CYNGOR BWRDEISTREF SIROL
RHONDDA CYNON TAF
COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

GWŶS I GYFARFOD O'R CYNGOR

C.Hanagan
Cyfarwyddwr Gwasanaeth y Gwasanaethau Democrataidd a Chyfathrebu
Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Rhondda Cynon Taf
2 Llys Cadwyn,
Taff Street,
Pontypridd,
CF37 4TH

Dolen gyswllt: Jess Daniel - Gwasanaethau Democrataidd ac Ymgysylltu (07385401877)

DYMA WŶS I CHI i gyfarfod hybrid o **PWYLLGOR CRAFFU - GWASANAETHAU CYMUNED** gynnal ar **DYDD LLUN, 11EG MAWRTH, 2024** am **5.00 PM.**

Caiff Aelodau nad ydyn nhw'n aelodau o'r pwyllgor ac aelodau o'r cyhoedd gyfrannu yn y cyfarfod ar faterion y cyfarfod er bydd y cais yn ôl doethineb y Cadeirydd. Gofynnwn i chi roi gwybod i Wasanaethau Democrataidd erbyn Dydd Iau, 7 Mawrth 2024 trwy ddefnyddio'r manylion cyswllt uchod, gan gynnwys rhoi gwybod a fyddwch chi'n siarad Cymraeg neu Saesneg.

Bwriedir i'r cyfarfod yma gael ei weddarlledu'n fyw, mae rhagor o fanylion am hyn yma

AGENDA

Tudalennau

YMCHWIL A CHRAFFU

Mae cyfleuster ymchwil craffu ar gael yn Uned Busnes y Cyngor i gynorthwyo Aelodau â'u cyfrifoldebau craffu a'u rolau'n Aelodau Etholedig. Mae ymchwil o'r fath yn cryfhau rhaglenni gwaith y Pwyllgorau Craffu er mwyn sicrhau bod pynciau sy'n seiliedig ar ganlyniadau yn cael eu nodi. Os oes gyda chi unrhyw ymholiadau ynghylch gwaith ymchwil, e-bostiwch: Craffu@rhondda-cynon-taf.gov.uk

1. **DATGAN BUDDIANT**

   Derbyn datganiadau o fuddiannau personol gan Aelodau, yn unol â'r Cod Ymddygiad.

Nodwch:

1. Mae gofyn i Aelodau ddatgan rhif a phwnc yr agendwm y mae eu buddiant yn ymwneud ag ef a mynegi natur y buddiant personol hwnnw; a

2. Lle bo Aelodau'n ymneilltuo o'r cyfarfod o ganlyniad i ddatgelu buddiant sy'n rhagfarnu, rhaid iddyn nhw roi gwybod i'r Cadeirydd pan fyddan nhw'n gadael.

2.   COFNODION

Cadarnhau'r cofnodion o gyfarfod ar-lein y Pwyllgor Craffu - Gwasanaethau Cymuned a gynhaliwyd ar 15 Ionawr 2024, yn rhai cywir.

3.   DOLENNI YMGYNGHORI

Gwybodaeth mewn perthynas ag ymgynghoriadau perthnasol i'w hystyried gan y Pwyllgor.

4.   ADRODDIADAU ER GWYBODAETH

Mae'r adroddiadau canlynol wedi'u darparu er gwybodaeth i'r Aelodau, a hynny er mwyn galluogi Aelodau i nodi materion y mae angen craffu arnyn nhw neu eu trafod ymhellach, lle bo'n addas.

LLEOEDD BWYD CYNALIADWY: DIWEDDARIAD AR WAITH PARTNERIAETH FWYD RHCT YN RHONDDA CYNON TAF

OEDI O RAN LLWYBRAU GOFAL – DATA DIWEDDARAF

(Mae hyn fel bod modd i'r Aelodau gydnabod yr wybodaeth sydd wedi'i chynnwys yn yr adroddiadau yma, ond dylid anfon unrhyw ymholiadau sy'n ymwneud â'r eitem at Craffu@rctcbc.gov.uk)

5.   YMGYSYLLTU AG AELOD O'R CABINET DDWYWAITH Y FLWYDDYN

Craffu ar unrhyw faterion gyda deiliad y portffolio sy'n gyfrifol am Iechyd a Gofal Cymdeithasol, a sicrhau bod y mecanweithiau priodol yn eu lle i graffu'n effeithiol ar yr Adain Weithredol.

6.   SAFONAU LLYFRGELLOEDD CYHOEDDUS CYMRU

Derbyn adborth ar Asesiad Llywodraeth Cymru o Safonau Llyfrgelloedd Cyhoeddus Cymru yn RhCT.

7. **ADOLYGIAD Y CADEIRYDD A DOD Â'R CYFARFOD I BEN**

    Myfyrio ar y cyfarfod a'r camau gweithredu i'w dwyn ymlaen.

8. **MATERION BRYS**

    Trafod unrhyw faterion sydd, yn ôl doethineb y Cadeirydd, yn faterion brys yng ngoleuni amgylchiadau arbennig.

Cyfarwyddwr Gwasanaeth y Gwasanaethau Democrataidd a Chyfathrebu

Cylchreliad:-

(Y Cynghorwyr Bwrdeistref Sirol Y Cynghorydd J Bonetto a Y Cynghorydd R Davis – Cadeirydd ac Is-gadeirydd, yn y drefn honno)

Y Cynghorwyr Bwrdeistref Sirol:
Y Cynghorydd S Bradwick, Y Cynghorydd A J Ellis, Y Cynghorydd D Evans,
Y Cynghorydd A Fox, Y Cynghorydd H Gronow, Y Cynghorydd N H Morgan,
Y Cynghorydd G Jones, Y Cynghorydd Owen-Jones, Y Cynghorydd D Parkin,
Y Cynghorydd A Roberts, Y Cynghorydd G Stacey and Y Cynghorydd T Williams

Tudalen wag

Agendwm 2

PWYLLGOR CYNGOR RHONDDA CYNON TAF
PWYLLGOR CRAFFU - GWASANAETHAU CYMUNED
Cofnodion o rhithwir gyfarfod y Pwyllgor Craffu - Gwasanaethau Cymuned a gynhaliwyd Dydd Llun, 15 Ionawr 2024 am 5.00 pm.

Cafodd y cyfarfod yma ei recordio, ac mae modd gweld y manylion yma

Y Cynghorwyr Bwrdeistref Sirol – Roedd y Aelodau Pwyllgor Craffu - Gwasanaethau Cymuned canlynol yn bresennol:-

Y Cynghorydd J Bonetto (Cadeirydd)

Y Cynghorydd S Bradwick	Y Cynghorydd R Davis
Y Cynghorydd D Evans	Y Cynghorydd A Fox
Y Cynghorydd N H Morgan	Y Cynghorydd Owen-Jones
Y Cynghorydd D Parkin	Y Cynghorydd A Roberts
Y Cynghorydd G Stacey	Y Cynghorydd T Williams

Swyddogion oedd yn bresennol

Ms L Davies, Cyfarwyddwr – Iechyd a Diogelwch y Cyhoedd, a Gwasanaethau'r Gymuned
Mr N Elliott, Cyfarwyddwr Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Mr C Hanagan, Cyfarwyddwr Gwasanaeth y Gwasanaethau Democrataidd a Chyfathrebu
Ms R Hope, Pennaeth Dros Dro – Diogelu'r Cyhoedd a Gwasanaethau Rheoleiddio
Ms S Nowell, Pennaeth Materion Trawsnewid
Mr N Pilliner, Rheolwr Diogelu'r Amgylchedd a Safonau Tai
Ms C Miles, Cyfreithiwr Gofal Plant

Y Cynghorwyr Bwrdeistref Sirol eraill oedd yn bresennol

Y Cynghorydd B Harris, Aelod o'r Cabinet

25 YMDDIHEURIADAU AM ABSENOLDEB

Daeth ymddiheuriadau am absenoldeb oddi wrth Gynghorwyr y Fwrdeistref Sirol G Jones ac A Ellis.

26 DATGAN BUDDIANT

Yn unol â'r Cod Ymddygiad, doedd dim datganiadau o fuddiant.

27 COFNODION

PENDERFYNWYD cymeradwyo cofnodion y cyfarfod a gynhaliwyd ar 21 Tachwedd 2023 yn rhai cywir.

