

Mid-Year Chief Officer Report

Report Author: Chief Officer - Organisational Change (Ian Bancroft)
Report Date: November 2014
Report Period: April to September 2014

Introduction

The Chief Officer report is produced on a half yearly basis and provided to Cabinet Members for review and assurance focusing on the 'business as usual'. The reports are provided for Overview and Scrutiny Committees as part of their Forward Work Programmes. Chief Officer reports complement the Improvement Plan monitoring reports.

Chief Officer reports are exception reports which summarise the key information Members should be aware of, including both good and poor performance. Emerging issues / operational risks are also detailed. The reports are split into three distinct sections: -

1. Performance Overview - this section is used to give an overview of the progress being made towards delivery of key plans for the services which include those Improvement Priorities which do not have an in year focus i.e. these are not reported within the quarterly Improvement Plan monitoring. It is also used to highlight good news and key issues (including operational risks) arising. In addition, summary progress is given for key projects and collaborative areas of work.

2. Internal and External Regulatory Reports - this section summarises regulatory work reported in the half year and its outcomes and intended actions arising from recommendations.

3. Corporate Reporting - this section summarises the performance in relation to corporate issues i.e. Sickness absence, Complaints

Plus supporting appendices: -

Appendix 1- Performance Indicators - summary table of the key performance indicators used to manage the services. In addition, any NSI and PAM (statutory PIs) reported by the services are included.

Appendix 2 - High level (red) operational risk detail - completed full risk templates for those risks currently assessed as high (red).

Section 1 - Performance Overview

This report covers the following areas:

- (1) Functions
 - Libraries and Arts
 - Leisure Services
 - Museums and Archives
- (2) Projects
 - Clwyd Theatr Cymru
 - Alternative Delivery Models
 - Community Assets

Areas of Positive Performance

1. Libraries

Key Strategic Objective: *To provide a relevant and responsive library service for Flintshire's communities*

- 1.1 Connah's Quay Library was extended and re-opened in June 2014 as a library, a *Flintshire Connects* hub and a heritage centre. Visitor numbers to the library increased by 6% during the six-month period April-September 2014.

Key Strategic Objective: *To inspire a community of readers and learners*

1.2 'Every child a member' project

Flintshire was one of 6 authorities in Wales to pilot the scheme, funded by CyMAL and sponsored by the Ministers for Education & Skills and Culture & Sport. 1,698 Year 4 children were enrolled as library members and invited to visit their local library to collect their new 'branded' library card and goody bag. In May, 5 events were held across 5 libraries with 2 visiting authors and children from 12 schools took part in launching the project. Library managers visited 54/66 primary schools in the summer term to promote the project. 61% of the children were already library members but many families re-joined and resumed using the library as a result of the promotion. By early July, 985 existing members and 630 new members of the Year 4 group had activated their new library cards by borrowing books: a 26% increase in issues to this Year group.

1.3 Lego Clubs

In September, Mold, Flint and Holywell libraries hosted 6 Lego Clubs for families. Communities First had obtained funding to enable the clubs to be provided by C2G Communities CIC. These were well attended with highly positive feedback on the enjoyment and learning value.

Key Strategic Objective: To provide and promote a suitable collection of resources to meet the needs of Flintshire's communities

- 1.4 The addition of 'thumbnail' images to the online catalogue has improved the accessibility of reading choices for library customers.

Key Strategic Objective: To provide opportunities for lifelong learning and self-development

1.5 Health and Wellbeing Week

A collaborative programme of events was hosted by Libraries, Arts and Leisure staff in venues across the County in June 2014. 10 of the 14 events were held in libraries.

1.6 Flintshire Learning Festival

Libraries' involvement this year consisted of an information stand and Rhymetime session at the Northop Family fun day and 2 sessions at Mold Library and 1 at the Record Office:

18th June

Bookbinding Workshop

An all day taster session introducing the art of bookbinding at Flintshire Records Office.

19th June

Learn with your Library

A demonstration event of free online learning opportunities available via Flintshire Libraries, featuring afternoon tea, e-book and e-magazines & recently installed wifi to attract potential learners.

