

APPENDIX 3(B): WELSH PUBLIC LIBRARY STANDARDS – CASE STUDIES AND STRATEGIC STATEMENT 2017-18

Case Study and additional strategic narrative 2017-18 Annual Standards Report Caerphilly County Borough Library Service

Good impact case studies are expected to include evidence that the library service has made a positive difference to an individual (or group of individuals). This would normally go beyond a description of services provided and their use, to show the outcome, and may include testimony from the customers concerned.

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).

Please indicate if permission for the Welsh Government to re-use and/or publish the case studies has been obtained or not: Yes - obtained / No – not obtained

- a) **Caerphilly Libraries as important social and meeting places supporting residents to retain their personal independence and cognitive awareness - Nelson Library's Scrabble Club.**

Caerphilly County Borough Library Service plays an important role in the local communities it serves for both adults and children. The Borough's Libraries are places where friends meet to take part in activities, educational classes and special groups – from education classes to craft clubs.

In Nelson Library a Scrabble club has been running for over 4 years. It began after the library was approached by a partially sighted customer looking for a safe/friendly venue to host a Scrabble club for a few competitive friends who were all “mad keen Scrabble fans.” To begin with there were three attendees but now each week sees between 10 and 12 ladies all aged from 65 to 90 battling it out to find the right winning words. All are widows who otherwise rarely leave their houses and who “really enjoy” their weekly competitive social get-togethers. The library Scrabble club has provided a safe place for the friends to meet and make new friends and has helped keep the minds of the participants active and gives them something to look forward to each week.

Talking to the Scrabble fans revealed:

Only one or two of the group knew each other before joining the Scrabble club – “lasting friendships have been made.” It is something “I really look forward to during the week” for the company and the chance to talk about what is going on in the world and to talk about personal problems they are having – “Often health related!”

All the ladies live on their own and when asked what they would be doing if not attending the group the replies were basically “I'd be at home watching the telly while knitting.” The club

also “gives me a reason to leave the house” Walking to the library each Friday was also said to “Provide me with a good dose of exercise.”

Several said they love it as it helps keep their minds sharp possibly helping to stave off dementia. They used words like “brain stimulation” and “Keeps the brain going.” One said she “loved the competition” element.

The group is open to all ages and sexes – no men as yet has been “willing to join in.”

b) **Caerphilly Library Service supporting residents who find accessing facilities and provision challenging due to their disability – Machen Library assisting a young customer with CHARGE syndrome.**

The case study below highlights the County Borough Library Services commitment to supporting those with disabilities to use its services and feel welcome and included at all times.

Saffron and her family (Julia and Khaled) moved to the village of Machen when she was 18months old, she is now 7. Saffron has CHARGE Syndrome that according to the CHARGE Syndrome Foundation is “extremely complex ... involving extensive medical and physical difficulties” The Syndrome affects sight, hearing, balance, can cause heart defects and impact on growth and development. Saffron is deaf and partially sighted. Saffron communicates with sign language and as she has a tracheostomy tube is unable to make any sounds.

When the family moved to Machen they joined the Library as soon as possible and Julia has been bringing Saffron weekly to visit ever since. Saffron enjoys her visits. She loves looking at the books and the colourful displays and seeing other children. She will sit quite happily on her own by the kinder boxes examining certain books closely; she always seems to gravitate towards the same books so has a few personal favourites. Saffron delighted the library staff recently by bringing a book she was enjoying to the counter, with no prompting from Julia or the staff, for it to be issued to her. This is a massive step for Saffron and proves that she is now beginning to understand how a library works.

Saffron’s parents use an approach called ‘Total Communication’ with her which includes speech, body language, signs, gestures, symbols etc. The library staff have in Julia’s words:-

“always been very welcoming to Saffron allowing photographs of themselves to be taken for Saffron’s communication book”.

Julia also adds that:-

“Machen does not have much in the way of community services apart from the library. The library has run music sessions, arts and crafts activities which have been easy to access.

The library has been somewhere I can take Saffron regularly where I know she is welcome, it is open at regular times so I can use the communication book to let Saffron know where we are going.

Saffron has just started to understand the booking in and out process of library books and enjoys the process now, the library staff have patiently encouraged Saffron with this.

Saffron does not attend the local school and is not able to access after school clubs etc. so the library is vital for us to link in with our local community.

As the mother of a disabled child you can find yourself at a loose end and the library has provided a welcoming warm environment, somewhere to go, and somewhere to meet others.

We can't thank our library staff enough for this wonderful hub they run in our village".