28 DOLENNI YMGYNGHORI

Aeth yr Aelodau ati i gydnabod yr wybodaeth oedd wedi'i darparu trwy'r dolenni ymgynghori mewn perthynas ag ymgynghoriadau agored, ymgynghoriadau Llywodraeth Cymru a'r materion hynny y mae'r awdurdod lleol yn cynnal ymgynghoriadau ynglŷn â nhw.

29 YMGYSYLLTU AG AELOD O'R CABINET DDWYWAITH Y FLWYDDYN

Croesawodd y Cadeirydd yr Aelod o'r Cabinet ar faterion Iechyd y Cyhoedd a Chymunedau i'r Pwyllgor a rhoddodd ddiolch i'r Aelod am ymuno. Cyflwynodd y Cyfarwyddwr Gwasanaeth – Gwasanaethau Democrataidd a Chyfathrebu ei adroddiad i Aelodau a rhoddodd wybod iddyn nhw fod gyda nhw gyfle i graffu ar unrhyw faterion gyda deiliad y portffolio sy'n gyfrifol am Iechyd y Cyhoedd a Chymunedau a sicrhau bod y mecanweithiau priodol yn eu lle i graffu'n effeithiol ar yr Adain Weithredol.

Cafwyd trafodaeth mewn perthynas â phroses sefydlu bwrdd Partneriaeth Cymunedau Diogel a gofynnodd Aelod am ymgysylltu a sicrhau y byddai mesurau ymgysylltu â'r gymuned yn parhau yn y strwythur newydd. Nododd yr Aelod o'r Cabinet fod grŵp ffocws amlasiantaeth yn ei le ar hyn o bryd a'i fod yn gweithio tuag at roi Bwrdd Partneriaeth Cymunedau Diogel Cwm Taf Morgannwg rhanbarthol ar waith o 1 Ebrill 2024. Mae disgwyl i adroddiad cynnydd gael ei gyflwyno i'r Cydbwyllgor Trosolwg a Chraffu ar 23 Chwefror ac i Bwyllgor Craffu RhCT – Gwasanaethau Cymuned (Trosedd ac Anhrefn) ar 28 Chwefror.

Gofynnodd Aelod a gafodd y potensial i un Awdurdod Lleol lywio'r Bartneriaeth ei ystyried ac aeth yr Aelod o'r Cabinet ati i gydnabod bod hyn yn bryder sydd wedi cael ei godi, a chydnabod y risgiau sy'n ymwneud â'r mater yma. Cafodd Aelodau wybod y bydd y Bartneriaeth yn cydnabod bod rhaid i unrhyw adolygiad o'r strwythurau ddarparu strwythur rhanbarthol integredig addas sy'n sicrhau bod trefniadau ar gyfer atebolrwydd lleol yn gynhwysfawr ac yn fanwl, a hynny er mwyn cadw ymreolaeth ac atebolrwydd lleol ym mhob Awdurdod Lleol unigol.
Felly, bydd y Bartneriaeth yn sicrhau bod pob Awdurdod Lleol yn cael ei fonitro a'u bod nhw'n atebol am eu cyfraniadau. Pan ofynnwyd cwestiynau pellach i'r Aelod o'r Cabinet am risg un Awdurdod Lleol yn llywio'r Bartneriaeth, ychwanegodd na ddylai datblygiad partneriaeth strategol ranbarthol gael effaith niweidiol ar y Cynghorau ac asiantaethau priodol hynny sy'n llwyddo i roi mentrau diogelwch lleol ar waith yn eu cymunedau. Bydd Cylch Gorchwyl newydd y Bartneriaeth Cymunedau Diogel yn cynnwys pwysigrwydd cynnal trefniadau cymunedau diogel lleol a'r trefniadau craffu lleol presennol sydd ar waith ar gyfer Cymunedau Diogel.

Cafwyd trafodaeth ar y Strategaeth Toiledau Lleol a gofynnodd Aelod a yw'r Cyngor yn gwneud digon i gyfathrebu â thrigolion mewn perthynas ag argaeledd cyfleusterau a'u lleoliadau. Siaradodd yr Aelod am fandaliaeth mewn toiledau cyhoeddus a gofynnodd beth sy'n cael ei wneud i fynd i'r afael â hyn. Aeth yr Aelod o'r Cabinet ati i gydnabod y broblem o ran fandaliaeth a'r effaith y mae hyn yn ei chael ar y Cyngor a'r heriau ariannu gwaith atgyweirio. O ran cyfathrebu, dywedodd yr Aelod o'r Cabinet fod cynllun wedi'i ddatblygu gyda meysydd gwasanaeth eraill a bod tudalen we Cyngor RhCT yn cael ei datblygu i roi gwybod am leoliadau toiledau cyhoeddus ledled y fwrdeistref. Bydd potensial creu ap hefyd yn cael ei ystyried. Bydd hefyd modd dod o hyd i doiledau

cyhoeddus trwy sticer logo. Tynnodd yr Aelod o'r Cabinet sylw at leoliadau mannau newid sydd ar gael yn y Fwrdeistref Sirol.

Gofynnodd Aelod a oes gwybodaeth ar gael o ran sut effaith y mae'r strategaeth yn ei chael ar grwpiau gwahanol ac a oes gwybodaeth ar gael o ran cynnydd ymgysylltu â busnesau lleol yng nghanol trefi i'w hannog nhw i adael i'r cyhoedd ddefnyddio eu cyfleusterau, a hefyd effaith nifer yr ymwelwyr â chanol trefi. Aeth yr Aelod o'r Cabinet ati i gydnabod bod angen cyfleusterau mwy amrywiol ac er nad oedd y ffigurau ar gael yn y cyfarfod, dywedodd yr Aelod o'r Cabinet y byddai'n eu rhannu nhw â'r Aelod yn uniongyrchol. Pwysleisiodd yr Aelod o'r Cabinet na ddylai heriau y mae unigolion yn eu hwynebu eu rhwystro nhw rhag defnyddio toiledau a chadarnhaodd yr Aelod o'r Cabinet fod hyn yn fater fydd yn cael ei drafod ymhellach. Mewn perthynas ag ymgysylltu â busnesau lleol, cafodd Aelodau wybod y bydd Swyddogion Carfan Datblygu'r Gymuned a Charfan Ffyniant a Datblygu yn ymgysylltu â busnesau'n fuan, gyda chanolbwynt cychwynnol ar fusnesau canol tref Pontypridd yn barod am yr Eisteddfod Genedlaethol.

Gofynnodd Aelod beth sy'n cael ei wneud i ddarparu cyfleusterau y tu allan i ganol trefi a gofynnodd am gyllid sydd ar gael gan Lywodraeth Cymru. Aeth yr Aelod o'r Cabinet ati i gydnabod y gostyngiad yn nifer y cyfleusterau sydd ar gael ledled y fwrdeistref wrth dynnu sylw Aelodau at y ffaith nad yw darpariaeth toiledau lleol i'r cyhoedd yn ofyniad statudol ar Awdurdodau Lleol yng Nghymru. Siaradodd yr Aelod o'r Cabinet am yr her o ran ariannu cyfleusterau newydd yn y sefyllfa ariannol sydd ohoni ac aeth ati i gydnabod yr awgrym o gysylltu â Llywodraeth Cymru i ofyn am gyfleoedd ariannu sydd ar gael ar gyfer hyn.

Manteisiodd yr Aelodau ar y cyfle i drafod Adolygiad Trwyddedu Tai Amlfeddiannaeth a gofynnodd Aelod i'r Aelod o'r Cabinet i ba raddau y mae'n ystyried achosion o beidio â chydymffurfio gan landlordiaid tai amlfeddiannaeth yn broblem, yn enwedig yn ward Trefforest, ac a yw'r Cyngor yn gwneud digon i sicrhau bod camau gorfodi yn eu lle ar gyfer y rheiny sy'n peidio â chydymffurfio'n fwriadol. Atebodd yr Aelod o'r Cabinet gan nodi bod achosion o beidio â chydymffurfio gan landlordiaid yn achosi problem sylweddol i'r Cyngor ac i'n trigolion, a hynny am nifer o resymau. Mae'r Cynllun Trwyddedu Ychwanegol ar gyfer 2024 yn hanfodol er mwyn sicrhau bod modd i'r Cyngor liniaru'r effaith negyddol yma a chymryd camau gorfodi yn erbyn yr unigolion hynny sy'n peidio â chydymffurfio'n fwriadol.

