

## ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	Tuesday 26 <sup>th</sup> April 2016
<b>Report Subject</b>	Welsh Public Library Standards
<b>Report Author</b>	Chief Officer Organisational Change

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The *Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964* makes it a duty of the relevant Welsh Ministers (currently the Deputy Minister for Culture, Sport and Tourism) “to *superintend and promote the improvement of the public library service provided by local authorities...and to secure the proper discharge by local authorities of the functions in relation to libraries conferred upon them as library authorities under this Act*”. Under the same Act, library authorities are required to “*provide a comprehensive and efficient library service for all persons desiring to make use thereof*”.

Since 2002, the Welsh Ministers have fulfilled this duty through the Welsh Public Library Standards (WPLS, or, the Standards). The first framework ran from 2002 to 2005 with subsequent frameworks covering the periods 2005-08, 2008-11, 2011-14 and 2014-17. Each individual framework evolved to reflect the changing needs and expectations of public library users. In addition to the fulfilment of statutory duties, the WPLS framework plays a valuable role in supporting the development of public library services.

Local authorities also have a statutory duty (under section 7 of the Act) to provide a library service and encourage both adults and children to make full use of that library service. The performance indicators assist the Welsh Government in assessing whether or not local authorities in Wales are complying with their duties under the 1964 Act, and in assessing the comprehensiveness and efficiency, in terms of the manner of delivery, of library services in Wales.

This report details the changing context of the WPLS, our current performance and anticipated future performance.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

1	To comment on the changing context for Welsh Public Library Standards and our progress on delivery against the standards.
---	---

## REPORT DETAILS

1.00	<b>BACKGROUND TO WPLS PERFORMANCE</b>
1.01	<p>There is general consensus among stakeholders concerned with the provision of public library services in Wales that these performance measurement frameworks, introduced and administered by the Welsh Government for the sector, have helped public library services to improve in a number of ways and in key areas. For example, as a result of the Standards, there have been significant improvements in service areas such as the delivery of requests and provision of ICT facilities and services, leading to enhanced outcomes for library customers.</p>
1.02	<p>In recent years there has been a growing feeling that the WPLS do not account for the current budgetary context and the changing methods of service delivery such as Alternative Delivery Models and Community Asset Transfer. Therefore recent national reports about community libraries have helped consider what options there are for communities to be involved in delivery of services and which types of provision should be included in consideration of the WPLS. So for example in terms of our current and future plans we will include the information about professional library services run in community buildings (planned at Holywell and Broughton) and any Alternative Delivery Model organisation delivering our core library service. However we would not include figures from libraries where the community have taken these on and are providing a community led provision different from a professional library service.</p>
1.03	<p>In 2015 the library service reported on performance for the first year of the fifth framework of Welsh Public Library Standards covering 2014-17. The annual assessment of our performance is attached as Appendix A.</p>
1.04	<p>The Fifth Framework consists of <b>Core Entitlements</b> and <b>Quality Indicators</b>. These are designed to ensure that library services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage with customers and potential users</li> <li>• Provide opportunities for individual and community development (core entitlements 1,2 &amp; 3)</li> <li>• Are delivered from buildings and facilities which are welcoming, inclusive and fit for purpose (core entitlements 4,5,6 &amp;7)</li> <li>• Provide a range of resources and services to meet people's needs (core entitlements 8,9,10,11,12 &amp; 13)</li> <li>• Are professionally managed with adequate resources (core entitlements 14, 15, 16, 17 &amp; 18)</li> </ul> <p>There are 23 Quality Indicators. Not all are measured by a target, and authorities are required to report on data collected from user surveys, feedback, sampling and to use Performance Indicators such as visitor numbers, attendance at events and level of ICT use.</p>
1.05	<p>In 2014-15 Flintshire met 17 of the 18 core entitlements in full, and</p>