The Library has provided a warm welcoming safe space for Saffron to explore. Julia acknowledges that the Library has been a lifeline to her and Saffron, somewhere to visit to break up the day and to see a friendly face and feel part of Machen community.

c) **Caerphilly County Borough Library Services supports customers to gain new skills and improve their employability potential – Rhymney Library customer uses her local Library to get her licensed Gym Instructor qualification.**

Caerphilly Library Service understands the benefits library users can gain: by reading or researching its eclectic and excellent stock or sitting down and using Wi-Fi or PC's, customers can gain and nurture invaluable life skills: Work Skills, IT knowledge, boost their confidence, and improve their interpersonal and communication abilities.

Alison has been undertaking a professional qualification via an online course in Rhymney library's IT learning suite to become a licenced gym instructor. She has highlighted that the library and the staff have been instrumental in her success, having recently completed her course and become qualified, after many months of intensive study on site, every day that the library is open. In addition to the research space, IT facilities, free Internet access, books and other resources that the library provides, Alison has commented on the informal learning support given to her by the staff, Damon, Valerie and Gail.

As well as supporting her learning needs on an ad hoc basis the staff have helped by signposting Alison to resources, organisations and partnerships that have helped improve her employability prospects and quality of life through pursuing her career aspirations. Alison has also noted that due to a lack of personal resources, she would not have been able to undertake the course, had it not been for Rhymney library and its staff. She even left a thank you card for the staff that read:

"To, Damon, Val and colleagues - Thank you all so much for your unfailing help and support during my time studying to become a Gym Instructor. It is very much appreciated - Best wishes, Alison".

Following Alison's successful training supported by Rhymney Library she has taken over one fitness class in the immediate area and begun to grow her reputation with 25 to 30 resident's regular taking part whilst being confident to branch out in other local communities as well.

d) **Caerphilly County Borough Library Service supporting Coding skills and learning across the generations – Three customers experiences at Caerphilly Town Library.**

This case study focuses on the customer experiences of three individuals of different

backgrounds who all use the Coding Club offer at Caerphilly Library to gain new skills, have fun, and get to know other people. Poppy is aged 9, Katherine is aged 10, and Claire the mother of two 10 year old boys who also attend Coding Club at the Library is a member of the adult club that has recently started.

Katherine described the experience as:

“one of my favourite clubs I have done before, and it has made my Friday an enjoyable day...I now go the Library much more often, and since I have joined code club I have read and borrowed many more books than I used to.”

Claire who initially attend Code Clubs in support her two sons has also joined the Library’s group for adults. Claire explains how the adult coding club helps members to socialise, learning from one and other and access the sites many other facilities and resources:

“Mae'r clwb oedolion yn rhoi cyfle i oedolion i gymdeithasu gyda pobl eraill o'r gymuned, helpu a dysgu oddi wrth eraill, a datblygu sgiliau fel grŵp. Mae gan y llyfrgell adnoddau eang yn addas ar gyfer pob diddordeb a gallu... Mae'r clwb wedi rhoi yr hyder i mi allu helpu fy mhlant pan fydden nhw yn dysgu codio yn yr ysgol, mae hefyd wedi rhoi diddordeb newydd i mi ddysgu a mwynhau.”

Poppy expressed how the Library and coding club had inspired her to learning new skills and explore new ideas:

“I have had a little look at some coding books from the library and felt inspired to do more and to use Python and a Raspberry Pi. In the future I would like to code worlds for use in Minecraft. I really liked creating the Boat Race Game and I always add my own ideas to the projects.”

It is clear from the experiences of these Library customers that coding has not only opened new possibilities and enjoyment for them but has supported them to gain the confidence to explore the other riches that their Town library holds and experience other aspects of the Library offer.

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).

Caerphilly County Borough Library Service contributes to the Council’s Corporate Plan 2018-2023 including its Well-being Objectives. The table below highlights the areas of particular synergy between the Library Services activities and the Local Authority’s strategic targets. The clear focus on the Wellbeing for Future Generations Act also highlights the Library Services contribution to Welsh Government strategic priorities including the key themes of

