Welsh Public Library Standards 2014-17

Vale of Glamorgan Council

Annual Assessment Report 2016-17

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

1) Executive summary

The Vale of Glamorgan met all of the 18 core entitlements in full.

Of the 7 quality indicators which have targets, Vale of Glamorgan achieved 4 in full, 2 in part and failed to achieve 1, a slightly poorer performance than last year.

Vale of Glamorgan has now completed a major review and the transfer of five libraries to the community has impacted on the reported performance for this year. The longer term outcomes of this model remain to be seen and a period of stability is required to allow changes to be embedded. The authority is to be commended on its continued investment in stock, however the impact of budget cuts on staffing and opening hours is clear, and these targets continue to be missed which is a disappointment for a previously high achieving library service.

- Vale of Glamorgan provided three impact case studies, two of which gave good evidence of the impact of the service. 98% of attendees at training sessions said they were helped to achieve their goals.

- Vale of Glamorgan carried out a customer survey of adults in September 2016, with 99% of adults indicating that the library was a safe and inclusive place – the second highest in Wales. Five libraries were transferred to the community later than expected and so not all of the individual development targets were achieved.

- Library usage has fallen compared to last year, although visits per capita remain above the median for Wales as a whole. Attendance at events and activities organised by the library has decreased over the last year and is now below the median for Wales.

- Acquisitions have not experienced the same reductions as staff and opening hours, and both the number of acquisitions and materials expenditure increased slightly during 2016-17. The Vale of Glamorgan is one of only 5 authorities to achieve both QI 8 and QI 9 this year.

- Staff figures continued to fall in 2016-17 and the only staff target achieved related to the Head of Services level of qualifications. Total revenue expenditure is lower than last year and it is noted that this is largely due to a fall in staff expenditure which included the costs of redundancies and early retirements last year.

- The transfer of five libraries to the community provided the opportunity to review opening hours which has led to a slight decrease overall, with further adjustments anticipated during 2017-18. Vale of Glamorgan does not meet the target for

opening hours per capita.

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, the authority appears to be an average performer, with many indicators in all areas close to the median for Wales and some pockets of good performance.

Compared to the previous year, there are some targets that have been missed owing to the transfer of five libraries to the community, and the further reduction in staff is a cause for concern. The authority should be commended for their continued investment in stock, however.

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.

Vale of Glamorgan transferred 5 service points to community management during the year. These libraries continue to be supported by the authority with some paid local authority library staff and have been included in the return.

a) Core entitlements

Vale of Glamorgan met all of the 18 core entitlements in full. This is an improvement over last year, now that current strategies, policies and objectives are available online, and brought to the attention of customers.

b) Quality indicators with targets

There are 16 quality indicators (QI) within the framework. Of the 7 which have targets, Vale of Glamorgan is achieving 4 in full, 2 in part and is failing to achieve 1 of the indicators:

Quality Indicator	Met?	
QI 3 Individual development:		Partially met
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:		Met in full
a) Acquisitions per capita	✔	
or Materials spend per capita	✖	
b) Replenishment rate	✔	
QI 9 Appropriate reading material:		Met in full
a) % of material budget on children	✔	

Quality Indicator	Met?	
b) % of material budget spent on Welsh	✘	
or Spend on Welsh per capita	✔	
QI 10 Online access:		Met in full
a) All service points	✔	
Computers per capita	✔	
b) Wi-Fi provision	✔	
QI 13 Staffing levels and qualifications:		Partially 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	✘	Not met

This is a slight decline in performance compared to last year, when the authority achieved QI3 in full. The authority notes this to be a consequence of the timing of the transfer of 5 libraries to the community.

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.

Vale of Glamorgan carried out an impact survey for children in February 2016 and an adult survey in September 2016.

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:	41%	*17/19*	36%	86%	97%
% of children who think that the library has made a difference to their lives:	66%	*15/17*	58%	82%	98%
QI 4 b) % of attendees of training sessions who said that the training had helped them achieve their goals:	98%	*7/19*	80%	97%	100%

Vale of Glamorgan provided 3 impact case studies which showed the real difference the library service makes:

- Two individuals who have improved their digital skills and literacy and increased their sense of community through regular library use.

- The audio book club for visually impaired users who choose their own books for discussion.

- A knit and natter group offering friendship and respite to participants as well as supporting local charities.

The second of these was largely descriptive, and all would have benefitted from additional direct evidence from users of the benefits gained.

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 the Vale of Glamorgan'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	24%	17/19	23%	71%	93%				
c) health and well-being	35%	17/20	26%	56%	94%				
d) enjoyable, safe and inclusive	99%	2/19	93%	98%	100%				
QI 2 Customer satisfaction									
a) 'very good' or 'good' choice of books	85%	17/20	74%	90%	98%				
b) 'very good' or 'good' customer care	97%	13/20	90%	99%	100%				
c) 'very good' or 'good' overall;	95%	15/20	92%	97%	100%				
d) child rating out of ten	9.1	9/19	8.6	9.1	10.0				
QI 4 User training									
a) attendances per capita	59	5	3	34	248	31	11	13	17
c) informal training per capita	151	11/20	1	156	712	195	10/19	113	16/21
QI 6 Library use									
a) visits per capita	4,327	8	2,453	4,033	6,751	4,613	6	5,114	4
b) virtual visits per capita	922	11/21	341	922	2,299	1,009	11	1,136	8
c) active borrowers per capita	194	5	77	153	235	186	6	191	6
QI 7 attendances at events per capita	211	12	62	214	496	227	10	181	12
QI 11 Use of ICT - % of available time used by the public									
a) equipment	34%	9/21	16%	32%	69%	34%	9	34%	13
QI 12 Supply of requests									
a) % available within 7 days	70%	13/21	48%	70%	82%	75%	6	67%	17
b) % available within 15 days	79%	19/21	65%	85%	96%	82%	18	84%	11
QI 13 Staffing levels and qualifications									
(v) a) total volunteers	193	2	0	24	209	19	10	18	7
b) total volunteer hours	4,268	2	0	798	5,156	532	12	736	9
QI 14 Operational expenditure									

