

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) The library service remains committed to partnership working with all Departments including the Education Departments within our Directorate and actively encourages EOTAS (Education Other Than At School) Students to visit libraries with their tutors. L is fourteen and an EOTAS student. He visits Deri Library with his tutor Darren and this is his account of how regular contact with the library service **has helped him.**

'I have been working with Darren on a photography project capturing images of the local area. On one visit to Deri Library, Julie suggested holding an exhibition of my work at that library. This was really exciting though I was quite shy about it as I'd never displayed anything before. I wasn't sure if anyone would care or if my work was good enough.'

'Julie's help didn't stop there. She also suggested I contact some of the other libraries in the area to see if they would be interested in holding the exhibition of my work. Over the next few days I visited Rhymney, Bargoed and New Tredegar Libraries and they all said yes, they would be happy to display my work! Also the exhibition will be displayed at Ty Penallta, Caerphilly Councils Head Offices, after the Education Services heard about the work I'd done.'

'I'm really happy about my exhibition, though find it quite funny when people tell me they like it. I go all red! I've had some great comments so far and people have been writing in the comment book. I do feel very proud of having an exhibition and I must say a big thank you to Julie and all the other librarians for helping me do something I never thought I'd ever do.'

L's mother also added, 'he is pleased with his work. Lots of people have spoken to me about the exhibition, calling over in the street, down the shop or at the local primary school. As it was on display in the libraries, everybody could gain access to see it as the library is a real hub of the community.'

The librarian at Deri has known L since he was a baby. Since visiting the library regularly with his tutor, she has noticed a big improvement with his communication skills and confidence. L now talks much more freely and enjoys all the positive feedback in the comments book about his exhibition. L is naturally reserved and shy so this sense of purpose and achievement resulting from visiting the library has been fantastic to see and has made him more self-confident.

The photography exhibition is still travelling around the Caerphilly Borough and Tweets of the event can be found in the attachment sent with this document. (JT)

- b) Caerphilly library service strongly supports and acknowledges its importance in the promotion of health and well-being to all residents and visitors in / to the Borough. We ensure buildings are safe, attractive and accessible: are open to all members of our communities and that staff are professional, approachable, knowledgeable and helpful.

Staff at Risca Library noticed that for some months a young lady would frequently visit the library. She did not engage with staff or customers and was more than happy to sit by herself in a quiet area. With her headphones on she would task herself with conducting her artwork. Over time, staff would quietly encourage conversation with her and talk to her about her artwork. Unexpectedly staff received the following letter and gift from this young lady.

'To everyone,

I wanted to do something nice to say thank you for the hours I've spent here since you opened. I have some health problems (physical and mental) and coming here always offers me some

	<p>respite. Sometimes it's difficult to go too far from the house, so to have somewhere I can drive to and then just sit in peace breaks up the day.</p> <p>I always notice how cheerful the staff are and how dedicated you are to visitors – from the funny voices at 'story time' to delight the toddlers, to helping people with computers.</p> <p>I also feel safe here. I know if anyone's upsetting the other visitors it's always sorted, like in the summer when some teenagers were shouting.</p> <p>I hope you enjoy the cupcakes – they're chocolate caramel and suitable for vegans. There's no need to thank me for them – I'm often nervous of speaking to people, which is why I appreciate being able to sit and draw / read without the pressure of conversation.</p> <p>Thank you!</p> <p>Hannah (the quite, skinny art girl)</p> <p>Since the gift and note, Hannah has carried on visiting Risca Library, conversing with staff when she's feels able and strong. When she is struggling with her mental health, Hannah will revert to passing staff notes to let them know how she is. Hannah's artwork has also been displayed at the Library. Hannah has openly stated she visits MIND and Risca Library are in talks to set up partnership working with the organisation. By working with MIND's art tutor, the library will display further artwork and also team up with the neighbouring MIND group at Torfaen. </p>
c)	<p>The library service undertakes to reach out to all members of its communities and is committed to providing services within community locations where residents find it difficult to visit their local library. Over the last three years, Community Librarians have run Shared Reading programmes at Residential Homes. Successful visits to a Rhymney Valley Residential Home: Min y Mynedd led to enquiries being made by the group leader from Gwerin, a Day Centre for adults with Adult Learning Needs with a simple enquiry, 'would you consider running a similar monthly session for our group?' The Library Service responded with a resounding yes.</p> <p>The adults in the group range in age from 20 to 60 years and spend time with each other at the centre where they use the facility to socialise, eat together and take day trips. Guest speakers also attend and offer talks and presentations on local history. The library service Community Librarian Saran says,</p> <p>'After meeting the group for an informal introduction and chat, I started the sessions by reading some poems. Following on from this we had an informal discussion about what the poem's mean, how the group interpreted them and about their lives in general. The comic poems were a huge hit and drew much laughter which made talking about the poems so much easier.'</p> <p>As the monthly sessions progressed, Saran noticed how relaxed the group was around her and how everyone loved to chat- even about personal and private topics such as the death of a pet. Saran has received many comments:</p> <p>'I loved the Roald Dahl poems and the funny ones'</p> <p>'Another fab session today, the whole group really enjoyed it'</p> <p>The group leader has said on many occasions how the clients have enjoyed the sessions. Whilst sitting in on the sessions, she has witnessed the group laughing at the poems, or sitting silently listening which shows how engaged and interested they are. The group leader believes this is beneficial to client's enjoyment and quality of life and states,</p> <p>'It's good for the group to have a different voice, a different visitor for a bit of variety.'</p> <p>'Everyone enjoyed thatit was so different and a great experience.'</p> <p>As a direct result of these sessions, the group leader and Saran have made arrangements for Gwerin to visit Rhymney Library to attend a local history talk. They are also visiting the library on a weekly basis where the group will run their craft sessions and make full use of the library service's IT facilities, Wi-Fi and book stock. </p>
d)	<p>Caerphilly Library Service understands the benefits library users can gain: by reading or researching its eclectic and excellent stock or sitting down and using WiFi or PC's, customers can</p>