Gofynnodd Aelod a yw'r Cyngor yn rhagweld gostyngiad posibl yn nifer y tai amlfeddiannaeth yn y dyfodol gyda thystiolaeth bod nifer y myfyrwyr yn Nhrefforest wedi gostwng dros y blynyddoedd diwethaf. Nododd yr Aelod o'r Cabinet ei bod hi'n anodd rhagweld y farchnad rhentu preifat. O ystyried y sefyllfa ariannol sydd ohoni gyda'r argyfwng costau byw, effaith diwygio lles, newidiadau i fudd-daliadau tai a'r galw mawr am lety llai, mae tai amlfeddiannaeth yn dod yn opsiynau mwy hyfyw i lawer o drigolion. Er gwaethaf y gostyngiad yn nifer y myfyrwyr, mae tai amlfeddiannaeth yn parhau i gael eu hystyried yn ddewis gan weithwyr proffesiynol ifainc sy'n newydd i'r farchnad gyflogaeth.

Siaradodd Aelod arall am y pryderon a gafodd eu codi'n flaenorol am safonau byw anniogel mewn tai amlfeddiannaeth a gofynnodd am eglurhad y byddai'r broses arolygu trwy'r strategaeth yn rhoi hyder i Aelodau fod safonau diogelwch yn cael eu bodloni. Roedd gan yr Aelod o'r Cabinet hyder yn swyddogion y Cyngor sy'n mynd i'r afael â phroblemau diogelwch a hynny fel blaenoriaeth uchel.

Rhoddodd y Cadeirydd ddiolch i'r Aelod o'r Cabinet am ymuno â'r cyfarfod ac i'r Aelodau am eu cwestiynau. **PENDERFYNWYD**:

1. Craffu ar yr Aelod o'r Cabinet ar faterion Iechyd y Cyhoedd a Chymunedau mewn perthynas â materion a gafodd eu trafod a'u cytuno gan y Cabinet, ac unrhyw benderfyniadau allweddol a gafodd eu gwneud, yn ystod y cyfnod rhwng 11 Mai 2023 a 15 Ionawr 2024;

2. Nodi unrhyw feysydd sy'n codi o'r materion hynny a bennwyd yn ystod y cyfnod yma y mae'r Pwyllgor yn dymuno cynnal gwaith craffu pellach arnyn nhw, a hynny'n rhan o'r diwygiadau i raglen waith y Pwyllgor sydd wedi'i chyhoeddi, mewn perthynas ag Iechyd y Cyhoedd a Chymunedau.

30 STRATEGAETH TIR HALOGEDIG

Amlinellodd y Cyfarwyddwr Gwasanaeth – Gwasanaethau Democrataidd a Chyfathrebu bwrpas yr adroddiad er mwyn i Aelodau rag-graffu ar y manylion yn yr adroddiad a rhoi sylwadau'r Pwyllgor i'r Prif Swyddog ac Aelod perthnasol o'r Cabinet cyn iddyn nhw drafod y Strategaeth Archwilio Tir Halogedig arfaethedig ar gyfer RhCT, trwy'r broses penderfyniadau dirprwyedig.

Amlinellodd Rheolwr Diogelu'r Amgylchedd a Safonau Tai gefndir y Strategaeth Archwilio Tir Halogedig a chafodd Aelodau wybod y cyhoeddodd Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Rhondda Cynon Taf ei strategaeth gychwynnol ym mis Ionawr 2004 yn dilyn ymgynghoriad cyhoeddus. Cafodd Aelodau wybod mai bwriad Strategaeth Archwilio Tir Halogedig y Cyngor oedd cyflawni'r blaenoriaethau canlynol o ran tir halogedig posibl:
a. Diogelu iechyd a lles pobl;
b. Annog ailddatblygu tir sydd wedi'i ddifrodi/ailddefnyddio tir llwyd;
c. Annog adfer gwirfoddol;
ch. Cyfathrebu a gweithio'n effeithiol gyda sefydliadau eraill i ddiogelu derbynyddion eraill;
d. Ymgysylltu â chymunedau lleol i gael gwybod am eu blaenoriaethau;
dd. Sicrhau cydymffurfiaeth a gorfodi'r ddeddfwriaeth a'r canllawiau statudol.

Nododd Rheolwr Diogelu'r Amgylchedd a Safonau Tai fod y Cyngor yn hanesyddol wedi ymchwilio i nifer o safleoedd strategol allweddol a'u hadfer nhw mewn partneriaeth ag Awdurdod Datblygu Cymru (WDA) a rhanddeiliaid eraill, a rhoddodd enghreifftiau megis Glofa a Golosgfa Coed-elái a'r Safle Phurnacite yn Abercwmboi. Mae gwaith adfer nifer o safleoedd eraill wedi cael ei sicrhau trwy'r broses gynllunio. Mae system gwybodaeth ddaearyddol (GIS) sydd wedi'i datblygu gan yr adran Iechyd a Diogelwch y Cyhoedd wedi bod yn hynod werthfawr yn ystod y cam ymgynghori cynllunio o ran nodi tir o'r fath. Cafodd Aelodau wybod bod materion tir halogedig yn aml yn gymhleth a bod delio â safleoedd halogedig posibl yn anodd, yn enwedig oherwydd nad oes unrhyw/llawer o wybodaeth ar gael yn aml.

Cafodd Aelodau wybod hefyd nad yw Llywodraeth Cymru wedi darparu rhaglen ariannu gyfalaf ar gyfer ymchwilio i dir halogedig a/neu adfer tir halogedig ers 2010. Yn ogystal â hyn, does gan y Cyngor ddim cyllideb gyfalaf benodol ar gyfer ymchwilio i dir halogedig a/neu adfer tir halogedig. O ganlyniad i hyn, mae'r Cyngor wedi defnyddio ei adnoddau i ganolbwyntio ar sicrhau trefniadau ymchwilio ac adfer tir effeithiol yn rhan o'r broses Rheoli Datblygu, a hynny trwy

bennu amodau ar gyfer caniatâd cynllunio lle bo angen. Mae ymchwiliadau'n cael eu cynnal cyn datblygu ac maen nhw'n ceisio nodweddu natur benodol unrhyw gysylltiadau llygru posibl a sicrhau eu bod nhw'n cael eu hadfer yn briodol.

Aeth Rheolwr Diogelu'r Amgylchedd a Safonau Tai ati i gyflwyno agweddau allweddol ar y Strategaeth Archwilio Tir Halogedig ac ar yr adolygiad mwyaf diweddar. Cafodd Aelodau wybod bod proses adolygu'r Strategaeth Archwilio Tir Halogedig wedi cael ei defnyddio i asesu effeithiolrwydd y strategaeth wreiddiol o ran bodloni gofynion deddfwriaeth Rhan 2A a chanllawiau statudol. Cafodd yr adolygiad llawn cyntaf o'r Strategaeth Archwilio Tir Halogedig ei gwblhau ym mis Rhagfyr 2008. Yn 2016, cafodd y strategaeth ei diwygio i ystyried y newid i'r canllawiau statudol yn 2012. Rhoddwyd gwybod i Aelodau y cafodd yr amserlenni yn y Strategaeth Tir Halogedig wreiddiol eu hystyried yn fympwyol felly roedd angen eu hailddiffinio nhw wrth ystyried profiad, galw am adnoddau a newidiadau i ddarpariaeth ariannu. O ganlyniad i hyn, mae pob adolygiad o'r Strategaeth Archwilio Tir Halogedig wedi ailddiffinio targedau archwilio er mwyn darparu rhaglen realistig a chyraeddadwy. Tynnwyd sylw Aelodau at Atodiad 1 a oedd yn cynnwys copi o'r Strategaeth Archwilio Tir Halogedig sydd wedi'i hadolygu fwyaf diweddar o fis Rhagfyr 2023.

Esboniodd Rheolwr Diogelu'r Amgylchedd a Safonau Tai fod tynnu cyllid grant cyfalaf yn ôl wedi effeithio'n sylweddol ar allu Awdurdodau Lleol Cymru i ymchwilio'n ffurfiol i dir halogedig posibl. O ganlyniad i hyn, defnyddiodd y Cyngor ei adnoddau i ganolbwyntio ar ddarparu mewnbwn i'r broses Rheoli Datblygu, lle mae amodau'n cael eu hychwanegu at ganiatâd cynllunio sy'n golygu bod angen cynnal gwaith ymchwilio/adfer. Mae hyn yn gofyn am amser sylweddol Swyddog ond mae'n darparu mecanwaith amgen effeithiol ar gyfer delio â halogiad trwy sicrhau bod y tir yn addas i'w ddefnyddio a sicrhau adferiad ar sail wirfoddol. Does dim cyfleoedd ariannu ar gael ar hyn o bryd a bydd y Cyngor yn parhau i ddefnyddio'i adnoddau trwy'r broses Rheoli Datblygu.

