

### **Appendix 3 – case study template and additional strategic narrative**

**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**

**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) Risca Library IT Support (A Prosperous Wales)**

This case study provides an excellent example how public libraries remain important to both Welsh Government and Local Authority strategic plans. This case study from Risca Library, a hub service point at the south of the Borough, clearly highlights how libraries and the services we offer are capable of having a profound impact on people's lives, leading to improved mental health and well-being. The services provided can help people to achieve potentially life-changing objectives or simply allows them to improve the situation in which they find themselves. We understand the benefits users can gain by sitting down and using our WiFi or PC's - customers can gain and nurture invaluable life skills: Work skills, IT skills, boost confidence, interpersonal and communication skills. Digital exclusion is still high in the Caerphilly Borough and many people still have no internet access at home. Caerphilly Library Service meets that need and provides all residents with free internet and Wi-Fi access at our 18 libraries.

Nicola was a regular library user and for many years had used the library as a place to borrow books to read for herself and her children. After her children had grown up she and her husband continued to make use of the services provided, continuing to borrow books, DVDs, use the request service and using the library building as a place to socialise, feel safe and secure and use the knowledge base of its staff.

In a letter sent to Risca Library during February 2020, Nicola at just 54 years old found herself in a, "dark place" after she was made redundant and felt she was, "on the scrapheap." She was desperate to find a new job but had no internet access at home to aid her search for work. Nicola highlights how she was able to access the

internet through her local library using the computers, and printing facilities, to help her look for jobs and apply for posts.

After three months of a “relentless search for work” she secured a “fantastic job” which she is “delighted with.” She remarks that she now feels that she has a more positive outlook to life all with the help of the free resources at her local library.

Nicola said, “At a time of enormous financial pressures on County Councils I really hope I really hope that Risca Library is not affected by these pressures. Your wonderful staff have been a huge support to me during every visit to the library. The library offers a fantastic service and enhances an amazing community spirit as a result. It is a wonderful place to visit. Many thanks to you and all your staff for providing such a fantastic service.”

### **Permission not obtained**

#### **b) Health & Well Being – Dementia Care (A Healthier Wales)**

With approximately 42,000 people in Wales living with dementia, data taken from *Dementia Statistics.org* suggest a figure of over 2,000 residents equal to 1.1% of the current Caerphilly borough population may have the condition. The *Caerphilly Library Service Dementia Action Plan*, ensures our current practices continue to support the Dementia agenda.

One of the projects run at all eighteen libraries are *Memory Bags*, loaned to carers or customers living with dementia.

We recently received this letter we wish to share with you,

“I am writing to congratulate you on the excellent dementia resources at Newbridge Library. My mum is a dementia sufferer, now confined to a wheelchair and her ability to speak and comprehend has been greatly diminished. She was always an avid reader so books always played a very special part in her life.

I am constantly striving to provide a range of stimuli for my Mum, so that she can respond and engage in what is happening around her. The dementia resources there are excellent - with a very wide range of material for both carers and those living with dementia. I have been able to access all sorts of information such as what provisions are available, any benefits for my step-father and support groups in the area. This has been invaluable as often we carers can feel very helpless and totally isolated.

The Pictures to Share books are in pristine condition, they have large print and have lots of colourful, clear photographs and pictures. The topics are very pertinent to everyday life and experiences - the seaside, pets, and short poems.

The topics and pictures also provide so many opportunities to talk about memories of holidays that we have shared together, poems and songs that my Mum taught both me and my children when they were small and also much loved pets. The amount of writing on each page is kept to the minimum, but is just enough to read aloud to her and stir precious memories. Although my Mum's speech is extremely limited, her pure enjoyment is evident in the smiles on her face.

I have also recently borrowed a memory bag from the library, as recommended by the librarian. I am so impressed by the scope of the resources in the bag. Every person living with dementia has specific difficulties and is at a particular stage in this relentless disease. The beach ball is perfect for sufferers with greater awareness and promotes conversation and co-ordination. At the same time, the CDs are from my Mum's generation, clearly selected to spark memories. Music was always very much enjoyed by my Mum and even now, never fails to make her smile.