Quick reads

A stand in the library foyer, manned by Learning Festival Partners. Partners used the offer of free books (Quick reads titles donated to the Flintshire Learning Festival Group by the Welsh Books Council) as a hook to promote learning opportunities in Flintshire.

2. Arts, Culture and Events

Key Strategic Objective: Participation, Presentation and Partnerships

2.1 'Happy Faces...Dancing Feet' April-June 2014

350 young people from Communities First East Flintshire together with Flying Start in Denbighshire worked with professional visual artist Luned Rhys Parri and Dance Practitioner Jamie Jenkins from NEW Dance to create artwork based on the theme of 'Happy Faces...Dancing Feet'. This project explored, with a fun and practical approach, how young people respond to emotion, what makes them happy and how this is physically/verbally conveyed. Each centre received four days of activity. The project

culminated with exhibitions at Clwyd Theatr Cymru (6 May-10 June 2014) and Rhyl Library Gallery (24 May-19 July 2014), with young people performing alongside the exhibits during the official opening.

2.2 Water & Stone: Ancient Flintshire Sites in Welsh Wool, June-July 2014

This programme was devised by the Community Events Officer and hosted by the Retired and Senior Volunteer Programme (RSVP) in Flintshire. It was a three part project which allowed participants the opportunity to work alongside professional felting artist, Helen Melvin, using local wools, natural dyes and early felting techniques.

2.3 Crossing Borders: 'The Secret Garden', May-July 2014

This cross county project saw 3 Flintshire schools and 1 Denbighshire school working with professional Director/Writer, Janys Chambers, and Visual Artists, Andrea Davies and Sarah Carvell, to create an original drama performance based on the novel 'The Secret Garden'. Each school received 11 days of workshops. The performance formed part of the Flintshire Schools in Performance.

Key Strategic Objective: Participation, Presentation and Policies

2.4 Gwanwyn Festival May-June 2014

The May Gwanwyn Festival 2014 in Flintshire was a two-part celebration of the richness of experience and depth of perception of people over 50 in our community. Using poetry as an art form to reach into the heart of our community in a unique way, 40 people took part in the project and 120 people visited the resulting exhibition. This year's project was funded by the Gwanwyn Festival, Age Concern and Flintshire County Council.

Key Strategic Objective: Advocacy, Participation, Presentation, Partnerships and Policies

2.5 Arts in Health Schools Project - Aaron's Diary

This pilot project, in partnership with the Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board, provided 8 participating schools with a creative experience that promoted health and well being through the artistic exploration of an original story written by The Shed Theatre Company, inspired by the Japanese legend about the 1,000 paper cranes. A drama practitioner from The Shed Theatre Company visited each school to creatively share the story of 'Aaron's Diary' and to explore the themes of the five precepts of well-being in mind.

3. Leisure Services

Key Strategic Objective: *Increasing participation in physical activity and enabling the Flintshire Community to develop its potential in sport*

3.1 There is currently only one National Strategic Indicator for Leisure Centres. NSI LCS/002 records the number of visits to Local Authority Sport & Leisure Centres during the year where the visitor will be participating in physical activity, per 1,000 population. For the first six months of 2014/15, the recorded figure is 4,623.61 visits per 1,000 population. Physical activity participation is - 4.17% down on the same six-month period during 2013/14, however, the temporary closure of the ice rink is significant to the reduced footfall.

In a national context, www.dataunitwales.gov.uk has published the 2013/14 outturn in relation to NSI LCS/002. With a total of 10,057 visits per 1,000 population, Flintshire is ranked 2nd out of the six Metropolitan Authorities and 5th in Wales overall.

3.2 The Festival of Youth Sport (FOYS) took place at Deeside Leisure Centre on 15 May 2014. More than 2,200 children from 64 schools across the County took part in 12 sporting events and competitions. The street dance event saw 22 primary school teams and 7 secondary school teams compete against each other, with more than 400 pupils attending in the sports hall. The event, now in its eighth year, is the largest of its kind in Wales and encourages the promotion of Sport Wales's mission to get children 'hooked on sport' for life.

