



11 December 2009

REVIEW OF LIBRARY PROVISION – GREATER BELFAST AREA

NIPSA has been made aware that the Board of Libraries NI yesterday took a decision to commence a consultation exercise which could result in the closure of up to 14 Libraries across the Greater Belfast Area. In addition the Board of Libraries NI also took a decision to commence a consultation period on their decision to close the former Library Headquarters in Ballynahinch.

NIPSA has objected to lack of pre-consultation and information in advance of a meeting with staff this morning and later this afternoon.

Assistant Secretary, Alison Millar, stated

“This looks very much likely the beginning of a new series of attacks on the public library service in Northern Ireland and NIPSA will be working closely with local communities to resist any closure of valuable community libraries. It is highly regrettable that Libraries NI Management have failed to involve and consult the trade union which represents staff, many of whom have many concerns over these proposals. NIPSA is scheduled to meet with Libraries NI Management on Monday on a range of matters and this issue will undoubtedly be discussed.” However members have been contacting NIPSA late yesterday and early this morning and unfortunately NIPSA was not in a position to respond as we were not aware of the detailed proposals. That information is still awaited.”

NIPSA will be organising consultation meetings with staff and the public over the coming days and weeks to respond to the proposals put forward by Libraries NI.

ENDS