APPENDIX 3 (B): Welsh Public Library Standards - Case Studies

Authority: Caerphilly County Borough Council

1. The impact which the library has had on an individual, or on a group of individuals, during the year. Describe the use made of the service, and the difference that use made to the individual or group concerned. Up to four case studies may be provided (indicative length: 500 words each).

    a)

Abercarn Library and its community run café provides the ideal setting for local adult learning and job seeking support through a range of complementary partners coordinated by a work coach each Friday. The setting offers only part of the solution delivered and the welcome and support of local Library staff is crucial to making the excellent physical resources onsite truly valuable to the customers in receipt of IT support and Job seeking assistance.

Comment (Abercarn Library – Lynette Jones [Work Coach])

I have been working at Abercarn library every Friday morning since October 2013, for Blackwood Job Centrre Plus providing a 'Youth Hub', which involves customers coming to the library to have support from Jobcentre services, we also involve Careers Wales and Communities 1st, providing help and support to move our customers into work or nearer the job market, by working together to get the best outcome for our customers with CV's, Universal Jobmatch, other organisations also attend such as Lift Project, we have also had customers who are wheelchair users, I must commend the staff at the library, Kerry and Julie as they are a great asset and so helpful to ourselves and our customers especially as we tend to take over the computer areas every week. They are also happy to help our customers to set up smart cards etc. The cafe is a great help too, providing us with drinks and a relaxing area with our customers, so well done to all the volunteers. I think this has been so successful due to the people who run this and also the welcoming atmosphere and the support given to the Jobcentre by everyone involved including Cheryl the manager who is most helpful. This proves that by working together within the community and involving many Partners we can all help each other and help move our customers forward. so thank you for supporting and grateful thanks again to all the staff and volunteers at Abercarn library.

    b)

Challenging stereotypes and engaging with the recreational or educational reading needs of all customer groupings is of vital importance to any Public Library when there are many competing pressures for the visitor's time. The comment below reflects positively on the contribution Bargoed Hanbury Chapel Library staff made to children and young people through their establishing of a Harry Potter night event where the 2 star listed facility became Hogwarts for a week of activities.

Comment (Bargoed Hanbury Chapel – Harry Potter Night event – Teenager feedback)

I had a wonderful comment from Connor Parker with regard to our Harry Potter Book Night event last Thursday, he came bounding into the library absolutely beside himself with excitement exclaiming how much he loved Harry Potter and we had an animated discussion about both films and books. He was very happy to tell me that he thought we were 'sooo cool' to have decorated the library so well and then he literally bounced from one display area to the next. His older brother Luke helped establish the Warhammer Club with the staff, which is held here every other Saturday morning, so they are familiar faces to the staff. Both are well behaved and friendly, but as they are both teenagers it is expected that staff no longer fall into 'cool people' territory any longer. It makes it all worthwhile! EH

c)

Caerphilly County Borough Library Service plays an important role social and community engagement role among its older customer grouping.

The comment detailed below highlights both the value of small part-time village facilities and the enabling opportunities that hosting events like 'Knit and Natter' classes can play and similarly reading groups. The County Borough Council has invested considerable resources in recent years to update and enhance its recreational reading offer and supports some 40 reading groups that meet in local Library facilities and elsewhere in the community.

Comment (Llanbradach Library – Older residents/ social and learning benefit of Library Service – feedback)

Comment: Last year I joined the Knit and Natter group on Friday mornings and really enjoy it. As well as doing my knitting, I catch up with old friend (and some new) and all their news once a week. After being away from the area for 14 years it was what I needed to find my way back into the local community. The lady at the library (Jeanette) is most helpful and has found me some books on crochet, as I have always wanted to learn how to master that skill. While I am in the library, I can always ask about books and have some reserved for me, so although I now live in Blackwood, if I can't find anything there I like, I look on the shelves in Llanbradach too. I have also joined a book club in Llanbradach library, which is held once a month. As well as performing a social aspect, it gives me the opportunity to sample many different types of books, some of which I might not have chosen for my self- and so broadens my reading horizons.

d)

The comment detailed below highlights the impact that online services can have in sustaining a resident's use of Library facilities even when their underlying health issues are significant. The 'virtual Library', or in Caerphilly Libraries case the 19th service point, can sustain conventional access to recreational reading and enable residents to feel informed and able to address their information and learning needs.