| Council Wellbeing Objectives 2018-2013 | Wellbeing Outcomes | Caerphilly County Borough Library Service Contribution |
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| <p>Improve Education Opportunities for All</p> <p><i>Linked to 'Prosperity for All: the national strategy' key theme 'Ambitious and Learning'</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the impact of poverty within early years • Raise Standards of Attainment • Reduce impact of poverty on attainment for both vocational and non-vocational qualifications • Help those who are not able to follow a traditional attainment path • Support learning that enables young and adult employment opportunities including a focus on 'future skills' • Improve Digital Skills | <p>The nationally recognised Bookstart Scheme providing free reading materials and information for parents and toddlers at their 9 month Health check is well established within Caerphilly County Borough Library Service.</p> <p>The County Borough Library Service supports a number of projects with the Council's Early Years Team and Flying Start. Aberbargoed Library houses an Early Years team whilst Rhymney Library regularly hosts a range of parent and toddler sessions delivered by Flying Start and other Early Years practitioners.</p> <p>During 2017-18 Caerphilly Libraries supported 12,537 children and parents / carers to participate in Library based toddler sessions and Rhyme time activities.</p> <p>1,603 children attended Library operated Homework Clubs in 2017-18 a 37% increase on the numbers who used participated in 2016-17.</p> <p>Coding Clubs for children and increasingly adults has significantly risen in popularity over the last year with 1300 users attending activities compared to 682 in 2016-17, a rise of 90%. Many of the customers have noted improved skills and confidence gained from participating in the clubs (see <i>Case Studies</i> section).</p> <p>The County Borough's 18 static Libraries offer dedicated Children sections and space for Young People with targeted resources and welcoming furnishings. It is free to borrow books and use the Internet Terminals and overdue charges do not apply to under 16s with the intention of fostering a fully accessible level of provision for those who wish to access the service.</p> <p>The Borough Library Service hosts a number of adult and employment tailored projects at its sites. These include Bridges into Work, Communities for Work, and Digital Friday styled events. In excess of 5,400 residents have benefited from digital and work preparedness training via these important initiatives. In addition some 2,094 customers have accessed Life Skills support at local Libraries during 2017-18.</p> <p>Supporting residents to improve their Digital and Information handling Skills remains a strategic priority for Caerphilly County Borough Library Service. Performance in these areas is noted above. The Library Service provides free access to 250 Internet</p> |

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| | <p>• Improve the learning environment</p> | <p>enabled terminals across its 18 sites and WiFi provision in 12 service points.</p> <p>All 18 County Borough service points offer dedicated space for children, young people, and learners of all ages to access a wide range of resources and digital equipment tailored to their needs.</p> <p>Library settings are modern and attractively furnished. 12 of the 18 Library sites offer free WiFi access in addition to the traditional desk top computer experience.</p> <p>In the most recently analysed Children's satisfaction survey conducted in May 2016 9.4 of Key Stage (KS) 2 Library customers rated their Borough Library as a safe and welcoming place. 93% indicated that using the Library had helped improve their reading with 85% stating the computer facilities had assisted them also. At KS 3 age group 59% of respondents indicated they had used Library computers with their School work.</p> <p>In 2017-18 1,300 children and adults took part in Library hosted Coding Clubs an increase of 90% from those taking part in 2016-17. This area of digital awareness has far reaching benefits for beneficiaries and the Library See (see Case study 4 for a specific example).</p> <p>In excess of 6,700 people have participated in, and benefitted from, some level of digital skill training, including coding, at Borough Library sites during 2017-18. A 14% increase on like for like training and support provided at Libraries in 2016-17.</p> <p>99% of Adult Public Library users surveyed rated Library facilities as enjoyable, safe and inclusive places to visit in 2017.</p> <p>Education other than at School (EOTAS) and Home tutoring support services are available at a number of the Borough's Library facilities with 1,281 children and young people benefitting from sessions hosted in local Library sites during 2017-18 a rise of 1% on the comparable figure for 2016-17.</p> |
| <p>Enabling Employment</p> <p><i>Linked to 'Prosperity for All: the national strategy' key theme 'Prosperous and Secure'</i></p> | <p>• Aim to reduce the impact of poverty by supporting people into better employment prospects</p> | <p>In 2017-18 there was an 11% increase in the number of IT classes held in Libraries however the total number of residents who attended declined from 7020 in 2016-17 to 6455 individuals in 2017-18.</p> <p>During 2017-18 Libraries hosted 2056 Job Match sessions and 330 Basic Skill interactions. A decline of 1/5th from 2016-17.</p> |