The Sea Spray in the bag is also an amazing idea. Again, a scent that stirs so many memories and is so evocative of the smells associated with the seaside. This has been especially useful for me as my Mum had a caravan by the sea for many years and we have very precious memories of our times spent there.

So, I would like to sincerely thank everyone concerned with the provision of these resources. They have so clearly been assembled and created with knowledge, care, compassion and a total awareness of the challenges.

AJ

### **Permission obtained**

#### **c) Welsh Language Provision (Vibrant Culture & Welsh language)**

Culture, diversity and equality for all are important issues to Caerphilly Library service. The authority financially supports library staff who wish to enrol on Welsh language courses and the library service supports staff who wish to attend during working hours. We consistently support up-to-date reading materials in the Welsh language to Welsh speaking customers and Welsh learners. The library service currently supports two Welsh Reading Groups held at Caerphilly Library and a Welsh Scrabble Club held at Risca Library. The following is a testimonial from SP:

"A few months ago I was offered a new job working for a neighbouring council. It was only when I was in the job for about 4 months was I told that I had to learn basic Welsh as it was now required by my employer. I was really overwhelmed with this fact as it's been some time since I was in any learning environment. However I enrolled and used Caerphilly Libraries, as I live in the borough and often visit them for reading books on Saturdays.

Over the last year Caerphilly Libraries have been invaluable in supporting me to develop my Welsh language skills. After I started the beginners Mynediad course I spoke to a library member of staff who happened to be wearing a 'Dysgwr Cymraeg' lanyard. She was very helpful and showed me the range of Welsh language resources that the library had to offer: fiction, information books and Cwmni (a locally printed magazine). I was really surprised! This was perfect timing as I had become overwhelmed by the potential costs of buying magazines and books.

Within 20 minutes I had a copy of the reading book I needed for my course, had requested one more I needed to look at and could access the current and older copies of *Lingo Newydd* eMagazine for free and had access to even more online content through BorrowBox. The member of also showed me the Welsh language collections and suggested that if I was overwhelmed then I could start with Welsh children's stories which I have to say are much better today than the range available to me when I was in school. There was a David Walliams Welsh book there! I felt so much better after our chat and shared experiences. We even had a basic conversation in Welsh which is great for my confidence!

Since then I have started to borrow more Welsh books and even use the self-service kiosk in Welsh! I also discovered that there are Welsh courses on offer at some libraries and there are even Welsh language rhyme times and scrabble club! Unfortunately due to being in work, I'm not able to attend as they're in the day time.

Now I always look out for the 'Dysgwr Cymraeg' lanyards and practice my Welsh. The library has been essential in supporting my learning and given me the encouragement and confidence to continue with the course. I started the course to help with my job but it's become much more enjoyable thanks to the library staff, the welcoming atmosphere in the libraries and the fantastic range of books and online goodies!

SP– Welsh learner

**(Due to current circumstances we haven't been able to get permission for her name to be used, although she was happy to share her experience at the time)**

#### **d) Blackwood Library – positive influence of jigsaws in a library (Healthier Wales)**

Ken Skates quotes in the *Connected and Ambitious Libraries*, sixth quality framework document, "libraries provide everyone with a wealth of information, resources, activities and cultural opportunities . . . they connect and unite people."

The following example from Blackwood Library, highlights the importance of library spaces and resources which are not necessarily books or computers, but something quite unique.

Following the cancellation of library newspapers, the affectionately known 'Men's Shed' (the newspaper group who loved putting the world to rights), was abandoned. Staff at the library felt that the group chatter, laughter and healthy debate was being missed by all and sought out ways to bring the gentlemen of the group back.

