From: Arne Kyrkjebo at NLB

To: DAISY Board

Date: 23 October 2017

# Invitation to a Music Braille collaboration

This paper should be read as an initial invitation to form a group who wants to look at how to improve our music Braille services. The proposal below is meant to describe one possible angle. At this point, the most important issues is to find organizations interested to join.

## Background

The Nordic Libraries together with Dedicon and SBS have developed a Pipeline 2 based Braille in paper production tool based on epub3 source files. The original project plan was quite ambitious when it came to type of content the tools should be able to produce. During the project we had to, because of limited resources, prior what type of content a first version should be able to handle. This original plan included also the ability to produce Music Braille in paper. The tools as it is today do not include this ability and we have at this point no specific plan to include this ability.

The demand for Music Braille and the capacity/ability to produce music Braille varies in the different countries but the general impression is that many of the libraries struggle to maintain this service. There are few people handling it and in many occasions only one person able to produce, tools/methods that limits efficient productions and limited written guidelines. Production time is long, which is a problem for those libraries serving students with more urgent needs. Our understanding is that there is a global standard for music Braille but there are national differences.

There is also MusicXML. But for Braille some extensions are needed. Existing extensions to MusicXML don’t cover all types of music scores and are not standardized. Therefore, Braille-Music-XML-files can’t be exchanged and also can’t be used as input to different tools to produce Braille Music.

## A proposal for cooperation

Establish a group where the goal is to collaborate in finding better ways to secure our Music Braille services in the future.

A possible method could be the following:

### Prestudy. Describe the situation today.

Hire a consultant to perform a prestudy about situation today. There should be emphasis on the business aspects of the situation. The group needs to define a mandate but elements includes should be:

* Interview representative agencies. Situation today, tools, user needs, the plans and needs for the future etc.
* Could include interviews some representative users. Experience with existing service and needs.
* Investigate the market Existing solutions/products for producing Braille, their plans, potential in existing tools, planned or ongoing activities
* Present a situation report and suggestions for the further work.

### Discuss and decide next steps

The outcome of the prestudy is important for discussion about possible further steps but it is realistic to expect to consider:

* Different needs. Some organizations might want to outsource the productions and others plan to continue their productions.
* The need for tools/methods to increase the efficiency in production.
* Closer cooperation requires written guidelines, and where similar guidelines makes cooperation easier.