Tynnwyd sylw Aelodau at Atodiad 2 a amlinellodd enghreifftiau i ddangos defnydd amodau tir halogedig i sicrhau bod tir gyda ffynhonnell bosibl o halogiad yn RhCT yn cael ei ailddatblygu'n ddiogel.

Cyfeiriodd Aelod at ddŵr mynyddoedd / glofeydd yn llifo i lawr ochrau mynyddoedd gan beryglu tai a gofynnodd am eglurhad mai Cyfoeth Naturiol Cymru sy'n gyfrifol. Cadarnhaodd Rheolwr Diogelu'r Amgylchedd a Safonau Tai mai Cyfoeth Naturiol Cymru yw rheoleiddiwr cenedlaethol dyfroedd a reolir, sy'n golygu y byddai dŵr sy'n llifo i lawr ochrau mynyddoedd yn dod o dan ei gylch gwaith. Rhoddwyd gwybod i Aelodau fod gwybodaeth ar gael o ran cysylltu â Chyfoeth Naturiol Cymru gyda phryderon.

Nododd Aelod fod y strategaeth yn gynhwysfawr ac yn dechnegol ac wedi'i hysgrifennu'n glir.

Cyfeiriodd Aelod arall at y cynnydd yn nifer yr achosion o lifogydd yn ystod y blynyddoedd diwethaf a gofynnodd a oes cysylltiadau digonol rhwng hyn
a Strategaeth Rheoli Perygl Llifogydd y Cyngor. Hefyd gofynnodd a oes protocolau yn eu lle ar gyfer asesu perygl unrhyw halogiad yn ystod llifogydd. Aeth Rheolwr Diogelu'r Amgylchedd a Safonau Tai ati i gydnabod effaith y newid yn yr hinsawdd a pherygl llifogydd ar ddatblygiadau a nododd y byddai rhaid i'r materion yma fod yn rhan o'r asesiadau risg ar gyfer datblygiadau fyddai'n cael eu hadolygu gan Gyfoeth Naturiol Cymru yn ogystal â'r Cyngor.

Cyfeiriodd Aelod ar yr wybodaeth yn yr adroddiad o ran cyfrifoldeb Cyfoeth Naturiol Cymru ar gyfer safleoedd arbennig lle mae'r mwyaf o halogiad, a gofynnodd a yw'r Cyngor yn hapus gyda threfniadau craffu o ran gwaith Cyfoeth Naturiol Cymru ac a oes digon o waith monitro yn cael ei gynnal o ystyried cyfrifoldeb y Cyngor i drigolion yn yr ardaloedd lleol. Esboniodd Rheolwr Diogelu'r Amgylchedd a Safonau Tai fod Cyfoeth Naturiol Cymru yn dod yn rheoleiddiwr ar gyfer y safle pan fo ardal yn cael ei datgan yn safle arbennig, a bod y Cyngor yn gweithio ochr yn ochr â fe. Mae gan Gyfoeth Naturiol Cymru gyfrifoldeb dros adfer yn y dyfodol ac mae'n parhau'n safle arbennig hyd nes bod gwaith adfer wedi'i ddatrys.

Tynnodd Aelod sylw at yr wybodaeth o ran y gofrestr gyhoeddus, gan nodi ei bod hi ar gael ar ffurf copi caled yn unig. Gofynnodd yr Aelod a oes cynlluniau i'w chyhoeddi ar-lein, a hynny ar gyfer tryloywder. Nododd Rheolwr Diogelu'r Amgylchedd a Safonau Tai y byddai rhaid gwneud ymholiadau pellach mewn perthynas â hyn ond byddai angen cydnabod faint o wybodaeth sydd ar gael ar-lein a chyfaddasrwydd cyhoeddi'r wybodaeth yma ar-lein.

Gofynnodd Aelod arall a ddylid cynnal asesiad risg ychwanegol yn ystod llifogydd sylweddol er mwyn bod yn hyderus nad yw unrhyw achosion o halogi wedi digwydd. Esboniodd Rheolwr Diogelu'r Amgylchedd a Safonau Tai y byddai hyn yn rhan o waith y carfanau rheoli perygl llifogydd a rhoddodd drosolwg o'r camau gweithredu wedi'u cymryd ers effaith Storm Dennis a gwaith adrannau eraill y Cyngor a Chyfoeth Naturiol Cymru.

Aeth Aelodau ati i gydnabod y pwynt yma ac roedden nhw o'r farn y byddai'n fuddiol gofyn i garfan rheoli perygl llifogydd am ragor o wybodaeth mewn perthynas â'r mater yma.

Aeth Aelod ati i gydnabod yr wybodaeth yn yr adroddiad sy'n nodi nad yw Llywodraeth Cymru yn darparu cyllid ar gyfer ymchwilio i dir halogedig mwyach a sut mae'r Cyngor yn dibynnu ar y broses Rheoli Datblygu a Chynllunio. Tynnodd yr Aelod sylw at y ffaith bod yr adroddiad hefyd yn nodi bod rhaid i'r Cyngor, a hynny o dan ran 2 o Ddeddf Diogelu'r Amgylchedd, archwilio ei ardal o ran tir halogedig a gofynnodd a yw'r diffyg o adnoddau'n effeithio ar allu'r Cyngor i wneud hyn ac a yw dull RhCT yn gyson ag Awdurdodau Lleol eraill yng Nghymru. Amlinellodd Rheolwr Diogelu'r Amgylchedd a Safonau Tai y broses archwilio, gan roi sicrwydd i Aelodau fod tir yn cael ei archwilio ond mae hyn yn cael ei wneud trwy'r broses rheoli datblygu. Ychwanegodd Rheolwr Diogelu'r Amgylchedd a Safonau Tai y nododd y Cyngor yr ystod amrywiol o safleoedd pan gafodd y Strategaeth Archwilio Tir Halogedig gychwynnol ei datblygu a nododd nad oes modd i'r Cyngor fynd ati'n rhagweithiol i gwblhau gwaith archwilio ond mae gwaith ochr yn ochr ag adran Gynllunio'r Cyngor yn sicrhau bod risgiau'n cael eu hystyried. Rhoddodd Rheolwr Diogelu'r Amgylchedd a Safonau Tai wybod i Aelodau fod yr holl Awdurdodau Lleol yn yr un sefyllfa mewn perthynas â chyllid a'u bod nhw'n gyson o ran defnyddio rheoli datblygu.

Gofynnodd Aelod sut mae'r strategaeth yma'n cyfrannu at gynlluniau ehangach y Cyngor megis y Cynllun Corfforaethol a Strategaeth Lleihau Carbon y Cyngor. Nododd Rheolwr Diogelu'r Amgylchedd a Safonau Tai ei bod hi'n bwysig, o ran cynaliadwyedd, ystyried yr effaith bosibl ar genedlaethau'r dyfodol a sicrhau bod tir yn ddiogel. Rhoddwyd eglurhad mai prif ganolbwynt y Strategaeth Archwilio Tir Halogedig yw delio â risgiau defnydd blaenorol tir. Ychwanegodd Rheolwr Diogelu'r Amgylchedd a Safonau Tai fod yna gysylltiadau â lleihau carbon o ran

y broses ddatblygu a sicrhau nad oes unrhyw achosion o halogi. Cafodd Aelodau wybod bod rhagor o drefnau rheoli ar waith o ran trwyddedau amgylcheddol a deddfwriaeth Iechyd a Diogelwch er mwyn rheoli llygredd.

Gofynnodd Aelod sut mae modd i'r Cyngor fod yn sicr nad yw'r dull yma'n peryglu ein cymunedau o ystyried y diffyg o adnoddau sydd ar gael. Rhoddodd Rheolwr Diogelu'r Amgylchedd a Safonau Tai sicrwydd i Aelodau fod y Cyngor yn gweithredu ar unrhyw gwynion sy'n dod i law gan y gymuned ac ar unrhyw risgiau a nodir yn y gymuned.

