

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE REPORT

Date Written	11 th November 2019
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Service Area	Libraries
Committee Date	26 th November 2019

To: Chair, Ladies and Gentlemen

Welsh National Library Standards Update

1.0 SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 On 2nd July 2019; a report and accompanying documents were brought before the Governance, Performance, Business Change and Corporate Services scrutiny committee for review and approval prior to its submission to Welsh Government for review. The responsibility for Library services remains with the Local Authority under the 1964 Libraries and Museums Act.
- 1.2 At this meeting, Committee Members gave approval for the documents and approved their submission to Welsh Government in line with the required deadlines.
- 1.3 This report provides the scrutiny committee with the feedback received from Welsh Government. It offers details of Welsh Government's judgements in relation to the core entitlements; quality indicators (with targets); impact measures and quality indicators and benchmarks.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 2.1 The Committee receives the information on feedback received from Welsh Government.
- 2.2 That the update report is accepted and Committee Members have an opportunity to review and comment on its content.

3.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 3.1 On 2nd July, a report was presented to scrutiny on progress made in relation to the Welsh Public Library Standards. The local authority must have a process in place to ratify the submission made yearly to Welsh Government. Scrutiny was asked to look at the report, challenge any issues identified and ultimately ratify it in its current form for submission to Welsh Government in line with the responsibilities held by the authority un the 1964 Libraries and Museums Act.
- 3.2 The Welsh Public Library Standards are the way in which the Minister with responsibility for Library Services is able to measure whether an authority is complying with its statutory duty.

4.0 WHERE WE WERE

- 4.1 When the report was presented to the Committee in July 2019; the officer presenting the documentation noted that during the first year of the framework; Merthyr Tydfil Library Service met 9 of the 10 targets in full and one in part and all 12 of the core entitlements.
- 4.2 Following receipt of the relevant documentation from the Head of Library Services; the Governance, Performance, Change Management and Corporate Services scrutiny committee accepted the content and ratified the report.
- 4.3 Following ratification; the approved report and supporting documentation was submitted to Welsh Government in line with the required deadline.

5.0 WHERE WE ARE NOW

- 5.1 On receipt of the feedback report from Welsh Government; the Head of Library Services is bringing back the findings to the Governance, Performance, Change Management and Corporate Services scrutiny committee to 'close the loop'; and offer Committee Members the opportunity to review Welsh Government's findings in relation to the original submission.

6.0 WHERE WE WANT TO BE

- 6.1 To maintain this performance through the life of the framework.

7.0 WHAT WE NEED TO DO NEXT

- 7.1 Ensure all our policies and practices feed into the delivery of the service to maintain performance

8.0 CONTRIBUTION TO NATIONAL WELLBEING GOALS

8.1 The new framework deals with the national wellbeing goals in the following way:

A Prosperous Wales

Development of a skilled and well educated population is a fundamental aspect of public libraries activity. Examples of how this is achieved include providing access to a world of lifelong learning through relevant book stock and online information, and the provision of free IT equipment, broadband and wi-fi, which supports education, small businesses and job seeking. Core entitlements 2, 3, 6 and 7, and quality indicators 1, 3, 5, 7, 8, 9, 12, 13 and 15 all monitor aspects of public libraries contribution to this goal.

A Resilient Wales

Social and economic resilience is supported by encouraging and promoting individual personal development, enabling people and society to adapt to changing circumstances. Regular consultation with users ensures that the services themselves are resilient and able to adapt to changing needs. Two core entitlements are particularly pertinent here, 3 and 11, together with quality indicators 4, 11 and 14. Examples of how this is achieved in practice include support for greater community involvement in running library services and book stock that encourages a more resilient lifestyle with access to IT so people can self-educate about the issues.

A Healthier Wales

Physical and mental wellbeing is a key offer of public libraries, not only by providing information on which to base informed choices for the benefit of health in the future but also designated collections and schemes such as Book Prescription Wales titles loaned through libraries, which directly benefit individuals with health concerns. Relevant core entitlements for this goal are 3 and 4: quality indicators 1, 4 and 6 monitor activity.

A More Equal Wales

Libraries are welcoming, inclusive and offer pro-active outreach and public engagement activities in deprived and socially excluded communities. Support for Government initiatives such as Universal JobMatch and Universal Credit enable those without IT skills or facilities fulfil their potential. Core entitlements 1, 2, 4, 6 and 7 and quality indicators 3, 4, 11, 13 and 14, all monitor public libraries contribution to this goal.

A Wales of Cohesive Communities

Libraries offer a safe neutral place within the community which provides opportunities for people to connect with each other. The one-stop shop or hub model being developed in many areas further connects local communities with the services they need. Other examples of support for community involvement through the process of provision of information about the local area. Core entitlements 1, 3 and 5 and quality indicators 1, 6, 13 and 16 monitor aspects of public libraries contribution to this goal.

A Wales of Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language

With explicit provision in the current framework covering the provision of material in the Welsh Language, libraries are well placed to contribute in this area. They promote and protect Welsh Culture and language, and encourage participation in the arts and recreation through the availability of a good range of stock in Welsh, and a host of cultural events and activities. Core entitlements include 2, 3, 6, 8, 9 and 10 and quality indicators 2, 6, 8, 9 and 10 are particularly relevant here.

A Globally Responsible Wales

A commitment to make the most efficient use of resources is embodied in the quality indicators. MALD works with the British Standards Institute and International Standards Organisation in developing and using quality indicators for Libraries that conform to ISO 11620. Further the borrowing of books is a great recycling tool, reducing the impact on the environment. Libraries in Wales work together in book purchasing consortia, digital e-book consortia and the All Wales Library Management system. Core entitlement 12 is directly related to global good practice, while quality indicators 14 and 15 are related to the balance and efficiency of service provision.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS		
Title of Document(s)	Document(s) Date	Document Location
WPLS Future Direction WPLS Case Study 1 WPLS Case Study 2 WPLS Case Study 3 WPLS Narrative WPLS Annual Return Pro-Forma	20 th June 2019	All documents presented on 2 nd July can be accessed using the hyperlink below: https://democracy.merthyr.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=329&MId=3215&Ver=4&LLL=0
Does the report contain any issue that may impact the Council's Constitution?		