3.3 In August 2014, Leisure Services was awarded the insport Development Bronze standard by Disability Sport Wales. This national kitemark award, which follows the Sports Development team's attainment of the first tier Ribbon standard in autumn 2013, further recognises Leisure's commitment towards the inclusive provision of sport and physical activity opportunities for disabled people.

3.4 In May 2014, Sport Wales published the results of its Active Adults Survey 2012. For Flintshire, the headline statistics are as follows:

- 11% volunteer in sport in the North Wales region
- 27% are members of a sports club
- 70% said their health was 'good' or 'very good'
- 38% said "It's important to me to take part in sport or exercise regularly"
- 33% said "I encourage my family to take part in sport or exercise"
- 36% were 'hooked on sport' compared to the all Wales figure of 39%

3.5 The Play Unit recorded a total of 19,041 visits to summer 2014 Play Schemes with 3,576 individual children registering for the programme. Leisure Services managed 13 x five-week schemes, 6 x four-week schemes and 37 x three-week schemes (including 3 x Welsh language schemes which accounted for 947 visits). Due to this revised programme, a viable attendance comparison between 2013 and 2014 is unavailable.

Key Strategic Objective: Quality Management of Leisure Facilities

3.6 The new Leisure Services' staffing structure was implemented on 7 July 2014. The new staffing structure has produced a service efficiency of £269k. The re-structure contributes to the 'Sustainability' area for improvement highlighted within the 2014/15 Service Plan.

3.8 In May 2014, the Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE) published Customer Satisfaction Survey results (weighted) for six leisure centre sites. (The APSE Average Score is based upon similar type facilities in the same 'family group'):

SITE	Staff & Information	Facility Characteristics	Value for Money	Performance Score
Deeside	78.23%	74.59%	76.64%	76.46%
APSE Average	78.94%	75.85%	73.94%	76.60%
Jade Jones Pavilion Flint	84.79%	81.58%	85.09%	83.48%
APSE Average	73.76%	71.96%	69.00%	71.97%
Holywell	76.15%	73.23%	64.91%	73.45%
APSE Average	73.76%	71.96%	69.00%	71.97%
Mold	76.56%	72.37%	70.19%	73.40%
APSE Average	74.51%	70.26%	68.61%	71.42%
Buckley	76.42%	68.29%	70.54%	71.68%
APSE Average	74.51%	70.26%	68.61%	71.42%
CQ Pool	76.79%	71.42%	67.71%	72.54%
APSE Average	73.42%	70.51%	68.05%	71.02%

3.9 At Mid-Year 2014/15, 376 individual customers had used the on-line booking and payment facility (excluding ten pin bowling and Afon Spa customers) since its launch in February 2012. This compares with 328 individual customers at Year End 2013/14.

Key Strategic Objective: Renewal of the County's leisure provision

3.10 The improvement scheme for children's play areas based upon a match-funding agreement between the County Council and Town & Community Councils has resulted in the County Council contributing £105k in 2014/15 towards the development of 16 play areas. The planning and design of these improvement works has taken place during the first six months of this financial year, with installation due to be completed during Quarters 3 & 4.

3.11 During the second half of 2013/14, legal work relating to recreation grounds nominated as designated Queen Elizabeth II Fields was completed with 15 sites securing a protection in perpetuity. During 2014/15, several formal presentations of the 'Fields in Trust' commemorative plaque were held at individual sites to raise public awareness of the legal dedication of the land for recreation purposes.

4. Museums and Archives

4.1 In June 2014, Connah's Quay Museum opened as part of the re-development of the Connah's Quay Library building.

Areas of Concern

1. Libraries

Key Strategic Objective: To provide a relevant and responsive library service for Flintshire's communities

1.1 For 2014/15, Flintshire may fail to provide a service achieving the Welsh Public Library Standards on staffing, expenditure and opening hours.

Key Strategic Objective: To ensure services are well managed and efficient, with high levels of customer service provided by courteous and knowledgeable staff

1.2 Flintshire fails to meet the Welsh Public Library Standard on staffing. Pressures on library managers continue to increase with a reduction of 1.6 FTE within the team during this reporting period.