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| <p>Creating a county borough that supports a healthy lifestyle</p> <p><i>Linked to 'Prosperity for All: the national strategy' key theme 'Healthy and Active'</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aim to reduce inequalities in health across the county borough. | <p>Access is provided to targeted health resources and information across all 18 static sites.</p> <p>The Books on Prescription Scheme to support those customers with mild to moderate Mental Health concerns remains a key element of Caerphilly Libraries Wellbeing offer.</p> <p>The Library Service currently holds 3,500 health related books and other materials. During 2017-18 some 484 health resources were purchased by Libraries.</p> <p>The Borough Library Service will participate in the 'Reading well for Dementia' initiative in 2018-19, part of the larger Books on Prescription umbrella. The Library Service already holds collections of the 'Pictures to Share' dementia friendly resource in all 18 static sites. Interactive reminiscence pods are shared between Libraries and Council run Care Homes to assist in engaging with residents suffering from dementia or related conditions. Loans of specific dementia friendly materials from Libraries during 2017-18 were 278.</p> |
| <p>Support citizens to remain independent and improve their well-being</p> <p><i>Linked to 'Prosperity for All: the national strategy' key theme 'Healthy and Active'</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support people to 'help themselves' by providing comprehensive advice and information including signposting to other services. • Identify and support carers. | <p>The Council's Library Link 'Housebound Service' provision is operated by two full time officers who take a range of preselected materials to customers in their homes. During 2017-18 the Library Link service delivered 10,994 resources to 221 customers with 2,873 visits made.</p> <p>As noted above Caerphilly Library Service provides a range of dementia focused materials from its 18 static sites targeted at supporting those suffering with the condition and their carers.</p> |

Wellbeing for the Future Generations Act – Wellbeing Goals

| Goal | Description | County Borough Library Service Contribution |
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| <p>A prosperous Wales</p> <p><i>Linked to 'Prosperity for All: the national strategy' key theme 'Prosperous and Secure'</i></p> | <p>An innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately (including acting on climate change); and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy</p> | <p>Caerphilly County Borough Library Service enables residents to have free access to a wide range of resources that can assist in their recreational activities, provide escapism, inform and educate. Library book and non-book materials are by their nature the perfect embodiment of recycling as numerous individuals can read the same title without the need to travel across the Borough to access them. The Library Service operates a free request service and is an active partner in the South Wales 'Books4U' initiative. During</p> |

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| | <p>which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work.</p> | <p>2017-18 Caerphilly Library Service accessed 4,280 books and related materials via 'Books4U' whilst sending 2,222 titles to other participating Council's in the area.</p> <p>During 2017-18 Libraries hosted 2,056 Job Match sessions and 330 Basic Skill interactions. A decline of 1/5th from 2016-17.</p> <p>In excess of 6,700 people have participated in, and benefitted from, some level of digital skill training, including coding, at Borough Library sites during 2017-18. A 14% increase on like for like training and support provided at Libraries in 2016-17.</p> <p>Library settings are modern, well furnished and comfortable to use. 12 of the 18 Library sites offer free WiFi access in addition to the traditional desk top computer experience via 250 Internet Terminals.</p> <p>In the most recently analysed Children's satisfaction survey conducted in May 2016 9.4 of Key Stage (KS) 2 Library customers rated their Borough Library as a safe and welcoming place. 93% indicated that using the Library had helped improve their reading with 85% stating the computer facilities had assisted them also. At KS 3 age group 59% of respondents indicated they had used Library computers with their School work.</p> <p>In 2017-18 1,300 children and adults took part in Library hosted Coding Clubs an increase of 90% from those taking part in 2016-17. This area of digital awareness has far reaching benefits for beneficiaries and the Library See (see <i>Case study 4 for a specific example</i>).</p> <p>In excess of 6,700 people have participated in, and benefitted from, some level of digital skill training, including coding, at Borough Library sites during 2017-18. A 14% increase on like for like training and support provided at Libraries in 2016-17.</p> <p>99% of Adult Public Library users surveyed rated Library facilities as enjoyable, safe and inclusive places to visit in 2017.</p> <p>Education other than at School (EOTAS) and Home tutoring support services are available at a number of the Borough's Library facilities with 1,281 children and young people benefitting from sessions hosted in local Library sites during 2017-18 a rise of 1% on the comparable figure for 2016-17.</p> |
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| <p>A resilient Wales</p> <p><i>Linked to 'Prosperity for All: the national strategy' key theme 'Prosperous and Secure'</i></p> | <p>A nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change).</p> | <p>Caerphilly County Borough Library Service uses a number of recycling services to ensure resources that have reached the end of their productive lifespan can be re-used whilst supporting environmental targets. Discontinued books and other media are wherever possible recycled by registered companies and in some instances sold via Better World Books a social business that works closely with the Charity sector.</p> |
| <p>A healthier Wales</p> <p><i>Linked to 'Prosperity for All: the national strategy' key theme 'Healthy and Active'</i></p> | <p>A society in which people's physical and mental Well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood.</p> | <p>Caerphilly County Borough Library Service purchased 484 titles in 2017-18 that relate to Health and Wellbeing and offers a minimum of 3,500 items available for loan across its network of 18 sites.</p> <p>The Borough Library Service is an active participant in the national Books on Prescription scheme designed to support residents with mild to moderate Mental Health conditions and will shortly be subscribing to the Reading with Dementia initiative.</p> <p>Each Library in their annual Local Improvement Plans have priorities associated with improving residents health and wellbeing.</p> |
| <p>A more equal Wales</p> <p><i>Linked to 'Prosperity for All: the national strategy' key theme 'United and Connected'</i></p> | <p>A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio economic background and circumstances).</p> | <p>Caerphilly County Borough Library Service provides free and welcoming facilities to all its residents.</p> <p>The nationally recognised Bookstart Scheme providing free reading materials and information for parents and toddlers at their 9 month Health check is well established within Caerphilly County Borough Library Service.</p> <p>The County Borough Library Service supports a number of projects with the Council's Early Years Team and Flying Start. Aberbargoed Library houses an Early Years team whilst Rhymney Library regularly hosts a range of parent and toddler sessions delivered by Flying Start and other Early Years practitioners.</p> <p>During 2017-18 Libraries hosted 2,056 Job Match sessions and 330 Basic Skill interactions. A decline of 1/5th from 2016-17.</p> <p>In excess of 6,700 people have participated in, and benefitted from, some level of digital skill training, including coding, at Borough Library sites during 2017-18. A 14% increase on like for like training and support provided at Libraries in 2016-17.</p> |