Ar ôl trafod, **PENDERFYNODD** Aelodau:

- Awdurdodi'r Cyfarwyddwr Gwasanaeth – Gwasanaethau Democrataidd a Chyfathrebu i roi sylwadau'r Pwyllgor i'r Prif Swyddog a'r Aelod perthnasol o'r Cabinet.

- Gofyn i Garfan Rheoli Perygl Llifogydd y Cyngor am ragor o wybodaeth mewn perthynas â'r ymholiadau am lifogydd sylweddol.

31   OEDI YN Y LLWYBR AT OFAL

Cyflwynodd Cyfarwyddwr Gwasanaethau i Oedolion yr adroddiad i roi gwybodaeth allweddol o ran Oedi yn Achos Llwybrau Gofal ar gyfer trigolion Rhondda Cynon Taf rhwng mis Ebrill a mis Tachwedd 2023 i Aelodau. Hefyd rhoddodd wybodaeth am effaith bresennol pwysau'r gaeaf ar ryddhau o'r ysbyty a gwybodaeth mewn perthynas â defnydd byrddau gwyn electronig a rhannu gwybodaeth cleifion i gefnogi trefniadau rhyddhau o'r ysbyty.

Dywedodd y Cyfarwyddwr fod cydweithwyr o Fwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol Cwm Taf Morgannwg yn bresennol yn y cyfarfod.

Amlinellodd y Cyfarwyddwr gefndir oedi wrth ryddhau o'r ysbyty fel sydd wedi'i nodi yn yr adroddiad gan esbonio bod rhagdybiaethau blaenorol am oedi wrth ryddhau o'r ysbyty yn aml yn canolbwyntio ar gapasiti cyfyngedig ym maes gofal cymdeithasol fel y prif reswm, ond mae cymysgedd o ffactorau eraill all achosi oedi wrth ryddhau cleifion o'r ysbyty, gan gynnwys heriau o ran manteisio ar wasanaethau eraill y GIG yn y gymuned.

Rhoddwyd gwybod i Aelodau fod data o ran oedi trosglwyddo ysbyty wedi'i gasglu ar dri achlysur gwahanol, sef:
• Oedi wrth Drosglwyddo Gofal (DToC) a oedd ar gael rhwng 2004 a mis Chwefror 2020.
• Adroddiadau gwybodaeth reoli ar oedi wrth ryddhau o'r ysbyty rhwng mis Gorffennaf 2020 a mis Mawrth 2023 (wedi'u llunio a'u dilysu gan y Byrddau Iechyd yn unig).
• Oedi yn Achos Llwybrau Gofal a gyflwynwyd o fis Ebrill 2023.

Cafodd Aelodau wybod bod gofyniad ar bob Bwrdd Iechyd i fesur Oedi yn Achos Llwybrau Gofal trwy gyfrifiad ciplun misol ar drydydd dydd Mercher y mis ac, ar ôl dilysu a cheisio cytundeb gwasanaethau cymdeithasol a phartneriaid llywodraeth leol ehangach, i roi'r wybodaeth yma i Lywodraeth Cymru.

Esboniodd y Cyfarwyddwr fod yna amrywiaeth eang o resymau dros Oedi yn

Achos Llwybrau Gofal a thynnwyd sylw Aelodau at y rhestr lawn yn Atodiad 1.

Esboniwyd yr wybodaeth dadansoddi data i Aelodau a thynnodd y Cyfarwyddwr sylw at y duedd tuag i lawr gyffredinol yn nifer yr adroddiadau o oedi ar gyfer Rhondda Cynon Taf dros y flwyddyn hyd yn hyn. Er gwaethaf bod â'r boblogaeth fwyaf, mae cyflawniad ar y cyfan yn dda o'i gymharu â gweithgarwch Cwm Taf Morgannwg ehangach.

Rhoddodd y Cyfarwyddwr drosolwg o'r wybodaeth yn nhablau 2a-d yn yr adroddiad ac esboniodd fod y 4 prif reswm dros oedi yn Rhondda Cynon Taf yn adlewyrchu themâu tebyg ledled Cymru ac Awdurdodau Lleol eraill.

Esboniodd y Cyfarwyddwr fod Bwrdd Rhyddhau o'r Ysbyty Integredig wedi'i sefydlu er mwyn cymryd cyfrifoldeb cyffredinol am gyflawniad rhyddhau o'r ysbyty ledled ardal y Bwrdd Iechyd, gan gynnwys sicrhau bod achosion o Oedi yn Achos Llwybrau Gofal yn cael eu hadrodd yn effeithiol, ac yn bwysicach oll, roi cynllun gwella ar waith i fynd i'r afael â'r meysydd sy'n peri'r risg fwyaf o ran oedi. Cafodd Aelodau drosolwg o'r meysydd sy'n peri'r risg fwyaf ar gyfer ardal Cwm Taf Morgannwg a'r cynlluniau gweithredu.

Esboniodd y Cyfarwyddwr y sefyllfa bresennol o ran data Oedi yn Achos Llwybrau Gofal a sut mae staff y Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol wedi gweithio'n agos gyda'r Bwrdd Iechyd i gyflymu'r broses o ryddhau o'r ysbyty, yn enwedig o Ysbytai Acíwt Brenhinol Morgannwg a'r Tywysog Siarl yn rhan o Strwythur Gorchymyn Aur.

Rhoddodd y Cyfarwyddwr wybodaeth ychwanegol y gofynnodd Aelodau amdani mewn cyfarfod blaenorol mewn perthynas â defnydd byrddau gwyn electronig ar wardiau ysbytai a rhannu gwybodaeth claf i gefnogi trefniadau rhyddhau o'r ysbyty. Cafodd Aelodau drosolwg o bwrpas y byrddau gwyn mewn ysbytai a buddion eu cyflwyno yn ôl y Bwrdd Iechyd.

Rhoddwyd sicrwydd i Aelodau o ran trosglwyddo data trwy ddefnyddio'r byrddau gwyn, ac amlinellodd y Cyfarwyddwr y dulliau a'r gweithdrefnau sydd ar waith i sicrhau bod yr wybodaeth yn cael ei rheoli'n effeithiol.

Gofynnodd Aelod am y data mewn perthynas ag anghytundebau a sut mae'r rhain yn cael eu rheoli. Aeth y Cyfarwyddwr ati i gydnabod anhawster rheoli'r achosion yma ond amlinellodd y broses o weithio ar y cyd â staff a rheolwyr wardiau ysbytai yn y Bwrdd Iechyd i drafod gyda theuluoedd er mwyn deall y rhesymau dros yr anghydfodau a cheisio dod o hyd i ddatrysiad gyda'r canlyniad gorau i'r claf. Cadarnhaodd Swyddog Bwrdd Iechyd Cwm Taf Morgannwg y broses o drafod gyda theuluoedd a rhoddodd drosolwg o waith sy'n cael ei gynnal yn y Bwrdd Iechyd o ran polisi a gweithdrefn rhyddhau o'r ysbyty integredig. Cafodd Aelodau fanylion Rhaglen 'Optimise' sydd â'r bwriad o gefnogi staff ysbytai gyda chymorth ymarferol o ran rhyddhau o'r ysbyty yn effeithiol. Tynnodd y Swyddog sylw at sut mae'r Bwrdd Iechyd yn dilyn y polisi rhyddhau o'r ysbyty newydd sydd wedi cael ei gyhoeddi'n ddiweddar gan Lywodraeth Cymru, gan gynnwys canllawiau o ran rhyddhau cleifion cyndyn.

Gofynnodd Aelod arall a oes data ar gael o ran pa mor hir y mae pobl wedi bod yn aros i gael eu rhyddhau o'r ysbyty. Cadarnhaodd y Cyfarwyddwr fod yr Oedi yn Achos Llwybrau Gofal yn giplun o ddata ar ddiwrnod unigol a nad yw'n darparu gwybodaeth y tu ôl i'r rhif. Ailbwysleisiodd Swyddog Bwrdd Iechyd Cwm Taf Morgannwg fod yr wybodaeth dim ond yn berthnasol i adeg benodol, a does

dim modd gwybod pa mor hir y mae claf wedi bod yn wynebu oedi gan y gall rhesymau newid o ddydd i ddydd. Nododd y Swyddog fod y Bwrdd Iechyd yn datblygu dangosfwrdd llif a rhyddhau o'r ysbyty fydd yn rhoi trosolwg cyffredinol o hyd a gwerth amser claf yn yr ysbyty.

