



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Paul Orders
Chief Executive
City and County of Cardiff Council
County Hall
Atlantic Wharf
Cardiff
CF10 4UW

29 September 2017

Dear Paul,

Fifth Assessment Framework for Welsh Public Library Standards: Annual Return 2016-17

The Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 sets out the statutory duties of public library authorities to "*provide a comprehensive and efficient library service*" and makes it a duty of the Welsh Ministers "*to superintend and promote the improvement*" of public library services in Wales. In accordance with these statutory requirements the Welsh Government has completed its assessment of your authority's library service Annual Return for 2016-17, and the full report is attached to this letter.

This is the final year of assessment under the fifth framework. The independent assessor, in consultation with a Reference Group comprising Welsh Government officials and three heads of library services, found that:

- Cardiff continues to meet all of the 18 core entitlements in full.
- Of the 7 quality indicators which have targets, Cardiff achieved 4 in full and 3 in part; an improvement over previous years.
- There are some welcome improvements in Cardiff's performance this year, despite further extensive budget cuts. Concern remains over continued low staffing, and investment in resources, which are reflected in below average customer satisfaction levels compared to other library services. Possible outcomes of the Hub strategy include increases in some measures of library usage, and the service is also actively engaging on digital and health and well-being agendas.

I am grateful for the support from your library service in submitting this year's return and liaising with the independent assessor and MALD officials on this important piece of work.

Museums, Archives and Libraries Division
Welsh Government, Rhodfa Padarn, Aberystwyth, Ceredigion, SY23 3UR.



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We welcome correspondence in Welsh. Correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

Should you have any queries concerning the report or the assessment process, please contact Alyson Tyler, Senior Libraries Development Adviser, tel: 0300 062 2103, email: alyson.tyler@gov.wales

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Owen'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'P' and 'O'.

Peter Owen
Acting Head of MALD

CC: Library Service Manager
Scrutiny Officer

Welsh Public Library Standards 2014-17

Cardiff City Council

Annual Assessment Report 2016-17

This report has been prepared based on information provided in Cardiff's annual return, case studies and narrative report submitted to Museums, Archives and Libraries Division of the Welsh Government.

1) Executive summary

Cardiff continues to meet all of the 18 core entitlements in full.

Of the 7 quality indicators which have targets, Cardiff achieved 4 in full and 3 in part; an improvement over previous years.

There are some welcome improvements in Cardiff's performance this year, despite further extensive budget cuts. Concern remains over continued low staffing, and investment in resources, which are reflected in below average customer satisfaction levels compared to other library services. Possible outcomes of the Hub strategy include increases in some measures of library usage, and the service is also actively engaging on digital and health and well-being agendas.

- Four good impact case studies were provided which demonstrated a range of impacts on individual users and groups of users in various settings.
- User surveys show high levels of satisfaction amongst children, although adult levels are below the median for Wales. Rates of attendance at formal training sessions and rates of informal training per capita have increased, and are among the highest in Wales.
- Physical visits have increased for the second consecutive year, possibly as a result of more co-located sites, and there have been increases in rates of membership and active borrowers. Use of the audio-visual and electronic collections remains low, however. The service meets the targets for access to service points.
- There has been a welcome increase in acquisitions, and the targets for replenishment rate, materials for children and materials in the Welsh language have all been met this year. ICT provision has temporarily fallen due to refurbishment at one location, but there has been an increase in usage levels.
- Professional staffing levels are among the lowest in Wales, with overall staffing levels also below the median. The service makes extensive use of volunteers. The proportion of the budget spent on other operational costs has fallen compared to last year. Despite temporary library closures for refurbishment, opening hours increased compared to last year and Cardiff has met the target this year. The proportion of unplanned closures has been further reduced, with a newer library vehicle contributing to a significant improvement in missed mobile library stops.
- The figures suggest the service is operating efficiently, with total spending per capita above the median for Wales, but net cost per visit is again the lowest in Wales, at

£1.50.

Considering the four areas in the framework (*Customers and communities; Access for all; Learning for life; and Leadership and development*) in comparison to the rest of Wales, Cardiff is generally performing well in the broad areas of *Access for all* and *Learning for life*. Performance in the remaining areas is mixed.

Compared to previous years, Cardiff has improved its performance in a number of areas, including customer engagement, acquisitions, and unplanned closures. More volunteers are being used to support the service.