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| | | The County Borough Library Service is currently preparing to support residents who are transitioning to the Universal Credit full Service in September 2018 to ensure customers gain the digital skills required to access their benefits and future employment opportunities. |
| <p>A Wales of cohesive communities</p> <p><i>Linked to 'Prosperity for All: the national strategy' key theme 'United and Connected'</i></p> | <p>Attractive, viable, safe and well-connected communities.</p> | <p>Caerphilly County Borough Library Service is located in 18 town and village centred sites that actively contribute the physical environment they share. Public Libraries are seen as anchor tenants in the modern retail / High Street environment.</p> <p>In the most recent Adult and Child user surveys of Borough Libraries customers questioned strongly endorsed local Libraries as safe, welcoming, and connected facilities.</p> |
| <p>A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language</p> <p><i>Linked to 'Prosperity for All: the national strategy' key theme 'United and Connected'</i></p> | <p>A society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation.</p> | <p>The Borough Library Service plays an important role in supporting the cultural identities of the communities it represents.</p> <p>The Library Service proactively markets its Welsh materials to customers and has embraced a bilingual approach to service presentation and user support wherever possible in line with the requirements of the 2011 Welsh Language Measure.</p> <p>During 2017-18 Caerphilly Library Service spent £23,837 on Welsh Language resources, 7% of the total resource fund and loaned 11,492 items in Welsh.</p> <p>During 2017-18 all front facing Library staff took part in 'Meet and greet' Welsh Language training. In 2018-19 six designated 'Reception Point' sites will undergo further training in Welsh. This additional level of bilingual competency will be achieved by September 2018.</p> |
| <p>A globally responsible Wales</p> <p><i>Linked to 'Prosperity for All: the national strategy' key theme 'Prosperous and Secure'</i></p> | <p>A globally responsible Wales. A nation which, when doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural Well-being of Wales, takes account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to global Well-being.</p> | <p>Public Libraries form an important part of the County Council's building portfolio with a number of significant sites that complement their physical environments whilst also protecting important cultural sites in Risca, Caerphilly, Newbridge, and Bargoed.</p> <p>Public Libraries are seen as important anchor tenants in local town and village centres supporting the economic wellbeing of the areas they are located in.</p> |

3. Please provide a short statement about the future direction and plans for the library service (indicative length 200 words).

Caerphilly County Borough Library Service faces a period of significant change as the Local Authority considers how this area of provision can best be delivered in the future in light of the continuing financial pressures of the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan. The Borough Library Service, alongside Community Centres and Customer Service team form one stream of the Council's Business Improvement Programme which seeks to deliver these important public facing areas of provision in new and innovative ways. Provision of community located 'Hubs' incorporating elements of the services noted above with other agencies and local groups are central to proposals under consideration.

The County Borough Library Service is facing reductions in funding over the next three year period whilst the other public facing teams noted above are facing similar challenges due to austerity.

The Local Authority remains committed to delivering the best Public Library provision possible during this period of continuing financial constriction. Welsh Government Public Library Standards will continue to provide the measures by which the Council will assess its performance.