Gofynnodd Aelod arall gwestiwn am y broses asesu cyn rhyddhau o'r ysbyty a gofynnodd am ragor o wybodaeth am argaeledd lleoedd mewn cartrefi gofal yn y Fwrdeistref Sirol. Amlinellodd y Cyfarwyddwr y broses asesu cyn rhyddhau o'r ysbyty ac aeth ati i gydnabod bod achosion lle mae oedi yn digwydd ond mae'r Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol yn sicrhau bod anghenion yn cael eu diwallu yn y cyfamser ar y cyfan. Aeth y Cyfarwyddwr ati i gydnabod bod argaeledd lleoedd mewn cartrefi gofal yn amrywio sy'n gallu arwain at gyfnodau lle mae rhai cartrefi'n llawn. Cafodd Aelodau wybod bod yna adegau lle mae pobl yn cael lle mewn cartrefi gofal y tu allan i'r sir ond pwysleisiodd y Cyfarwyddwr y byddai'r Cyngor yn sicrhau bod y rhain yn lleoliadau dros dro ac yn ceisio symud yr unigolion yn y dyfodol pe byddai'n well gan deuluoedd hynny.

Gofynnodd yr Aelod am ffïoedd cartrefi gofal a'r gwahaniaeth rhwng y lefelau o ffïoedd a bennwyd gan y Cyngor a'r rhai a bennwyd gan gartrefi gofal preifat. Cadarnhaodd y Cyfarwyddwr fod ffïoedd cartrefi gofal yn cael eu pennu ym mholisi'r Cyngor bob blwyddyn a'u bod nhw'n dilyn polisi Llywodraeth Cymru ar gyfer taliadau preswyl. Nododd y Cyfarwyddwr fod modd i gartrefi gofal preifat bennu eu ffïoedd eu hunain ar gyfer pobl sy'n ariannu eu gofal eu hunain a chyfeiriodd at ddylanwad y farchnad ar bennu'r lefelau hynny. Cydnabyddir bod costau cartrefi gofal wedi cynyddu ond cadarnhaodd y Cyfarwyddwr fod y Cyngor yn gweithio gyda darparwyr lleol i adolygu eu costau gofal er mwyn ystyried ffïoedd y Cyngor yn unol â hynny.

Ar ôl trafod, **PENDERFYNODD** Aelodau:

- Craffu ar gynnwys yr adroddiad
- Gofyn am ddiweddariadau pellach mewn perthynas â data yn dilyn pwysau'r gaeaf er mwyn monitro tueddiadau.

32   ADOLYGIAD Y CADEIRYDD A DOD Â'R CYFARFOD I BEN

Rhoddodd y Cadeirydd ddiolch i'r Swyddogion am ymuno â'r cyfarfod ac am eu hadroddiadau a chyflwyniadau cynhwysfawr. Rhoddodd y Cadeirydd ddiolch i Aelodau am gyfrannu at y cyfarfod ac am eu cwestiynau.

33   MATERION BRYS

Dim.

Daeth y cyfarfod i ben am 6.50 pm   Y Cynghorydd J Bonetto
                                                                    Cadeirydd.

Tudalen wag

Agendwm 5

RHONDDA CYNON TAF

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

MUNICIPAL YEAR 2023-24

COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

11th March 2024

BI-ANNUAL CABINET MEMBER ENGAGEMENT

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR DEMOCRATIC SERVICES AND COMMUNICATION

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1. To scrutinise any arising matters with the portfolio holder responsible for Health and Social Care and to ensure that the appropriate mechanisms are in place to effectively scrutinise the Executive.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Committee:

2.1 Scrutinise the Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care in respect of matters considered and agreed by Cabinet, and any key decisions taken, during the period 11 May 2023 – 11th March 2024; and,

2.2 Identify any areas arising from those matters determined within this period which Committee wish to further scrutinise, as part of revisions to the committees published work programme, in relation to Health and Social Care.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 To provide the Community Services Scrutiny Committee the opportunity to scrutinise and challenge the Cabinet in respect of the decisions taken in the defined decision-making period.

3.2 The recommendations seek to provide a structure to these sessions, to enable discussion and challenge to be focused upon a defined period and those individual decisions taken.

4. BACKGROUND

4.1 As part of this Council's ongoing commitment to improve the function of Scrutiny as a critical friend of the Council, this item is being brought before the Community Services Scrutiny Committee as part of Cabinet and Scrutiny engagement.

4.2 Such an approach will provide Scrutiny Members with the opportunity to further challenge the Executive, as the Cabinet Member can provide details relating to the investments being taken forward within the portfolio and the challenges faced by the Council.

5. SCRUTINY OF THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER

5.1 The role that the Community Services Scrutiny Committee can play in holding the Council's decision-makers to account makes it fundamentally important to the successful functioning of local democracy. Scrutinising the Executive serves an important purpose in ensuring that decision makers of the Council are held accountable for their actions and decisions.

5.2 By Scrutinising the Cabinet Member Health and Social Care, the public can gain a better understanding of their decision-making process and hold them accountable, which will promote openness and transparency within the Council. It will also ensure that those in Leadership positions are acting in the best interests of their constituents.

5.3 Scrutiny can also identify areas for improvement and drive positive changes, strengthening our governance arrangements. Effective scrutiny helps secure the efficient delivery of public services and drives improvements within the authority itself. Conversely, poor scrutiny can be indicative of wider governance, leadership and service failure.

5.4 Under the Terms of Reference of the Community Services Scrutiny Committee, Members have the opportunity to scrutinise and challenge areas that fall under the remit of the Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care. The main responsibility areas of the Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care cover the following areas:
- Adult Social Care (including Residential, in-house & external)
- Care management Mental Health
- Care management Learning Disabilities
- Day Care Services
- Adult & Children's Safeguarding
- Children's Services
- Foster Care & Adoption
- Family Support services
- Corporate Parenting Lead
- Resilient Families

5. 5   Scrutiny in various forms is essential to ensuring accountability, transparency and fairness and ensures that political decisions are taken in the best interests of our residents.

5.6   **Decisions taken forward by the Portfolio holder during the period 11 May 2023 – 11 March 2024**

The decisions can be found by clicking on the following links below:-

Learning Disability Day Services Offer - November 2023
[Decision - Learning Disability Day Services Offer - Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council (moderngov.co.uk](https://www.moderngov.co.uk)
Future Commissioning of the Council's Supported Living Service for People with a Learning Disability – October 2023
[Decision - Learning Disability Day Services Offer - Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council (moderngov.co.uk](https://www.moderngov.co.uk)
Discussed at Community Services Scrutiny Committee meeting – Monday 24th April 2023

Social Services Annual Complaints and Compliments Report – October 2023
[Decision - Social Services Representations, Compliments and Complaints Procedures Annual Report 2022/23 - Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council (moderngov.co.uk)](https://www.moderngov.co.uk)
Discussed at Community Services Scrutiny Committee meeting – Monday 25th September 2023

Domiciliary Care Services – October 2023
[Decision - Future Commissioning of Domiciliary Home Care - Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council (moderngov.co.uk)](https://www.moderngov.co.uk)

Director Social Services Annual Report – November 2023
[Decision - Director of Social Services Annual Report 2022 / 2023 - Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council (moderngov.co.uk)](https://www.moderngov.co.uk)
Discussed at Community Services Scrutiny Committee meeting – Monday 25th September 2023

Day Services for Older People – December 2023
[Decision – Day Services for Older People – Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council (moderngov.co.uk)](https://www.moderngov.co.uk)
Discussed at Community Services Scrutiny Committee meeting – Monday 21st November 2023

Cwm Taf Morgannwg Safeguarding Board Annual Report 2022-23 – October 2023
[Decision - Cwm Taf Morgannwg Safeguarding Board Annual Report 2022-2023](https://www.moderngov.co.uk)

<u>Exempt Decisions</u>
'Operating without Registration (OWR) settings
[Decision - Update in relation to the Children Looked After: Residential Care Strategy2022-2027](#)
This item was exempt due to it containing exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 14 and 18 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act, 1972 (as amended). If Members have any queries in respect of this item, they should contact the Cabinet Member outside of the meeting.

5.7   Questions should be focussed in respect of the above decisions taken by the Cabinet Member, to enable effective scrutiny of those decisions by committee members.

