

Councillor Douglas Campbell  
Council Leader  
South Ayrshire Council  
*Via douglas.campbell@south-ayrshire.gov.uk*

9 February 2018

Dear Mr Campbell,

### **Balancing the Budget Consultation 2018-2020: Protect South Ayrshire's School Libraries**

My name is Peggy Hughes and I am the Chair of Literature Alliance Scotland (LAS), which represents the principal literature and languages organisations in Scotland.

I write with great concern in response to South Ayrshire Council's proposed removal of school librarians and school library assistants.

While I do of course appreciate that the Council has to make difficult financial decisions, the argument for continued investment in school libraries is strong.

Trained school librarians are an essential part of a modern school and a vital resource. They transform the school library into a place of learning where pupils can be helped in directing their own reading, learning and research. They ensure that, wherever they live, learners have equal access to the best educational start in life. Young people cannot choose where to live, and surely every child has an equal right to a school library.

We strongly support the Scottish Government in its decision to make it a national priority to reduce the attainment gap between children and young people in different parts of the country, and improve their life chances.

Our concern is that the removal of school librarians and library assistants from your area's schools, who support literacy and help raise attainment, acts against this national priority.

We also feel it would be premature to take decisions about local school libraries on 1 March 2018 when the Scottish Government's National Strategy for School Libraries, which will include guidance on service provision to help deliver consistency nationwide, is due to be published a few months later, ahead of the new academic year.

On behalf of our members, the community and the young learners in your area – and for the future success of South Lanarkshire - we urge you to please protect South Ayrshire librarian service in the forthcoming budget.

**Chair:** Peggy Hughes | **Vice-Chair:** Dr Donald Smith | **Treasurer:** Rosemary Ward  
**Communications Officer:** Jenny Kumar ([admin@literaturealliancescotland.co.uk](mailto:admin@literaturealliancescotland.co.uk) / 07989 557198)  
Literature Alliance Scotland is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation. Registration Number: SC046387

Yours sincerely



Peggy Hughes, Chair

## Literature Alliance Scotland Membership at February 2018

### MEMBERS

- Association for Scottish Literary Studies (ASLS)
- Association of Scottish Literary Agents (ASLA)
- Bookdonors CIC
- CILIPS (Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals in Scotland)
- Edinburgh International Book Festival
- Edinburgh UNESCO City of Literature Trust
- The Gaelic Books Council
- Moniack Mhor
- National Library of Scotland
- Peter Pan Moat Brae Trust
- Playwrights' Studio Scotland
- Publishing Scotland
- The Saltire Society
- Scottish Book Trust
- Scottish Language Dictionaries
- Scottish Library and Information Council (SLIC)
- SLAM (Scottish Literary and Arts Magazines)
- Scottish Society of Playwrights
- Scottish PEN
- Scottish Poetry Library
- Scottish Storytelling Forum
- Scottish Writers Centre
- Society of Authors in Scotland
- Universities Committee for Scottish Literature
- Wigtown Festival Company
- Writers' Guild of Great Britain (Scottish Region)

### NETWORK ASSOCIATES

- Ayton Publishing
- Emergents CIC
- Florida State Universities Library
- Indie Authors World
- Royal Botanic Gardens Edinburgh
- Stirling Centre for International Publishing and Communication @ Stirling University
- The Poetry Association of Scotland

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