Performance indicator	Rank	Lowest	Median	Highest	2015/16	Rank	2014/15	Rank
a) total expenditure per capita	£16,968	1 /21	£6,745	£11,979	£16,968	£18,760	1 / 21	£20,796	1
b) % on staff	51%	16/21	46%	58%	75%	58%	11 / 21	49%	18
% on information resources	10%	17/21	4%	13%	25%	9%	18 / 21	10%	18
% on equipment and buildings	2%	16/21	0%	4%	20%	4%	8 / 21	6%	9
% on other operational costs	37%	1 /21	9%	22%	37%	29%	7 / 21	35%	4
c) capital expenditure per capita	£429	10/21	£0	£341	£16,692	£95	13 / 21	£1,495	5
QI 15 Net cost per visit	£3.03	3 /20	£1.50	£2.33	£3.30	£3.21	2 / 21	£3.20	3/11
QI 16 Opening hours *(see note)*									
(ii) a) % hours unplanned closure of static service points	0.07%	4	0.00%	0.00%	0.48%	0.05%	16	0.02%	11
b) % mobile stops / home deliveries missed	5.48%	12 /19	0.00%	0.13%	8.33%	23.44%	19 / 19	n/k	

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

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

Vale of Glamorgan carried out a customer survey of adults in October 2016. Responses were generally below the median for Wales as a whole, except for the proportion of adults who experience the library as a safe at inclusive place which, at 99%, was the second highest in Wales. A survey of children was carried out in February 2016, and this was reported on last year. It is noted that there was a delay in five libraries being transferred to the community so that programmes relating to individual development had not been pre-arranged or advertised. As a result not all of the individual development targets have been achieved. Attendance at formal pre-arranged training sessions has increased significantly so that the per capita level was the fifth highest in Wales in 2016-17.

b) Access for all

Vale of Glamorgan meets the target for easy access to service points. Visits and virtual visits have both fallen compared to 2015-16, as have the other indicators of library use reported under QI 6. It is noted that this is partly due to a reduction in opening hours, the closure of one library for several weeks and the transfer of five libraries to the community. Visits per capita remain above the median for Wales, however, whilst book issues per capita remain below the median for Wales. Attendance at events and activities organised by the library has decreased over last year, due to a halt in arranging activities pending the transfer of five libraries to the community, and is just below the median for Wales as a whole.

c) Learning for life

The level of acquisitions and materials expenditure have both increased slightly compared to last year, with the number of acquisitions per capita the second highest in Wales. The proportion of materials expenditure accounted for by children's stock and the per capita level of expenditure on items in the Welsh Language have both achieved their target in 2016-17. The Vale of Glamorgan is one of only 5 authorities to achieve both QI 8 and QI 9 this year.

Usage of ICT facilities is the same as last year, and remains above the median for Wales. Wi-Fi usage data provided by the supplier records total user connection hours, including automatic connections for people standing outside the library, rather than the total hours of use by library customers, and so has not been included in the table above.

d) Leadership and development

Overall staff and professional staff have both decreased slightly this year. Last year saw a major restructure which was fully implemented during 2016-17. None of the targets involving staffing have been achieved, apart from the one relating to the Head of Services qualifications, and the per capita levels of both total staff and professional staff are close to the median for Wales as a whole. The number of volunteers has increased over last year, with an increase in home borrower volunteers and volunteers for the library code clubs, with a total of 37 each providing an average of 19 hours to the service. In addition, 154 volunteers each contribute an average of 23 hours to the five libraries that have now been transferred to the community.

Total revenue expenditure has fallen by 10% compared to last year, which is largely attributable to a decrease in staff expenditure which included the costs of redundancies and early retirements in 2015-16. Total revenue expenditure per capita remains the highest in Wales. Average net cost per visit is £3.03, the third highest in Wales, and compares to £3.21 last year.

Opening hours have fallen slightly over the last year with the transfer of five libraries to the community providing the opportunity for a review of opening hours with one library halving the length of time they were open, whilst others have increased opening hours. It is anticipated that further adjustments may be made during 2017-18. The Vale of Glamorgan has recorded one of the highest numbers of unplanned closures during 2016-17, with the missed pop-up mobile library stops being due to the volunteer driver being unavailable – this responsibility has now been passed over to staff to prevent any further stops being missed.

4) Strategic context

The authority provided a clear narrative concerning its contribution to the four pillars to the Taking Wales Forward programme – prosperous and secure; healthy and active; ambitious and learning; and united and connected – noting that the service could equally well match against the seven goals of the Well-being of Future Generations Act and other initiatives.

5) Future direction

During the year, 5 libraries were transferred to the community, with two posts dedicated to supporting them on the ground, with a commitment to ensure the long term future and

sustainability of these libraries. A priority will be migrating to the All Wales Library Management System during the next year. A small management re-structure has brought libraries into a section with adult community learning and arts, which is expected to bring benefits.

6) Conclusion

Vale of Glamorgan has now completed a major review and the transfer of five libraries to the community has impacted on the reported performance for this year. The longer term outcomes of this model remain to be seen and a period of stability is required to allow changes to be embedded. The authority is to be commended on its continued investment in stock, however the impact of budget cuts on staffing and opening hours is clear, and these targets continue to be missed which is a disappointment for a previously high achieving library service.