Librarian has been an acting position for 18 months. There is one HEO10 position and six HEO7 Senior Librarian or equivalent position. The Library needed to think about how to best use the resources that we had left to deliver the best possible outcomes for our clients. Our Library Management Team has now been disbanded and all of the HEO7 positions now sit on the Library Executive. We have also disbanded most of our committees, except for the ITS and Web and will revisit what may be needed as the structure beds down. All position descriptions are being ‘refreshed’ and will be revisited at the end of the year, as part of the performance and career development conversations. We have realised that we will need to be flexible and nimble in our approach we use to move forward. See what works and be prepared to abandon what doesn’t.

I will now give you some more detail about the new Senior Librarian portfolio positions.

**Slides 9-12**

**Slide 13**

**Student Services and Information Centre**

Changes to how we deliver our first tier client services is seen as the key project of the change by both the Division and the VC. Ultimately, we would like to be able to achieve a fully integrated consistent student centre and Library service across all our sites. The pace has been fast and exhausting for all those involved and although full integration everywhere is some distance away, an enormous amount of progress has been made in six months. There has been no outside project staff allocated, with the project team is made up of the former Head of Client Service for the Student Centre, the former Senior Librarian, Library Client Services a, myself and my equivalent in Student Services. The initial meetings were a little difficult, as we jostled for positioning. It was hard to not feel that the Library was being taken over. We had by far the largest number of staff but they were all at lower levels. We have a large number of branch libraries and extended opening hours. How could we possibly implement an integrated service across so many sites. As well as all this change, the Student Centre had just gone through a difficult implementation of the new Student Management System, which had been trying for them. We managed to work through many issues, although the differences in levels across our staff was not something that could be solved in the short term. A project plan allowed us to clearly articulate what needed to be done, identified the risks and gave us a timeline to work towards.

**Briefly talk about the following**

Burnie – pilot

MM Library – changes 2013-2014 and the future

Launceston – building works and working across both sites

Sydney – new position

Day at Campbell Town in early June – joint funding bid for staff development funding

**Slides 14-16**

**Learning Services**

One of the challenges has been how to deliver our ‘Information Services’ when our ‘Liaison Librarians’ have gone from 17 to 9. From being in every one of our libraries, to now being only in four physical locations. With four of them focused on research and four based in another team, the conversations now are about how to deliver all of our teaching and reference services.

**Briefly talk about the following**

The importance of role of Senior Librarian, Learning and Teaching, despite their disappearing in the restructure

Working with Learning Services staff- previous collaborative teaching opportunities

Position descriptions

RALs meetings

**Slide 17**

**Divisional Administration Services**

The Library’s Policy and Planning Librarian has a new title of Senior Executive Officer and is responsible for Divisional HR and Travel oversight. She supports the University Librarian one day per week and this includes providing reporting to CAUL and the Library component of the monthly Divisional report to Senate.

**Slide 18**

1. **Where to from here and Opportunities and threats**

The Library is largely now positive about moving forward and on the whole, staff are excited about the challenges ahead. There were difficult times, as staff, some with over 30 year’s experience left, many quickly. For those that remained, various changes have been around for some years, with us never finishing any implementation. For most, they had reached the stage where they just wanted to get on with it. From a personal point of view, as the SSIC Team begins work across all sites, I need to be able to pull away and focus on all the new areas that I have to have a working knowledge of.

While the team known as the ‘Library’ is small in number, we have people now across a number of different teams and I believe that our skills and commitment to a quality client service will enhance those teams in so many ways. Due to us working across multiple areas, we are now involved with conversations about a new Customer Relations Management system or CRM and associate knowledge base that could potentially replace our current FAQ service. A new appointment booking system, used by the counsellors that can be rolled out to our Research Services Librarians. Interconnected digital signage screens across multiple sites, displaying information relating to all aspects of the Division. We are now working collaboratively on new Divisional client surveys and plans. There will also be opportunities to build and advance careers amongst many of our staff, something that the Library was not in the past able to offer to most of our staff.

…and the future there has been some talk that the Library might be better aligned with the Division of the DVC Research. We await the arrival of the new DVC, to see if that progresses at all