

CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL.

CABINET EXECUTIVE

21 January 2020

**REPORT AUTHOR: County Councillor Rachel Powell
Portfolio Holder for Young People and Culture**

REPORT TITLE: Welsh Public Library Standards report for 2018/19

REPORT FOR: Information

1. Purpose

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 2018/19, as required under the Welsh Public Library Standards (6th Framework).

2. Background

2.1 The Welsh Government has a supervisory and monitoring role in relation to the 22 Library Authorities in Wales.

2.2 Welsh Public Library Standards (WPLS) were first developed in 2002. The period 2018/19 is covered by a sixth performance framework, "Connected and Ambitious Libraries". Under this framework, the Authority's performance was measured against a revised set of 12 Core entitlements and 16 key Performance Indicators, which includes impact and outcome measures, in order to demonstrate 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.

2.3 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

2.4 Section 3 below sets out the performance of Powys Library Service under the Welsh Public Library Standards framework, for the financial year 2018/19.

3. Advice

3.1 Performance: For the year 2018/19, Powys Library Service met 11 of the 12 core entitlements in full, and partially achieved the 12th.

The framework has 16 quality indicators, of which 10 have measurable targets; for those with targets, Powys met 7 in full, 1 in part, and failed to meet two.

The key performance indicators of library visits per thousand population (actual and virtual) continue to be above the Welsh median, proving benefit to Powys citizens. The full report is attached at Appendix A.

3.2 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 2018/19 in forward planning of service delivery amidst budgetary constraints.

3.3 It is proposed that the outcomes in the Welsh Public Library Standards Annual Report from Welsh Government on Powys Library Service 2018/19 are duly noted and considered in forward planning, so that the library service strives to maintain performance at this level.

4. Resource Implications

4.1 Finance - The Finance Business Partner notes the contents of the report which has no budgetary implications

4.2 The Head of Finance (Section 151 Officer) notes the content of the report.

4.3 Customer Services: The Customer Service Manager comments as follows: "Powys County Council Library service provides front-line, face to face support for many customers that wish to access council services. For the year 2018-2019 the libraries dealt with 34,000 enquires. They support our customers accessing services through our telephony channel and via our web-site. They also scan and verify documents as well as taking payments. Unaided many of our customers would struggle to access some services, the support provided by our libraries is invaluable."

5. Legal implications

5.1 The Professional Lead-Legal notes the compliance obligations that the Library Service has to follow and has no comment to make concerning this report

5.2 The view of the Monitoring Officer will be stated in the meeting.

6. Comment from local member(s)

6.1 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.

7. Integrated Impact Assessment

7.1 An Impact Assessment is not attached, as this report considers historical performance under the Welsh Public Library Standards for the financial year 2018/19, and is provided for information.

7.2 It is noted that any subsequent proposals for service change as a result of information provided would be assessed for impact.

8. Recommendation

8.1 That the outcomes in the Welsh Public Library Standards Annual Report from Welsh Government on Powys Library Service 2018/19 are duly noted and considered in forward planning, in order that Powys Library Service continues to provide a quality service to residents, maintains its performance under the 6th Framework of Welsh Public Library Standards, and seeks to address as far as possible those areas which do not currently meet Welsh Government's standard.

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