gain and nurture invaluable life skills: Work Skills, IT skills, boost confidence, interpersonal and communication skills. Meet Alan . . .

Alan moved to the Caerphilly area from Newcastle in 1996. He used the old Caerphilly Library at Morgan Jones park to photocopy materials for his job delivering private music tuition. Unfortunately it proved difficult to maintain this career.

Many years later, Alan returned to Caerphilly Library at its new location in the central area of Caerphilly, this time accessing employment support through Job Club and using the IT facilities to improve his skills. Alan enrolled on a Teaching Assistant course at the local College and used the library extensively to access books and information relevant to his course. He used the library to complete assignments, many of which required Microsoft Publisher. During this time he received further support from ‘Digital Fridays’ – a group of volunteers who use the library facility to help others enhance their IT skills.

At the completion of his course, Alan starting looking once again for employment and decided to take up a teaching position in Mexico. By using the library facilities, he was able to research the customs of the country, correspond with his new employer and book his flights! In October 2016, Alan left Wales to take up his new life in Mexico. In a recent email sent to the library he states,

‘personally I began using the library for Jobclub at first – the library provided me with the only social outlet I could afford. Later on I gained a place at Ystrad Mynach College on a Teaching Assistant course. The staff at Caerphilly Library proved to be invaluable in helping me pass the course, with both technical help using computers and also giving me encouragement and confidence when I really needed it. I wouldn’t have made it to Mexico without the library and the marvellous staff. Thanks to all of your for helping me get here when frankly, I needed help – the library is good for lots of reasons – socially and educationally – and I got the benefit of both when my business and life fell apart.’

Alan is now settled in Mexico with a new home, new job and new girlfriend! He teaches during the day and entertains customers in a local coffee shop with his music in the evenings and weekends.

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).

The library service aligns itself clearly to the priorities and strategic objectives of Caerphilly County Borough Council. The authority ensures that it delivers on the programme set out by the Welsh Government, therefore it may prove useful to first consider how the library service contributes towards CCBC plans.

Caerphilly Delivers – The Single Integrated Plan 2014-17	Anti-Poverty Strategy	Council Improvement Objectives	Priority Areas and key contributions by the Library Service
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.	Develop and sustain vibrant town and village centres New and refurbished Library facilities in town centre/retail locations are anchor services that support the communities they serve. Since 2007 the Council, stakeholders, and the private/third sector have invested some £12million to develop Library sites making the facilities fit for purpose and complementary to the

			<p>local area and retail environment they often occupy.</p> <p>Access to free public internet facilities is available in Libraries through 250 PCs, alongside a range of training and mentored support provided for residents. This includes Digital Friday activities at 6 locations enabling customers to gain new skills and qualifications and to become IT enabled.</p>
<p>Theme 2: Learning Caerphilly</p>	<p>Prospects, and Pockets - measures and policies that support residents to improve their life chances, income levels, and reduce the risk of them sliding into poverty.</p>	<p>Improve outcomes for all learners, particularly those vulnerable to under achievement</p> <p>To help people make the best use of their household income and manage their debts.</p>	<p>Residents of all ages are supported to learn new skills and gain qualifications. They are able to learn within their locality including virtually from home.</p> <p>Residents have the skills and knowledge to meet the challenges of poverty through access to good quality training and support.</p> <p>Residents have access to training and improved employability conditions providing potential to increase income levels, qualifications, and ability to progress with their employment.</p> <p>County Borough Libraries support residents to access mediated and informal learning, books and other materials, and to feel in control of their progress and achievements.</p> <p>Within the range Library premises there is a strong focus on community centred learning spaces that are modern, attractive, and learner friendly.</p> <p>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'.</p>
<p>Theme 3: Healthier Caerphilly</p>	<p>Prevention - measures and policies that assist residents not to slide into poverty.</p>	<p>Close the gap in life expectancy for residents between the most and least deprived areas in</p>	<p>Support the mental and physical well-being of the County Borough's residents.</p> <p>Provide access to skills,</p>

