

## **SCRUTINY COMMITTEE REPORT**

Date Written	1 <sup>st</sup> March 2021
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*To: Chair, Ladies and Gentlemen*

### **Welsh National Library Standards Update**

#### **1.0 SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 Each year Public Library Services in Wales are required to submit a report to Welsh Government regarding the performance against the Welsh Public Library Standards. The Welsh Public Library Standards are the measure by which the minister with responsibility for Libraries can make a decision about their compliance with the statutory Libraries and Museums Act 1964. The responsibility for Library services remains with the Local Authority despite Wellbeing Merthyr being the vehicle for delivery.
- 1.2 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.
- 1.3 On this occasion – the report was not ratified prior to submission to Welsh Government due to the impact of the Corona Virus Pandemic.

#### **2.0 RECOMMENDATION(S)**

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

### **3.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

3.1 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.

3.2 Due to the impact of the Corona Virus Pandemic, this years report was not ratified prior to submission.

### **4.0 WHERE WE WERE**

4.1 During the previous year of the framework, the Library Service performed well. The service was able to maintain performance standards against core entitlements and targeted measures measured over the last three years of the framework.

### **5.0 WHERE WE ARE NOW**

5.1 On receipt of the feedback report from Welsh Government; the findings, and initial report are being brought to the Governance, Performance, Change Management and Corporate Services scrutiny committee to offer Committee Members the opportunity to review the original submission and the Welsh Government response.

### **6.0 WHERE WE WANT TO BE**

6.1 To maintain this performance where appropriate and to work in line with other Library authorities to understand the impacts of the pandemic on performance moving forward through the year of the pandemic and lockdowns and forward into recovery.

### **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.

**JANE SELLWOOD**

***Wellbeing Merthyr (Merthyr Tydfil Leisure Trust)***

## BACKGROUND PAPERS

Title of Document(s)	Document(s) Date	Document Location
1. Future Direction 2. Case Study – Bus Pass Renewal 3. Case Study – Harri Webb 4. MT Library Report 5. Narrative 19/20 6. Framework 6 Reporting Template	September 2020	
<b>Does the report contain any issue that may impact the Council's Constitution?</b>		<b>No</b>