	partially met 1. This was due to the fact that not all the libraries provided WIFI at that time. Of the 7 quality indicators which have targets Flintshire achieved 2 in full and 5 in part.
1.06	For those Quality Indicators where a target is set, Flintshire fully met the following in 2014-15: QI 5. Location of service points QI 16. Opening hours (no less than 120 per week should be provided per 1,000 resident population)
1.07	Flintshire partially met the following, in 2014-15: QI 3 Individual development QI 8. Number of items acquired per 1000 resident population QI 9. a) percentage of material budget spent on resources for children. b) minimum of 4% of materials budget to be spent on Welsh language materials. QI 10 Online access QI 13 Staffing
1.08	The remaining indicators do not have targets but allow performance to be compared between authorities. This information is provided at Appendix A. Flintshire's rankings fall within the median range.
1.09	Predicted performance for 2015-16 is that Flintshire will meet 17 of the 18 core entitlements in full, and partially meet 1. This was due to the fact that not all the libraries provided WIFI. WIFI will be provided in all libraries for 2016-17.
1.10	For those Quality Indicators where a target is set, performance in Flintshire is expected to fully meet the following in 2015-16: QI 5. Location of service points QI 8. Number of items acquired per 1000 resident population
1.11	Flintshire is expected to partially meet the following in 2015-16: QI 3 Individual development QI 9. a) percentage of material budget spent on resources for children. b) minimum of 4% of materials budget to be spent on Welsh language materials. Flintshire will exceed the indicator for spending on materials for children. This is seen as not achieving the target. QI 10 Online access QI 13 Staffing
1.12	Flintshire will not meet the following in 2015-16 QI 16. Opening hours (no less than 120 per week should be provided per 1,000 resident population) This will be fully met for 2016-17 as Deeside Library opened in March 2016 and the opening hours of this library ensure that we fully meet requirements for this quality indicator.
1.13	In conclusion Flintshire's performance against the standards is good. A slight drop in performance was seen in 2015/16 when budget savings have been made through service efficiencies. Performance will improve in 2016-

	17 when bigger changes to the network have been fully implemented e.g. re-location of libraries and community asset transfers. The medium term business plan for libraries took WPLS into account when proposals for efficiencies were made and current level of performance should be maintained and possibly improved.
--	--

<b>2.00</b>	<b>RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS</b>
-------------	------------------------------

2.01	<p><b>Financial Implications</b></p> <p>There are no financial implications indicated for the improvement of performance against WPLS. Changes proposed to the library network in 2015-16 and 2016-17 as part of the Libraries MTF Business Plan, once completed, should not adversely affect the performance. This is because funding will be in place to provide sufficient hub libraries, open for sufficient hours and with enough budget for purchasing resources.</p>
------	---

2.02	<p><b>Human Resource Implications</b></p> <p>Flintshire have been unable to fully meet staffing requirements and this is expected to continue as staffing per capita and professional staffing per capita is well below the standard. Currently the head of service is qualified and trained to the required standard. This should be ensured when the proposed structure for any Alternative Delivery Model (ADM) is planned. Staff training requirements have been met and this should also be considered in plans for an ADM.</p> <p>The quality indicator for supporting individual development is only partially met and this is due to low staff capacity which does not allow for staff to provide formal skills training sessions at all the libraries. The service relies on partnership arrangements for this provision, and this is only in place at some hub libraries.</p>
------	---

<b>3.00</b>	<b>CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT</b>
-------------	---

3.01	The return for 2014-15 was approved by the portfolio member in June 2015.
------	---

<b>4.00</b>	<b>RISK MANAGEMENT</b>
-------------	------------------------

4.01	<p>Key Risks and Mitigation:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Lack of qualifications, training and staff development – these should be incorporated into any plans for an ADM.</li> <li>2. Reducing performance against WPLS – the Medium Term Libraries Plan ensures the service can achieve what is realistically possible within the current budgetary constraints.</li> </ol>
------	--

<b>5.00</b>	<b>APPENDICES</b>
5.01	Appendix A – Welsh Public Library Standards 2014-17. Flintshire County Council. Annual Assessment Report 2014-15.

<b>6.00</b>	<b>LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS</b>
6.01	<p><i>Guidance on Community Managed Libraries and the Statutory Provision of Public Library Services in Wales.</i></p> <p><a href="http://gov.wales/about/cabinet/cabinetstatements/2015/libraries/?lang=en">http://gov.wales/about/cabinet/cabinetstatements/2015/libraries/?lang=en</a></p> <p><i>Libraries making a difference: the fifth quality framework of Welsh Public Library standards 2014-17</i></p> <p><a href="http://wales.gov.uk/docs/drah/publications/140425wpls5en.pdf">http://wales.gov.uk/docs/drah/publications/140425wpls5en.pdf</a></p> <p><b>Contact Officer:</b> Pennie Corbett, Principal Librarian  <b>Telephone:</b> 01352 704402  <b>E-mail:</b> <a href="mailto:pennie.corbett@flintshire.gov.uk">pennie.corbett@flintshire.gov.uk</a></p>

<b>7.00</b>	<b>GLOSSARY OF TERMS</b>
7.01	Welsh Public Library Standards - The performance indicators that assist the Welsh Government in assessing whether or not local authorities in Wales are complying with their duties under the 1964 Act, and in assessing the comprehensiveness and efficiency, in terms of the manner of delivery, of library services in Wales.
7.02	Alternative Delivery Model (ADM) - A different way of providing the service ranging from shared service through to a social organisation through to external procurement.
7.03	Community Asset Transfer (CAT) – The transfer of a community asset to a community or social organisation on the basis of a 27 year lease and peppercorn rent.