6.   EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS / SOCIO ECONOMIC DUTY

6.1   None arising as a direct result of this report.

7.   CONSULTATION / INVOLVEMENT

7.1   There are no consultation requirements emanating from the recommendations set out in this report.

8.   FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

8.1   There are no financial implications aligned to this report.

9.   LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

9.1   The report has been prepared in accordance with paragraph Part 4 of the Constitution (Overview & Scrutiny Procedure Rules).

10.   CONCLUSION

10.1   To provide the Community Services Scrutiny Committee with the opportunity to scrutinise, challenge and make recommendations for policy improvement under the remit of the Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
11th MARCH 2024

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DRIECTOR DEMOCRATIC SERVICES AND COMMUNICATIONS

Tudalen wag

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

11TH MARCH 2024

WELSH PUBLIC LIBRARY STANDARDS: RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL'S ASSESSMENT REPORT 2022-2023

REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH, PROTECTION AND COMMUNITY SERVICES IN DISCUSSIONS WITH COUNCILLOR BOB HARRIS, CABINET MEMBER FOR PUBLIC HEALTH AND COMMUNITIES

Author(s): Nick Kelland – Library and Information Advice Service Manager

1. **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide information to the Community Services Scrutiny Committee on the feedback received from Welsh Government in respect of the Library Service's performance against the Welsh Public Library Standards (WPLS) within the Sixth Quality Framework of the WPLS: *'Connected and Ambitious Libraries'* (Appendix 1) for the period 2022-2023.

2. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

   It is recommended that Members:

2.1 Consider the content of the Annual Assessment Report 2022-2023 (Appendix 2) received from Welsh Government.

2.2 Scrutinise in greater depth any matters contained within the report.

3. **BACKGROUND**

3.1 The Welsh Government has developed a range of indicators (the Welsh Public Library Standards) against which the performance of library authorities in Wales can be measured.

3.2 Progress against the standards is reviewed by Welsh Government on an annual basis, to ensure that local authorities are endeavouring to carry out their statutory responsibilities in the delivery of a core library service.

3.3 This Assessment Report on the Library Service's performance falls under the Sixth Quality Framework of the WPLS: *'Connected and Ambitious Libraries',* which was due to expire in 2020 and a new framework created; however, due to the impact of the pandemic, the development of the seventh framework has been delayed and the sixth framework has been extended, with some minor revisions.

3.4 The aims of the Sixth Quality Framework are to:

- Enable the Deputy Minister for Culture and Sport to fulfil the statutory requirements of the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 in respect of superintending the duty of local authorities to deliver a '*comprehensive and efficient'* library service;
- Provide a robust assessment of the performance of library services;
- Have clear links to the Welsh Government's agenda to ensure credibility across local government in Wales;
- Be relevant and useful to all local authority library services in Wales;
- Be transparent, easily understood and accepted by stakeholders;
- Incorporate outcome measures to show the benefits of using libraries;
- Act as a driver for improvements to library services and local communities; and
- Minimise the burden of data collection on library authorities.

3.5 The Sixth Quality Framework of the WPLS includes 12 core entitlements and 16 Quality Indicators designed to monitor how well library services provide for the people of Wales.

3.6 The Quality Indicators fall into three broad types:

- Input indictors are concerned primarily with what the library service will provide for the citizens of Wales in key areas in order that core entitlements can be delivered;
- Output indicators are concerned with levels of use; when considered alongside input indicators they can give an indication of the efficiency of delivery of the service;
- Outcome and impact indicators measure the direct or indirect effects of the library service on its users and the wider community.

3.7 In addition to the core entitlements and quality indicators, authorities are required to submit an Impact Statement (Appendix 3) which provides evidence that the library service has made a positive difference to an individual or group of individuals.

4. **RESULTS OF THE ANNUAL ASSESSMENT REPORT 2022-2023**

4.1 Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council's Library Service was assessed as follows:

- All 12 core entitlements were met in full;

- Of the 10 quality indicators which have targets, Rhondda Cynon Taf achieved 5 in full, 1 in part and failed to achieve 4;
- ICT provision, stock acquisition and staffing were areas identified as requiring attention.

4.2 The Assessment Report recognises that '*Rhondda Cynon Taf is facing a challenging financial situation*' but expresses that 'the *planned cuts to staffing and the book budget are a serious concern given that the service is already falling short of targets in these areas*'.

4.3 It is difficult to assess the 2022-2023 performance in comparison to 2021-2022 as the Welsh Government issued an abridged version that year due to the impact of the Covid pandemic, with many of the quality indicators reported upon in 2022 – 2023 not present in the 2021-2022 report; however, the quality indicators which have targets were reported upon in both years and our performance against these has remained static, with the service having achieved 5 in full and 1 in part.

4.4 Undoubtably, major changes to the service during the Covid pandemic continued to have an adverse impact on performance against some indicators; however, data on the number of visitors to libraries, and attendees at training sessions and organised events/activities, showed significant improvement on those reported in 2021-2022, yet these still have not returned to pre-pandemic levels.

4.5 There is improvement to be made with regard indicators such as staff training, volunteers in libraries and the provision of events or activities for users with special requirements.

4.6 We will continually be unable to meet the quality indicator relating to expenditure, such as purchasing materials and the number of staff employed, without a significant increase in financial resources; however, this measurement does not correlate with the quality of service delivery, whereby our most recent Customer Survey indicated that 94% of our users rated the choice of books as very good or good, and in this area, we ranked 4th out of the 16 authorities that returned the data.

4.7 Furthermore, at a time when local authorities are required to make best use of limited resources, some of the quality indicators do not appear to ensure a best value approach with service decisions impacting negatively on performance against some indicators.

4.8 One such example is that of 2022-23 Computer usage across RCT libraries which was 11% of available capacity based on 6.82 computers per 10,000 population; however, to improve our performance against the WPLSQI 11 (online access) we would need to purchase more computers, and given that there is 89% of available capacity on the current number of computers within libraries, this is not best value for expenditure of a limited budget.

5. <u>LOCAL AUTHORITY LIBRARY SERVICES ACROSS WALES: AN UPDATE</u>

5.1 Local authority Library Services across Wales have developed differently over the past 10 years, as local authorities have adopted various approaches to funding their services following budget reductions.

5.2   As a result, many Councils no longer offer a full range of specialist services, such as home delivery and schools library services, which Rhondda Cynon Taf has maintained along with 13 static libraries; and additionally, some authorities have outsourced the management of their library provision to a trust, and others make extensive use of community-run libraries; as such, it is difficult to compare performance across Wales or to have a set of national benchmarks that measures the performance of library services in a meaningful way.

5.3   Rhondda Cynon Taf is one of 16 authorities that meet all the 12 core entitlements, and one of only 5 authorities that meet 5 quality indicators in full (the performance of local authority library services across Wales can be seen at Appendix 4).

5.4   A meeting was held between representatives of the Welsh Government's Culture Division and the Council's Chief Executive on the 8th December 2023 whereby the authorities financial pressures were outlined and the rationale behind the proposed changes to the library service discussed, noting that they have been designed to be equitable across the authority and have as little impact on customers as possible.

6.   EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS / SOCIO-ECONOMIC DUTY

6.1   There are no implications as a direct result of this report.

7.   WELSH LANGUAGE IMPLICATIONS

7.1   There are no Welsh language implications as a result of the recommendations set out in the report.

8.   CONSULTATION / INVOLVEMENT

8.1   There are no consultation implications as a direct result of this report; however, it should be noted that developments to date and those in future, rely upon significant involvement from all key partners and agencies.

