

CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL

**CABINET EXECUTIVE
December 2016**

REPORT AUTHOR: County Councillor Graham Brown
Portfolio Holder for Commissioning & Procurement

SUBJECT: Welsh Public Library Standards: Powys Annual Report
2015-16

REPORT FOR: Information

1. Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to receive and give consideration to the Annual Report from the Welsh Government on the Library Service, for the year 2015-2016, as required under the Welsh Public Library Standards (5th Framework).
- 1.2 The Welsh Government has a supervisory and monitoring role in relation to the 22 Library Authorities in Wales.
- 1.3 Welsh Public Library Standards (WPLS) were first developed in 2002. The period 2015-16 is covered by a fifth performance framework, "Libraries making a difference". Under this framework, the Authority's performance was measured against a revised set of 18 Core entitlements and 16 key Performance Indicators, which includes impact and outcome measures, in order to reveal the wide range of benefits that result from public library use, such as improvements to people's literacy skills, digital skills and health and wellbeing.
- 1.4 The Standards are intended to help define the responsibilities of library authorities in providing a "comprehensive and efficient" service under the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964. The performance framework aims to:
- enable the Minister for Culture and Sport to fulfil the statutory requirements of the 1964 Act in respect of superintending the provision of a 'comprehensive and efficient' library service by local authorities;
 - provide a robust assessment of the performance of library services;
 - have clear links to the Welsh Government's agenda, to ensure credibility across local government in Wales;
 - incorporate outcome measures to show the benefits of using libraries;
 - act as a driver for improvements to library services and local communities

- 1.5 For the year 2015-16, Powys Library Service met 17 of the 18 core entitlements, and partially achieved the 18th. The framework has 16 quality indicators, of which 7 have targets; for those with targets, Powys met 4 in full, 2 in part, and failed to meet one. This is an improvement on 2014-15, when the service met 3 in full and 3 in part. The key performance indicators of library visits per thousand population (actual and virtual) continue to be well above the Welsh median, proving increased benefit to Powys citizens. The full report is attached at Appendix A.

2. Proposal

- 2.1 It is proposed that the outcomes in the Welsh Public Library Standards Annual Report from Welsh Government on Powys Library Service 2015-16 are duly noted and considered in forward planning, so that the library service strives to maintain performance at this level, and seeks to address as far as possible the areas which do not currently meet Welsh Government's standard.

3. One Powys Plan and Powys 2020 vision

- 3.1 The Library Service plays an important strategic role in delivering current corporate and multi-agency objectives, and in particular contributes strongly to the achievement of a range of Powys One Plan and 2020 vision outcomes such as literacy, skills and learning, digital inclusion, addressing poverty, and health and well-being:

- **Supporting people in the community to lead fulfilled lives:** the local library provides a neutral space for all members of the public to enjoy in a safe and inclusive atmosphere, using services which benefit their skills and learning, personal health and wellbeing, and ability access to wider council and democratic processes
- **Developing the economy:** provision of good quality hardware and internet access (including wi-fi) enables residents to access government and other online services (e.g. to file VAT returns online, and access the HMRC site), supporting small businesses to develop skills, and assisting job seekers to find and apply for employment opportunities. Libraries also bring people into the high street, creating local spend.
- **Improving learner outcomes for all, minimising disadvantage:** through free provision at the point of access, libraries continue to support learners of all ages and abilities locally, through provision of up-to-date learning materials and facilities, promoting equality and addressing the poverty agenda.
- **Stronger, safer and economically viable communities** – libraries bring people together in Powys so they feel that they matter, belong and can contribute to their community.
- **Integrated health and adult social care** – older people are helped to lead fulfilled lives within their communities, carers and families have a safe place to go and receive support, and mental health and wellbeing is improved through mental stimulation and bibliotherapy schemes, all contributing to “Powys citizens are supported and empowered to lead active and healthier lives”.
- **Transforming learning and skills** – resources and facilities help children and young people, and their families to achieve their potential, as well as

supporting students of all ages. Jobseekers in particular make heavy use of library resources.

- **Financially balanced and fit for purpose public services** – the library service is commissioned to deliver a face-to-face gateway to council services and the democratic process through the library+ project, and also works in partnership with many other statutory and voluntary sector organisations such as PtLHB (Bookstart, health promotion materials/activities), Workers Education Association for computer training and access, and local history societies.

4. Options Considered / Available

- 4.1 The Authority is obliged to comply with the reporting requirements of the Welsh Public Library Standards, and to pay due regard to concerns raised in the Welsh Government's Annual Report 2015-16 in forward planning of service delivery.

5. Preferred Option

- 5.1 To note the contents of the Welsh Public Library Standards report in order to inform forward planning of the Library Service and aid compliance with the Welsh Public Library Standards going forward into the remainder of this framework period.

6. Local Member(s)

N/A

7. Support Services (Legal, Finance, HR, ICT, BPU)

- 7.1 Legal - The Professional Lead-Legal has no comment to make concerning this report
- 7.2 Finance – the contents of the Welsh Public Library Standards report are noted and need to be reflected in order to inform forward planning of the Library Service and take into account the substantial reductions in provisions in the future
- 7.3 HR – There are no HR implications to this report.

8. Local Service Board/Partnerships/Stakeholders etc

9. Corporate Communications

- 9.1 No proactive communication action required

10. Statutory Officers

- 10.1 The Strategic Director Resources (S151 Officer) notes the comments made by finance.

10.2 The Solicitor to the Council (Monitoring Officer) has commented as follows: “I note the legal comment and have nothing to add to the report.”

11. Members’ Interests

11.1 The Monitoring Officer is not aware of any specific interests that may arise in relation to this report. If Members have an interest they should declare it at the start of the meeting and complete the relevant notification form.

Recommendation to Cabinet		Reason for Recommendation:	
That the outcomes in Welsh Government’s Annual Report on the Library Service 2015-16 in Appendix A to the report be duly noted, and considered in forward planning.		To aid compliance with the requirements of the Welsh Public Library Standards 2014-2017.	
Relevant Policy (ies):			
Within Policy:	Y	Within Budget:	Y
Relevant Local Member(s):		N/A	
Person(s) To Implement Decision:		Kay Thomas	
Date By When Decision To Be Implemented:		With immediate effect	
Contact Officer Name:	Tel:	Fax:	Email:
Kay Thomas	01597 826864	01597 826872	kay.thomas@powys.gov.uk

Background Papers used to prepare Report:

[‘Libraries making a difference: the fifth quality framework of Welsh Public Library Standards 2014-2017’, Welsh Government, 2014](#)

Appendices:

Appendix A - [Powys Library Service Annual Report 2015-2016 en.pdf](#)

Appendix B - [Appendix B Customer satisfaction survey results Nov 15.odt](#)

Appendix C - [Appendix C Services available from your local library.docx](#)