

May 2020

Dear colleague,

**COVID-19 - Library and information service recovery planning**

I am writing to outline the guidance that CILIP is providing to librarians, information and knowledge management professionals in support of service recovery planning during the current public health emergency.

Our first concern is for the safety and welfare of everyone who interacts with the library or information service, including staff, volunteers and service users.

While planning to recover or re-open services disrupted during COVID-19 is a positive and necessary step, we actively encourage employers in all sectors not to re-open services until they have completed a COVID-19 Risk Assessment and are satisfied that the risks to library or information service staff have been addressed.

We encourage employers to work with their library or information service staff to develop a phased Service Recovery Plan, ensuring that service users can benefit from their support while minimising risk. We have published guidance on Service Recovery Planning as part of our *Coronavirus Information Service* (<https://www.cilip.org.uk/news/493378/CILIP-Coronavirus-Information-Service.htm>).

Where employers have re-deployed library or information service staff away from their usual roles and into COVID-19 support roles, our recommendation is to return those staff to their contracted functions as quickly as possible. It has been positive to note that many employers have discovered during their COVID-19 response that their library and information services staff are able to bring a range of digital, organisational and soft skills to their work. We encourage employers in all sectors to consider how these skills can best be developed and utilised in future.

We also note that many organisations have more fully embraced digital and remote working and collaboration during COVID-19, in many cases supported by their library or information services staff. We believe that this experience has highlighted the central role of our professional skills in enabling our organisations to be more adaptive, responsive and resilient. We encourage all employers to work with their library and information services staff to explore how they can embed these new ways of working, supported by quality information resources.

Yours sincerely,



Nick Poole  
Chief Executive, CILIP