		the county borough.	<p>knowledge and information that enable residents to achieve their goals</p> <p>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. The service provides access to the National Books on Prescription Scheme – where GP's prescribe a book to a patient with mild to moderate mental health issues; the resident then borrows the item from their local Library).</p>
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Library service contributions towards 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 – Wellbeing of Future Generations Act	Priority Areas and key contributions by Caerphilly Borough Library Service
<p>Modernise Public Library Buildings - to meet the changing needs of their users</p> <p>Skills for life – including literacy information and digital skill development</p> <p>Attracting the Audience – developing and utilising a planned programme of citizen engagement to access and benefit from Library provision in Wales</p> <p>Investing in</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>Culture and Poverty Report</p> <p>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</p>	<p>Widen access to our culture, heritage and sport, and encouraging greater participation.</p> <p>Reduce inequality and poverty among the most disadvantaged areas of Wales and work to ensure citizens do not fall into poverty wherever possible.</p> <p>Supporting education and employment progression as an enabler to lift people out of poverty and material deprivation.</p> <p>Ensuring residents and their carers receive the support required to benefit from fulfilled lives.</p> <p>Support the wider business and innovation growth environment through complementary access to community located learning and skill development</p>	<p>A prosperous Wales – using resources efficiently developing a skilled, well educated population within an economy generating wealth and providing employment opportunities</p> <p>A more equal Wales – Enabling people to fulfil their potential regardless of background and circumstances</p>	<p>Access to a range of free services provided by the Borough Library Service including recreational and learning materials; IT facilities, including WiF; and community learning opportunities in partnership with a range of public sector / FE /HEI providers. All these play an important role in supporting residents to lift themselves from poverty and deprivation and obtain skills to benefit them in their future job seeking .</p> <p>Each library, regardless of size, has dedicated learning areas that can facilitate digital enablement alongside conventional educational activities. Access to free public internet facilities is</p>

			<p>attending dementia awareness training. Community Librarians have developed Shared Reading groups at a number of care homes.</p> <p>A resilient Wales – support for social, economic and ecological resilience</p> <p>Professionally curated information resources, both traditional and digital format are essential in assisting resilience within communities. Access to reliable, impartial reputable information sources contributes towards building capacity within communities enabling empowerment and resilience.</p> <p>A Wales of cohesive communities – attractive, viable, safe and well connected communities.</p> <p>New and refurbished Library facilities in town centre/retail locations are anchor services that support the communities they serve. Libraries are viewed by residents as safe public spaces with a neutral and welcoming environment. Their establishment provides a facility which helps to give viability to local communities. Habury Chapel, Newbridge Memo and Palace Cinema building in Risca have all been converted into statement library facilities providing a first class environment for traditional library services, ICT facilities and community meeting spaces. The new Caerphilly library incorporated the dressed stone facade of the old post office into its exterior – all of</p>
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			<p>A globally responsible Wales – a Wales which takes account of whether it's decisions make a positive contribution to global well-being and has the capacity to change.</p>	<p>the libraries have thus guaranteed the survival and development of these important listed/civic buildings</p> <p>The service works with internal partners when planning sustainability for the service with a view to maximising efficiency in the use of all resources; staffing; buildings (co-location and agile working); energy usage and building ratings.</p>
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3. Please provide a short statement about the future direction and plans for the library service (indicative length 200 words).

The authority continues to develop its medium term financial plan proposals and the library service is required to fulfil its obligations towards enabling the authority to reach its savings target. The Improving Services strand of the Business Improvement Programme within the authority is continuing and a review of the library service is currently ongoing. Over the past six years the service has met its required savings targets. During 2016 / 2017 2.5 (FTE) senior staff posts were not backfilled leaving the library service with: 1 Head of Service, 2 Group Specialists and 6 Community Librarians. It important to note that further savings will be required from the service over the years 2017-2020 and the library service review will be undertaken with a view to identifying how these savings can be made, assessing the impact on communities and analysing how negative effects can be minimised. It is likely that any further savings identified will result in changes to front line service delivery and it is anticipated that the service will not meet some of the Core Entitlements and Quality Indicators identified in the *Sixth Quality Framework of Welsh Public Standards 2017 / 2020* that it has in previous years. However Caerphilly Library Service remains committed to 'provide a comprehensive and efficient library service' to the best of its ability.