2) Performance against the standards

The standards framework comprises of core entitlements, quality indicators with targets, quality indicators with benchmarks and impact measures. Section 2 summarises achievements against the core entitlements, the quality indicators which have targets, the quality indicators showing performance against others, and impact measures. A narrative assessment of the authority's performance is made in Section 3.

a) Core entitlements

Cardiff continues to meet all of the 18 core entitlements in full.

b) Quality indicators with targets

There are 16 quality indicators (QI) within the framework. Of the 7 which have targets, Cardiff is achieving 4 in full and 3 in part:

Quality Indicator	Met?	
QI 3 Individual development:		Met in full
a) ICT support	✓	
b) Skills training	✓	
c) Information literacy	✓	
d) E-government support	✓	
e) Reader development	✓	
QI 5 Location of service points	✓	Met in full
QI 8 Up-to-date reading material:		Partially met
a) Acquisitions per capita	✗	
<u>or</u> Materials spend per capita	✗	
b) Replenishment rate	✓	
QI 9 Appropriate reading material:		Met in full
a) % of material budget on children	✓	
b) % of material budget spent on Welsh	✓	
<u>or</u> Spend on Welsh per capita	✓	
QI 10 Online access:		Partially met
a) All service points	✓	
Computers per capita	✗	
b) Wi-Fi provision	✓	
QI 13 Staffing levels and qualifications:		Partially met

Quality Indicator	Met?
a) Staff per capita	✗
b) Professional staff per capita	✗
c) Head of service qualification/training	✓
d) CPD percentage	✓
QI 16 Opening hours per capita	✓ Met in full

This is an improvement over the position in previous years. Performance has improved against QI 8, with the target for replenishment rate being met, and on QI 9 and QI 16, which are now both met in full.

c) Impact measures

The framework contains three indicators which seek to gather evidence of the impact that using the library service has on people's lives. Through these and other indicators it is possible to see how the library service is contributing towards educational, social, economic and health and wellbeing local and national agendas. These indicators do not have targets. Not all authorities collected data for the impact indicators, and ranks are included out of the numbers of respondents stated, where 1 is the highest scoring authority.

Cardiff undertook a customer survey of both adults and children in February 2016. Note that the percentage of attendees of training sessions who said that the training had helped them achieve their goals is based on a very small sample of just 83 responses.

Performance indicator		Rank	Lowest	Median	Highest
QI 1 Making a difference					
b) % of children who think that the library helps them learn and find things out:	91%	13/19	68%	93%	100%
e) % of adults who think that the library has made a difference to their lives:	87%	9/19	36%	86%	97%
% of children who think that the library has made a difference to their lives:	85%	7/17	58%	82%	98%
QI 4 b) % of attendees of training sessions who said that the training had helped them achieve their goals:	100%	1/19	80%	97%	100%

Cardiff provided four impact case studies which showed the real difference the library service makes:

- A volunteer through Jobseekers who received support and encouragement at a difficult time, and gained paid employment as a consequence.
- Parkinson's Cafes in three branch libraries giving sufferers more self-confidence and independence.
- The personal story of how the library helped a Developer Advocate for Google invited to speak to the library's Google Developer Group while he was a student at Cardiff University.
- The work of the Neighbourhood Development Librarians with one inner city school in particular which has increased take-up of library services by pupils and their families

d) Quality performance indicators and benchmarks

The remaining indicators do not have targets, but allow performance to be compared between authorities. The following table summarises Cardiff's position for 2016-17. Ranks are included out of 22, where 1 is the highest, and 22 the lowest scoring authority, unless stated otherwise. Indicators where fewer than 22 authorities supplied data are those where relevant data elements were not available to some authorities. Figures reported in respect of the first two years of the framework for QI 4 to QI 16 are repeated for convenience of comparison. Note that indicators 'per capita' are calculated per 1,000 population.

Performance indicator	Rank	Lowest	Median	Highest	2015/16 Rank	2014/15 Rank	
QI 1 Making a difference							
a) new skills	71%	10/19	23%	71%	93%		
c) health and well-being	43%	14/20	26%	56%	94%		
d) enjoyable, safe and inclusive	95%	16/19	93%	98%	100%		
QI 2 Customer satisfaction							
a) 'very good' or 'good' choice of books	84%	18/20	74%	90%	98%		
b) 'very good' or 'good' customer care	93%	19/20	90%	99%	100%		
c) 'very good' or 'good' overall	95%	15/20	92%	97%	100%		
d) child rating out of ten	9.5	3 /19	8.6	9.1	10.0		
QI 4 User training							
a) attendances per capita	161	2	3	34	248	134 2	39 5
c) informal training per capita	331	5 /20	1	156	712	278 6 / 19	115 15 / 21
QI 6 Library use							
a) visits per capita	6,751	1	2,453	4,033	6,751	6,185 1	5,955 1
b) virtual visits per capita	2,299	1 /21	341	922	2,299	2,475 1	2,449 1
c) active borrowers per capita	235	1	77	153	235	217 3	232 3
QI 7 Attendances at events per capita	487	3	62	214	496	293 6	221 9
QI 11 Use of ICT - % of available time used by the public							
a) equipment	40%	5 /21	16%	32%	69%	35% 8	46% 5
QI 12 Supply of requests							
a) % available within 7 days	68%	16/21	48%	70%	82%	68% 18	72% 9
b) % available within 15 days	78%	20/21	65%	85%	96%	77% 20	82% 17
QI 13 Staffing levels and qualifications							
(v) a) total volunteers	209	1	0	24	209	103 1	31 4
b) total volunteer hours	5,156	1	0	798	5,156	3,699 1	927 6
QI 14 Operational expenditure							
a) total expenditure per capita	£14,125	8 /21	£6,745	£11,979	£16,968	£16,536 6 / 21	£17,410 4
b) % on staff	46%	21/21	46%	58%	75%	40% 21 / 21	49% 19
% on information resources	12%	15/21	4%	13%	25%	9% 19 / 21	10% 20
% on equipment and buildings	19%	2 /21	0%	4%	20%	16% 2 / 21	20% 3
% on other operational costs	22%	10/21	9%	22%	37%	34% 3 / 21	22% 12