2. Leisure

Key Strategic Objective: Quality Management of Leisure Facilities

2.1 Leisure Services' expenditure is on target for the first six months of 2014/15. Though net income is £35,385 down on the same period in 2013/14, this is largely due to the unforeseen temporary closure of the ice rink in April and May. This negative figure will be rectified shortly following an insurance payment of £63,973. (Leisure Services received the formal settlement offer on 8 October).

Improvement Plan (none in year priorities)

- Festivals, community arts and events (see 2.1 – 2.5 of areas of positive performance)
- Level of use of libraries (see 1.1 – 1.6 of areas of positive performance and 1.1 & 1.2 of areas of concern)
- Creative and expressive arts (see 2.1 – 2.5 of areas of positive performance)
- Childhood obesity and healthy lifestyles through increasing participation in youth sport (see 3.2 – 3.4)
- Participation in sport and use of leisure centres (see 3.1 & 3.4 of areas of positive performance)
- Informal and formal play (see 3.5, 3.10 of areas of positive performance)

Key Projects

1. Clwyd Theatr Cymru

1.1 The Theatre is currently developing plans to implement a new and more efficient operating model. Much of the saving will come from reduced in-house production budgets. The main house of the theatre will be a focal point for maximising income levels and maintaining the current level of activity through co-productions and collaborations with other theatre companies. Income generation will be increased by reviewing ticket prices and seeking ways to generate higher income from the bars, café and shop, as well as utilising function rooms for hire and events.

2. Alternative Delivery Models

2.1 Officers within the Organisational Change 1 (Community) portfolio are currently developing a Flintshire Guide to Alternative Delivery Models explaining what they are and when they might be considered.

3. Community Assets

3.1 Following County Forum meetings, the Chief Officers for Organisational Change have re-launched the Community Asset Transfer Scheme using Flintshire Local Voluntary Council as the agency to support and administer the scheme. This project is moving at a rapid pace.

Collaboration / Partnership Working

1. Libraries

- 1.1 Health and Well Being Week (identified above in para. 1.5) was a collaborative programme of events hosted by Libraries, Arts and Leisure.
- 1.2 Flintshire Library Service continues to support the Wales Library Management System (LMS) Project and is working towards a regional bibliographic service once the LMS is in place.
- 1.3 Flintshire Library Service, in partnership with Communities First, ran Job Clubs at three libraries; digital assistance training was provided at four libraries in partnership with Communities 2.0.

2. Arts, Culture and Events

- 2.1 The 'Happy Faces...Dancing Feet' project (identified above in para 2.1) also ran at the Oak Tree Centre, Rhyl.
- 2.2 The Water & Stone: Ancient Flintshire Sites in Welsh Wool programme (identified above in para. 2.2) was developed in collaboration with the Retired and Senior Volunteer Programme (RSVP) in Flintshire.

3. Leisure Services

- 3.1 During summer 2014, Leisure Services and Urdd Gobaith Cymru worked in partnership to deliver play schemes through the medium of Welsh. Leisure Services' Play Unit received a grant from *Families First* and provided all staff training, equipment and supervision whilst Urdd Gobaith Cymru directly employed the play workers. The play schemes were held for three weeks at Ysgol Bro Carmel, St. Richard Gwyn High School and Ysgol Maes Garmon, Mold.
- 3.2 During summer 2014, Leisure Services worked in partnership with Schneider Electric (Manor Industrial Estate, Flint) to develop a corporate membership package for its workforce. A total of 14 employees have subsequently joined Leisure on an annual gym membership generating £4.5k income for the service.