Jigsaw puzzles were placed on empty tables for customers to assemble. The last twelve months has seen an incredible rise in their popularity – 'jigsawing' seems to bring different people together and are proving to be a new 'Men's Shed' – everyone is allowed to participate! Whilst Blackwood Library has a real community spirit and holds many different activities for library customers such as Reading Groups and Lego Club, staff have commented that it is a pleasure to see different sectors of society integrating and communicating with each other whilst doing a jigsaw in the library.

Below are staff observations on some of the regular 'jigsaw' customers:

One customer appeared to be visiting the library every day and would sit at the jigsaw table for hours. He is frequently joined by other customers as they do the jigsaw together. Mr W is retired and widowed and he seems to be a reticent man but when staff have engaged him in conversation he has said "visiting the library to do the jigsaws is giving me a purpose to get out of the house and it gives me the opportunity to talk to other people".

J is a 15 year old male pupil who visits the library after school to do his homework. He also spends most Saturdays in the library. He has struck up a friendship with AW and they enjoy doing the jigsaws that are no resemblance to the illustration on the jigsaw box. He told a library assistant that he likes visiting the library because it is a welcoming environment and he is able to print his school work for free.

Mrs S is a female 70+ library customer and has visited the library for years in order to borrow audio books. The magnetic draw of the jigsaw has lured her so she frequently sits at the jigsaw table and has a chat with whoever else is there. She has also donated several jigsaws to the library for everyone to do together.

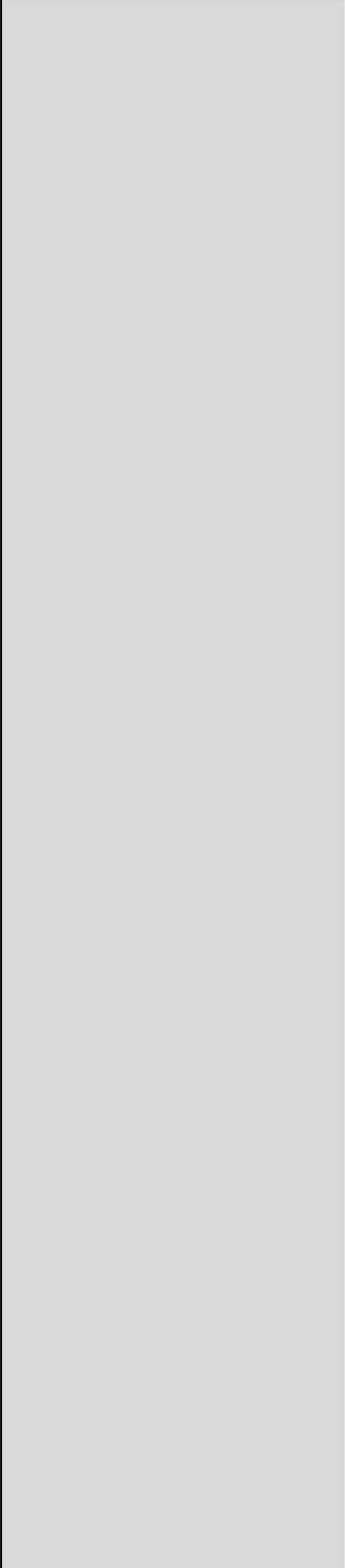
The introduction of jigsaws into the library has been beneficial for customers using the library. Jigsaws help people focus, they help develop the brain and they are a good way to relieve stress. In Blackwood Library they have been a discussion point for people to start communicating with one another and to make new friends. They help to combat isolation and loneliness. As customers assist one another connecting pieces together to form a complete jigsaw picture they are also making connections with other people in their community.

**Permission not obtained**

**2. Please provide a narrative that demonstrates how the library service is contributing towards wider Welsh Government priorities and strategic goals.**

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 Prosperity for All and Taking Wales Forward, 2016-2022.