Comment (New Tredegar – DDA issues and the benefits of e-zines, e-books, and online information provision– feedback)

A customer came in to end theirs and their wives relationship with the library service. Both of the customers had issues with their wrists stopping them holding books and mobility issues and felt the library physically wasnt an option for them anymore. I queried if they used e-readers and they said they did but were'nt happy with the range of free stock available on amazon. I told them that we had a great range of free stock available through their librarycard. During their visit I sat them down and re-joined them through the smartcard service. I showed them how to access our e-books and e-zines. I also showed them our ancestry subscription and they told me they also helped their grand daughter do her homework. I took this as an opportunity to show the customers our brittanica site with which they were very happy. The customer was shocked they could use the library service from home at any time of night (the customer was a night owl). They left very happy.

2. Please provide a narrative that demonstrates how the library service is contributing towards wider Welsh Government priorities and strategic goals (indicative length: 500 - 1,000 words)

2 (i) How the Borough Library Service contributes to key Caerphilly County Borough Council Local Authority Strategies and Plans

Single Integrated Plan	Anti-Poverty Strategy (4 P's)	2015-16 Council Improvement Objectives	Priority Areas that the Library Service contributes toward	Key Contributions – Libraries
Theme 1: **Prosperous Caerphilly**	**Places** (where people live and the services they have access to locally can impact positively on their ability to be resilient to poverty)	To help people make the best use of their household income and manage their debts.	Develop and sustain vibrant town and village centres The Borough is able to offer sustainable and high quality town and village centres that have the potential to enhance resident feelings of well-being and to develop the skills and employability of local residents.	New and refurbished Library facilities in town centre/retail locations are anchor services that support the vitality and value of the communities they serve. Since 2007 the Council, stakeholders, and the private/third sector have invested some £12million in develop Borough Library sites making the facilities fit for purpose and complementary to the retail and local hubs they often occupy. Access to free public internet facilities in Libraries, 250 Internet Terminals, alongside a range of training and mentored support provided for residents, including Digital Friday activities at 6 locations enable customers to gain new skills and qualifications and to become IT enabled. There has been an 11% rise in total computer hours used and a 3% increase in total occupancy rates from 25 to 28%.
Theme 2: **Learning Caerphilly**	**Prospects, Pockets, & Prevention** (measures and policies that support residents to improve their life chances, income levels, and reduce the risk of them sliding into poverty)	Improve outcomes for all learners, particularly those vulnerable to under achievement To help people make the best use of their household income and manage their debts.	Residents of all ages are supported to learn new skills and gain qualifications. Residents are able to learn in their locality at School, work, or in a variety of community locations (including virtually from home). Residents have the skills and knowledge to be resilient to the challenges of poverty through access to good quality training and support. Residents have access to training and improved employability conditions that have the potential of increasing their income levels, qualifications, and ability to progress with their employers.	County Borough Libraries support residents to access mediated and informal learning, books and other materials, and to feel in control of their individual educational progressing and achievements. Some 6,778 residents took part in either structured or informal learning activities in Library premises during 2014-15 with 89% of those participating indicating they had learned and benefitted from the process. The range of new or recently refurbished Library premises include a strong focus on establishing community centred learning spaces that are modern, attractive, and learner friendly. Establishing/Developing sustainable online educational content that children, parents, and other independent learners who live or work in the County Borough can access and benefit from is a key goal of the Borough Library Service's Three Year Plan 2014-17 under the theme of 'e-digital services'.
Theme 3: **Healthier Caerphilly**	**Prevention** (measures and policies that assist residents not to slide into poverty)	Close the gap in life expectancy for residents between the most and least deprived areas in the county borough.	Support the mental as well as physical well-being of the County Borough's residents Access to skills, knowledge and information that enable residents to achieve their goals	Libraries offer access to a wide range of self-help, advice and well-being resources targeted at supporting the individual to cope with the physical or mental distress they may be facing (National Books on Prescription Scheme – supported by the Welsh Government where GP's can prescribe a book to a patient with mild to moderate mental health issues which the resident can then borrow from their local Library).