Summary of Operational Risks (from the above sections)

Risk Type	Risk Ref. and Description	Net Risk Score	Risk Trend	Target Risk Score & Date
Operational	Reduction in capacity of libraries' management team leading to reputational risk around delivery deliver on national initiatives	A	↔	A
Operational	Insurance claim for temporary closure of Deeside Ice Rink (Easter 2014, £64k)	A	↓	G Q3 2014/15
Operational	Potential reduction or end of <i>Families First</i> grant funding to support delivery of the summer play scheme programme (currently £81k)	A	↔	G Q4 2014/15
Operational	Closure of Mold Leisure Centre's ATP on health & safety grounds due to inability to meet cost of replacement floodlighting (£56k)	A	↔	G Q3/4 2014/15

Section 2 - Internal and External Regulatory Reports

Report: *Welsh Public Library Standards: Review of Flintshire's performance against the fourth framework of WPLS*

Date Finalised: September 2014

Conclusion: *Flintshire Library Service achieved 6 out of the 9 standards, an increase of 2 compared to March 2013. Two further standards were partly met*

Recommendations:

Summary (excerpt from the audit report)

The authority had made some progress in the final year of the 4th assessment framework but performance overall have been limited by gradual erosion of spending in 2 key areas - the book materials' budget and the staffing budget. These matters had been drawn to the authority's attention in previous years and until such time as the authority is able to channel more resources into those areas the scope for achieving higher performance is very limited.

Section 3 - Corporate Reporting

Equality and Welsh Language

List the Equalities and Welsh Language Impact Assessments: -

(1) Started/Work in Progress

Leisure Services in relation to its Business Plan 2014-18 and the proposed increases to tariff to help offset the challenging budget position.

(2) Completed during the period (April – September 2014)

n/a

List the work areas / functions where diversity of customers are monitored

Libraries

- The libraries management system does not collect information on the diversity of library customers. Customer diversity information will be requested via the Welsh Public Library Standards Survey 2014-17.

Leisure Services

- Registration for an actif card requests information from customers in relation to ethnicity, religion, marital status, disability and preferred language. The submission of this information is optional but where it is provided it is recorded onto the leisure management system database.
- actif plus one is a disability equality scheme which permits a personal assistant to have free access to our leisure facilities when supporting a disabled customer. A total of 122 disabled customers have 'signed up' for the actif plus one subscription since the launch of the scheme in 2009.
- During this reporting period, Leisure Services and Menter Iaith have together identified 222 children who wish to be taught swimming lessons via the Welsh medium.
- The Sports Development Team monitors diversity as part of its Dragon Sport school and holiday club programme.
- The Play Unit monitors and evaluates the diversity of all children attending the summer play scheme programme (July-August 2014).
- Leisure Services is responsible for managing the North East Wales Community Play Project (NEWCPP), a Big Lottery funded project delivering play provision across targeted play deprived communities in Flintshire, Wrexham and Denbighshire. Between 1 August 2013 and 31 July 2014, the last year of the three-year project, NEWCPP recorded first language and disability data from parental consent forms for children attending in Flint, Gronant and Trelogan.

Appendix 1 - Performance Indicators

Key

R	Target significantly missed or likely to be missed by a significant margin
A	Target missed or likely to be missed but within an acceptable level
G	Target achieved / exceeded or on track to be achieved / exceeded

The RAG status of the indicators for the half year position are summarised as follows: -

R	0	A	1	G	0
----------	----------	----------	----------	----------	----------

Note 1 – NSI = National Statutory Indicator PAM = Public Accountability Measure

Note 2 – Change (Improved / Downturned) is based on comparison with the previous reporting period. Where it is more appropriate to compare performance with the same period in the previous year this should be stated in the commentary.

Indicator	NSI / PAM (Note 1)	Annual Outturn 2013/14	Annual Target 2014/15	Mid-Year Outturn 2014/15	Target RAG	Change e.g. Improved / Downturned (Note 2)	Commentary
LCL/001(b): The number of visits to Public Libraries during the year, per 1,000 population	NSI	5,314.73 Visits per 1,000	5,500 Visits per 1,000	n/a	N/A	n/a	Mid-year information not available for virtual visits but physical visits increased by 2%.
LCS/002(b): The number of visits to local authority sport and leisure centres during the year per 1,000 population where the visitor will be participating in physical activity	NSI	10,056.59 Visits per 1,000	9,700 Visits per 1,000	4,623.61 Visits per 1,000	A	Downturn (explained in commentary)	Physical activity participation is - 4.17% down on the same six-month period during 2013/14, however, the temporary closure of the ice rink is significant to the reduced footfall.

Appendix 2 – High Level (Red) Net Risks

Risk to be managed - No red risks