<b>Council Wellbeing Objectives 2018-2013</b>	<b>Wellbeing Outcomes</b>	<b>Caerphilly County Borough Library Service Contribution</b>
<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"> <li>• Reduce the impact of poverty within early years</li> <li>• Raise Standards of Attainment</li> <li>• Reduce impact of poverty on attainment for both vocational and non-vocational qualifications</li> <li>• Help those who are not able to follow a traditional attainment path</li> <li>• Support learning that enables young and adult employment opportunities including a focus on 'future skills'</li> <li>• Improve Digital Skills</li> <li>• Improve the learning environment</li> </ul>	<p>The library service has retained all 18 static service points and both LibraryLink officers although 11 of the 18 libraries are now single staffed.</p> <p>The nationally recognised Bookstart and Early Years Scheme providing free reading materials and information for parents and toddlers at their 9 and 18 month health check is well established within Caerphilly County Borough Library Service. This remains the case for 2019-20.</p> <p>The County Borough Library Service supports a number of projects with the Council's Early Years Team and Flying Start initiative. Aberbargoed Library houses an Early Years team and Flying Start resource base whilst Rhymney Library regularly hosts a range of parent and toddler sessions delivered by Flying Start and other Early Years practitioners, including Meithrin groups.</p> <p>The County Borough Library Service continues to facilitate Homework Clubs, Reading Hack sessions and reading groups at its static buildings.</p> <p>Coding Clubs for children adults continue to rise in popularity.</p>



Many of the customers have noted improved skills and confidence gained from participating in the clubs.

Caerphilly Library Service has developed a new school engagement programme around the 3 key themes of Reading, Information and Learning called **The School Engagement Scheme**. Our aspiration is to help support schools to empower and enhance pupil's performance in areas such as vocabulary, comprehension, problem solving, digital and information literacy awareness.

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.

Free Wi-Fi at all 18 services points is available along with Wi-Fi printing at Hub libraries. Charges for photocopying and printing remain low.

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. Residents have benefited from digital and work preparation and training via these important initiatives.

Supporting residents to improve their Digital and Information handling Skills remains a strategic priority for Caerphilly County Borough Library

		<p>Service. Performance in these areas is noted above. The Library Service provides free access to 250 Internet enabled terminals across its 18 sites and WiFi provision in all of its service points.</p> <p>Education other than at School (EOTAS) and Home tutoring support services are available at a number of the Borough's Library facilities.</p> <p>During 2019/2020 the library service introduced a new category of lending stock: Further Studies Collection. This carefully maintained repository for adult non-fiction titles has a strict entry policy with an aim to inform and educate current and future generations.</p> <p>The library service tailors community based loan collections to a diverse range of group in the areas it serves.</p>
<p>Enabling Employment</p> <p><i>Linked to 'Prosperity for All: the national strategy' key theme 'Prosperous and Secure'</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aim to reduce the impact of poverty by supporting people into better employment prospects</li> </ul>	<p>The library service supports CCBC and external learning partners with library space, Wi-Fi, PC's. These partners include: Bridges into Work and Inspire into Work.</p> <p>The above partners request work placements for their clients at our libraries which are approved.</p> <p>Our library buildings support colleagues at local colleges with placements, study and exam space.</p>
<p>Creating a county borough that supports a healthy lifestyle</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aim to reduce inequalities in health</li> </ul>	<p>Health resources and information are freely available across all 18 static sites and</p>

<p><i>Linked to 'Prosperity for All: the national strategy' key theme 'Healthy and Active'</i></p>	<p>across the county borough.</p>	<p>LibraryLink customers including continual purchasing of stock in all health genres and formats.</p> <p>The library service fully commits to the following health-related schemes: Books on Prescription Scheme / Reading Well with Dementia / Reading Well for Mental Health.</p> <p>The service continues to support the Dementia agenda through the Caerphilly Library Service Dementia Action Plan.</p> <p>The library service support the Welsh Government Period Poverty scheme by placing free, sanitary products at all its public access toilets.</p> <p>Caerphilly Libraries are partners for many health organisations which include MIND, Carer's Support, Friendship Support Group, Yoga classes etc. Our Seminar Rooms and spaces remain free of charge to charities.</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"> <li>• Support people to 'help themselves' by providing comprehensive advice and information including signposting to other services.</li> <li>• Identify and support carers.</li> </ul>	<p>The Council supports information to housebound customers with its Library Link 'Housebound Service' provision.</p> <p>As noted above Caerphilly Library Service provides a range of dementia focused materials from its 18 static sites targeted at supporting those living with the condition and their carer's.</p> <p>We continue to link with CCBC partners including CCBC Youth Team and Basic Skills and all libraries signpost and advise when able to.</p> <p>Caerphilly Library Service have partnered with the Government and actively support customers who require the use of the</p>