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2 (ii) How the Borough Library Service contributes to a range of Welsh Government Priorities and Strategic Goals

Libraries Inspire : The strategic development framework for Welsh libraries 2012-16	Welsh Government **Priorities for Tackling Poverty, Baroness Andrews Report 'Culture and Poverty', Fusion: Tackling Poverty through Culture**	Welsh Government - **Programme for Government**	Welsh Government - **Building a brighter future : Early Years and Childcare Plan, National Literacy Programme, Delivering Community Learning for Wales,** and **Qualified for life**	**Priority Areas that Caerphilly Borough Library Service contributes toward**	**Key Contributions – Caerphilly County Borough Library Service**
Modernise Public Library Buildings - to meet the changing needs of their users **Skills for life** – including literacy information and digital skill development **Attracting the Audience** – developing and utilising a planned programme of citizen engagement to access and benefit from Library provision in Wales **Investing in People** - Library staff are central to the provision of a good library experience for customers. The Libraries Inspire Framework is committed to continue investing resources and funding to enable Welsh Library Services to develop a skilled and confident workforce.	Culture and collaborative working as a driver for learning and improved life changes – focused on Communities First areas and the impact aspirational activities can support when available. ***Culture and Poverty Report*** Assist in mitigating the impact of poverty through ensuring fair access to computer technologies and working to improve engagement and wider skill development alongside community participation through 'digital inclusion' measures ***Welsh Government Priorities for tacking Poverty***	Widen access to our culture, heritage and sport, and encouraging greater participation. Reduce inequality and poverty among the most disadvantaged areas of Wales and work to ensure citizens do not fall into poverty wherever possible. Supporting education and employment progression as an enabler to lift people out of poverty and material deprivation. Ensuring residents and their carers receive the support required to benefit from fulfilled lives. Support the wider business and innovation growth environment through complementary access to community located learning and skill development opportunities. Support Schools, Colleges and Higher Education providers to play their role as community institutions through extending and enhancing the partnerships that exist with Public Library Services to their maximum effect. Work more effectively across the regional and local public sector bodies to collaborate wherever possible.	"Literacy is an essential life skill. To make sense of the world around them, young people need an understanding of written and spoken language, the ability to interpret what has been written or said, and to draw inferences from the evidence that surrounds them. It is also about being able to communicate – accurately, fluently and persuasively." ***National Literacy Programme*** "Collaborative working between support staff, teachers, school leaders, schools, colleges **and other learning centres** ... to enable children and young people to achieve their potential" ***Qualified for life*** Only 45% of poorer households read regularly to their under 3's compared to 78% among more affluent homes. Overall Wales under performs both among its wealthiest family settings and those significantly hampered by poverty with regard to child and parent confidence in reading. ***Building a brighter future: Early Years and Childcare Plan***	The creation of informal 'cultural hubs' at Library facilities including Bargoed Hanbury Chapel, Risca Palace Cinema, Newbridge Memo, and Caerphilly Library and Customer Service Centre places the Borough Library Service at the heart of artistic and community learning activity – with premises often located in important civic sites that are listed, supporting their retention, development, and effective utilisation. Projects linked to digital skill enablement, film and creative art activity, and reading initiatives, have and will continue to drive the Borough Library Services contribution to the 'programme for government' cultural & heritage priority themes. Access to a range of free services provided by the Borough Library Service including recreational and learning materials, IT facilities, including WiFi at 12 of its 18 locations, and community learning opportunities in partnership with a range of public sector / FE /HEI providers – all played an important role in supporting residents to lift themselves from the dangers of poverty and deprivation and to obtain skills that will benefit them in their future job seeking endeavours.	Since 2007 some £12 million has been invested in a range of new, refurbished, or enhanced Public Library spaces across Caerphilly County Borough in a number of listed iconic cultural sites including Bargoed Hanbury Chapel, Risca Palace, and the Memorial Hall Newbridge. Each new or refurbished facility has dedicated learning areas that can facilitate digital enablement alongside conventional educational activities. Some 6,778 residents took part in either structured or informal learning activities in Library premises during 2014-15, a rise of 36% on the previous year, with 89% of those participating indicating they had learned and benefitted from the process. Use of Library ICT facilities increased by 11% during 2014-15 building on a number of years of growth, in particular among adults seeking employment or benefit information often taking advantage of the volunteer based ICT tuition provided at the 6 largest Library sites as part of the Digital Friday initiative. During 2014-15 8,659 children and accompanying parents, carers, or teachers attend events and activities in local Borough Libraries including author sessions and toddler times. This represents a 9% rise on the numbers who participated in 2013-14. Attendance by children rose more markedly by some 14% with 7,581 taking part in activity sessions over the last 12 months.

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					In excess of 1,200 staff hours have been invested in workforce development activities during 2014-15. The Borough Library Service also supports the follow staff training and progression in the last year: - 2 Members of staff undertaking Master Degrees in Librarianship - 4 Officers are being supported to undertake NVQ's in the application of ICT in LIS work - 1 Employee is completing a ILM Level 5 in Management - 15 new employees are undertaking their full range of induction training at present