Performance indicator	Rank	Lowest	Median	Highest	2015/16	Rank	2014/15	Rank	
c) capital expenditure per capita	£1,059	7 /21	£0	£341	£16,692	£4,677	1 / 21	£481	10
Q1 15 Net cost per visit	£1.50	20/20	£1.50	£2.33	£3.30	£1.83	21 / 21	*	
Q1 16 Opening hours (<i>see note</i>)									
(ii) a) % hours unplanned closure of static service points	0.01%	2	0.00%	0.00%	0.48%	0.04%	15	0.17%	18
b) % mobile stops / home deliveries missed	0.29%	5 /19	0.00%	0.13%	8.33%	3.49%	17 / 19	5.4%	19 / 19

Note: Rankings here have been reversed, so that 1 is the lowest scoring (best performing) authority.

* Income data for 2014-15 not available to calculate this figure.

Data on Wi-Fi usage has only been provided by three authorities for 2016-17 and so is not included in the table above.

3) Analysis of performance

The core entitlements and quality indicators are divided into four key areas. This section of the report outlines performance against the quality indicators within these four areas, and compares results with those from the first two years of the framework.

a) Customers and communities

Cardiff carried out customer surveys in February 2016. Adult satisfaction levels are below the median for Wales as a whole, but the results from the children's survey are better, being the third highest in Wales. All static service points are providing the full range of services in support of individual development. Attendance at formal training has increased for the second year, and the per capita level is the second highest in Wales. Rates of informal training reported have also increased further, and are above the median for Wales.

b) Access for all

Cardiff meets the target for access to service points, with 97% of the population within easy reach. Physical visits per capita have increased for the third consecutive year, and remain the highest in Wales. The Hub model is thought to contribute to this, but is not the only factor, with increased attendance at library events and activities.

Both the number of library members and the number of active borrowers have increased since last year, and are the highest in Wales. However, book and audio-visual issues have both fallen slightly this year. While book issues per capita remain the second highest in Wales, audio visual issues per capita are the lowest in Wales and this is an area which the service may wish to investigate.

c) Learning for life

There has been a welcome increase in the rate of acquisitions, and the target for replenishment rate has now been achieved. The authority is also meeting targets for the purchase of materials for children and material in the Welsh language. Having increased the number of PCs available last year, a temporary reduction this year has led to this target being missed; the authority expects performance to improve next year. Percentage usage of computers has increased slightly. Cardiff is unable to measure the hours of Wi-Fi network usage, but notes a significant increase in customers using their own devices, and

reported a usage figure in Gigabytes of data accessed.

There has been a slight improvement in the speed of delivery of requests over 15 days, compared to last year, following a remapping of stock alignment processes, and further improvement is anticipated next year.

d) Leadership and development

There have been further falls in staffing levels, and the targets are not met. The authority notes that recruitment strategies are under consideration which will include qualification requirements. Staff are encouraged to participate in training, and the Lead Libraries Officer is a Chartered Librarian. Cardiff has doubled its use of volunteers during the year, to 209, each giving an average of 25 hours to the service. Volunteers are recruited through a variety of schemes including schools, the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme, and work experience placements.

The service has experienced a further 14% cut in its revenue budget although spending per capita remains above the median for Wales. The proportion spent on other operational costs has fallen back to the level of two years ago, after increasing last year. The average net cost per visit has fallen to £1.50 compared to £1.83 last year. This remains the lowest in Wales, and results from a combination of increased visits and falling expenditure.

Despite the temporary closure of several locations for refurbishment during the year, aggregate opening hours have increased and the target has been met, and further improvement is expected next year. The service has further reduced the proportion of unplanned closures and missed mobile library stops, with a newer travelling library vehicle making a marked impact on the latter's performance.

4) Strategic context

Cardiff provided an extensive statement outlining its contribution to the goals of the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act and the ambitions for citizens set out in *Taking Wales forward 2016-21*. The Hub strategy for service delivery provides a sustainable approach during challenging times.

5) Future direction

A key priority is to develop and embed the SCL universal offers during 2017-18. Work with the Dyslexia Association on the development of public library dyslexia friendly standards could benefit those affected. The Hub building programme is expected to conclude during 2017 with the opening of Llanishen Hub.

6) Conclusion

There are some welcome improvements in Cardiff's performance this year, despite further extensive budget cuts. Concern remains over continued low staffing, and investment in resources, which are reflected in below average customer satisfaction levels compared to other library services. Possible outcomes of the Hub strategy include increases in some measures of library usage, and the service is also actively engaging on digital and health and well-being agendas.