		EUSS Scheme: EU Settlement Scheme: a scheme to help EU citizens and their families apply to get either settled or pre-settled UK status.
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Wellbeing for the Future Generations Act – Wellbeing Goals

Goal	Description	County Borough Library Service Contribution
<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 which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work.</p>	<p>Please also refer to the document above - <b>Council Wellbeing Objectives 2018-2023</b></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.</p> <p>Library settings are modern, well-furnished and comfortable to use. All 18 static libraries offer free WiFi. Additionally the traditional desk top computer experience is currently being maintained via 250 Internet Terminals. WiFi printing facilities are also available at 6 Hub Libraries.</p>

<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>Please also refer to the document above - <b>Council Wellbeing Objectives 2018-2023</b></p> <p>All individual libraries in the borough are 'challenged' with meeting health and well-being improvements in their base library. 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>Please also refer to the document above - <b>Council Wellbeing Objectives 2018-2023</b></p> <p>Caerphilly County Borough Library Service provides free and welcoming facilities to all its residents.</p> <p>The County Borough Library Service continues to support residents who are, or have moved to the Universal credit benefit system with digital support. The Library Service currently assists EU nationals who are seeking settled status in the UK post Brexit as part of the government's sign-up requirements.</p>

<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 Council Public Toilet Strategy Libraries play an important role as a local site's where residents can access their facilities near to where they live, work, or play.</p> <p>In recent Adult and Child user surveys of Borough Libraries customers questioned strongly endorsed local Libraries as safe, welcoming, and connected facilities.</p> <p>The library service welcomes all sectors of the community into its libraries. Library staff are trained in CCBC Safeguarding and VAW (Violence Against Women) issues.</p> <p>Library services actively support many partners and groups to use the library spaces which are seen as safe and welcoming.</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>The County Borough Library Service has maintained its commitment to train new staff in meet and greet Welsh language</p>

		<p>familiarity.</p> <p>The library service actively encourages all staff members who wish to take up welsh learning. Fees and course time is made available to them.</p> <p>Publicity materials produced by the library services are bi-lingual. These include posters, social media etc.</p> <p>The library service continues to purchase Welsh language materials in line with the Welsh Public Library guidance.</p> <p>The library service actively support Welsh Reading Groups and Welsh Scrabble Club who use our Hub libraries.</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 locations 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.**

CCBC Library Service will work towards the aims and goals set in the:

- Future Generations & Wellbeing Act.
- CCBC 'Shared Ambitions: working together to achieve the best outcomes for our young people'.
- CCBC Education Directorate Service Improvement Plan 2020.
- 2020 – 2022 Caerphilly Library Service Strategy and Action Plan.

The Borough Library Service will work alongside other support services to assist schools, teacher, pupils and parents to achieve the best outcomes possible for young residents growing up in the area.

The Borough Library Service will ensure it remains a 'community anchor' to the residents of the Caerphilly Borough and will strive to ensure its services remain current, vibrant and respected in our communities.

The Borough Library Service, like all Council departments is governed by the Local Authority's Medium Term Financial Plan 2019-2023. No library service saving proposals were identified during 2020 /2021. However, the impact on the COVID-19 pandemic will certainly affect library services moving forward this year and will undoubtedly affect the WPLS standard return for 2020 / 2021. Finally, further financial constraints are possible in subsequent years of the Medium Term Financial Plan cycle up to March 2023.

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.