9.   FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

9.1   There are no financial implications as a result of the recommendations set out in the report.

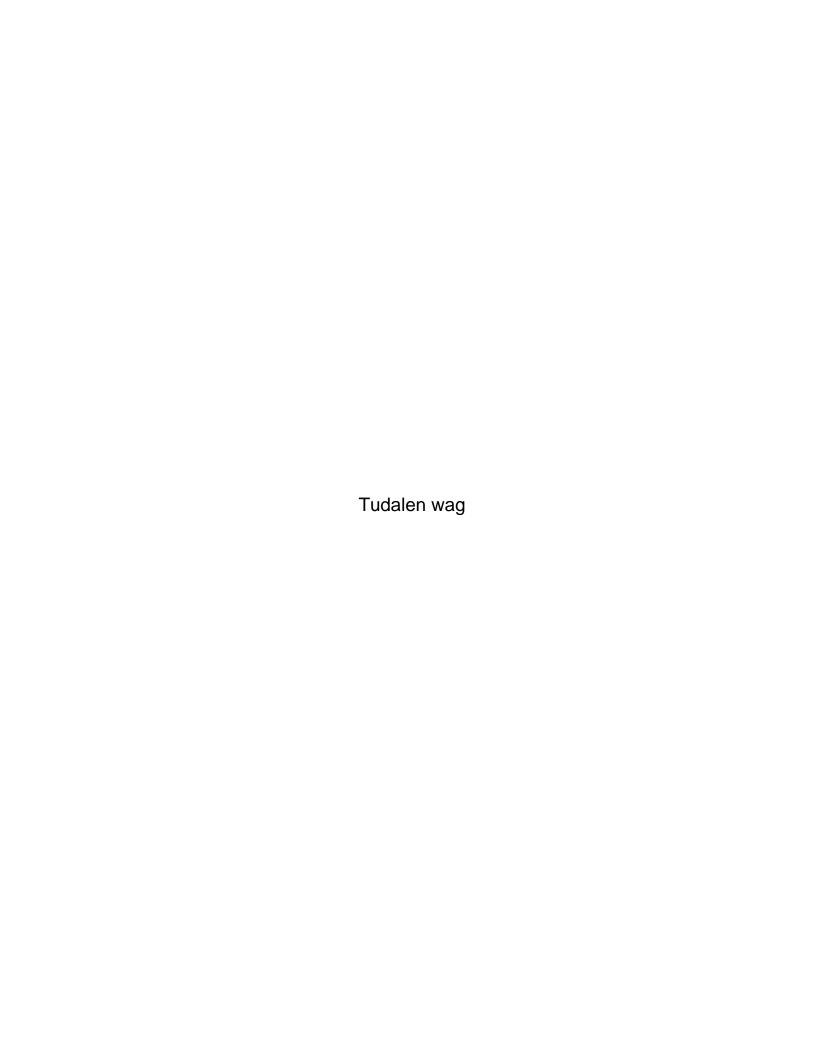## 10.   LEGAL IMPLICATIONS *OR* LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

10.1   The Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 requires local authorities to ensure the provision of a 'comprehensive and efficient service' without providing any criteria for what can be considered as 'comprehensive and efficient'; and in Wales, the Welsh Government's Welsh Public Library Standards has clear quality indicators that library services have to abide by, which are outlined in this report.

11.   LINKS TO THE CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT.

11.1 The Library Service specifically contributes to all four of the well-being objectives within the Council's proposed new Corporate Plan 'Working With Our Communities':

- **People and Communities**: supporting and empowering residents and communities to live safe, healthy and fulfilling lives;
- **Work and Business**: helping to strengthen and grow RCT's economy, with thriving town centres and a well-connected County Borough;
- **Nature and the Environment:** supporting a clean, safe and sustainable RCT;
- **Culture and Heritage:** recognising and celebrating RCT's past, present and future where culture and heritage are vibrant, preserved and recognised as enhancing well-being.

11.2 The Service reflects the five ways of working in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, considering long-term needs, focusing on collaboration and involvement of communities, contributing specifically to a Wales of cohesive communities and a vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language goals of the Act.

12. <u>CONCLUSION</u>

12.1 During a year where the effects of the Covid pandemic were still being felt, the Library Service has met all 12 Core Entitlements, and either fully or partly achieved 6 of the 10 Quality Indicators set by Welsh Government; nevertheless, it is recognised that there are opportunities for further improvement in some areas highlighted in the current report.

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Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Connected and Ambitious Libraries:

The sixth quality framework of Welsh Public Library Standards 2017-2020

Tudalen 27

Contents

Foreword

Public libraries connect people, information and culture. The Welsh Government and local authorities have an established record of working well together to achieve ambitious goals for our library services. I am delighted to be working collaboratively with local authorities on a new framework of Welsh Public Library Standards, to ensure that we continue to provide the citizens of Wales with high quality public library services.

As library users know, libraries provide everyone with a wealth of information, resources, activities and cultural opportunities. They are places of ambition and learning where people can gain new skills, leading to job success and prosperity; they encourage people to be active and healthy through a range of health information services and partnerships; and they connect and unite people, not only with each other and local communities, but also with culture and the world beyond Wales. They also make a valuable contribution to the seven goals of the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

All parts of the public sector are facing considerable financial pressure, including public library services. The expectations of citizens, for a high quality library service, need to be balanced with what is practical and possible to deliver, alongside the statutory requirement to provide a "comprehensive and efficient" service as specified in the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964.

The Welsh Public Library Standards framework provides a mechanism to enable service providers to plan their provision, and for the public to know what they can expect from their library service. The framework also enables me to assess provision and performance of Welsh public library services as part of my statutory duty under the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964.

I am pleased that this new framework increases the emphasis on outcome and impact measures to help identify the wider benefits of using the library service. In conjunction with promoting the Standards to make our library services as sustainable and efficient as possible, further consideration will also be given to the regional consortia model which was outlined in the Expert Review of Public Libraries and the Scoping a New Future for Welsh Public Libraries report.

I welcome this new framework of the Standards and the opportunities that it provides to continue the positive partnership between the Welsh Government and local authorities to continue to deliver an outstanding connected and ambitious public library service in Wales.

Ken Skates, AM

Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Infrastructure

1. Introduction

"Freedom, Prosperity and the Development of society and individuals are fundamental human values. They will only be attained through the ability of well-informed citizens to exercise their democratic rights and to play an active role in society. Constructive participation and the development of democracy depend on satisfactory education as well as on free and unlimited access to knowledge, thought, culture and information.

"The public library, the local gateway to knowledge, provides a basic condition for lifelong learning, independent decision-making and cultural development of the individual and social groups."[1]

1.1. The benefits of using public libraries

Library service engagement with individuals and with the wider community drives benefits in many of the Welsh Government's priority areas such as prosperity, resilience, equality, cohesive communities, culture, learning and health and well being. How the library interacts with its stakeholders – chiefly the users (and potential users) of the service – is key to the provision of a quality service. User perceptions of the services available derive from their experiences.

Libraries which engage appropriately with their customers will provide the maximum benefits both for individuals and the community. As well as providing training and learning support for individuals, libraries contribute to society in other ways, such as providing access to computers and e-government for digitally excluded members of the community.

The public library has a key role in social inclusion. It may be the only place in the community where users can spend time in a safe and neutral environment. Supporting job-seekers in their search for work contributes to the local – and

national – economy. By providing specialist facilities and services for those in the community who might have special needs, libraries contribute to health and well-being. Such benefits will only be achieved if the library provides equality of access for all. Much information is now more easily accessible online – indeed, some is only available online – and libraries are uniquely positioned to facilitate access to resources which may be too costly for individuals (e.g. the cost of the basic hardware, Internet access or the resource subscription).

Libraries play a key role in providing information, promoting knowledge and developing skills for people of all ages and all walks of life. From children's first steps in listening to stories and learning to read, to providing quiet spaces for study, and supporting older people in using new technologies, libraries contribute to the delivery of literacy targets, information literacy and digital inclusion.

Good libraries play an important part in shaping people's views of local government. In order to deliver quality,

[1] UNESCO Public Library Manifesto, available at http://www.unesco.org/webworld/libraries/manifestos/libraman.html (accessed 23-08-2016)

sustainable services to the public, libraries need active leadership and a programme for development enabling them to respond in a timely way to the changing information and cultural needs of their local communities. Staff must have the skills, knowledge and confidence to deliver services and meet customer needs, demonstrated by appropriate professional qualifications. Libraries have the opportunity to contribute to a range of wider local and national government agendas, but this will only happen if the library is pro-active in promoting its role, based on a strong vision linked to those agendas.

1.2. What this means for the people of Wales

The sixth framework of Welsh public library standards builds on the developments in the fifth framework. It comprises 12 core entitlements and 16 quality indicators to monitor how well library services realise these benefits for the people of Wales. The mapping between benefits and indicators is not a simplistic one, as measuring outcomes and impacts at a service-wide level cannot be achieved directly, but must be inferred from broader indicators.

The table below shows the indicators in this framework which are most directly related to some of the key benefits of using public libraries. Libraries which perform well on these indicators will be engaging appropriately with their customers to make a difference to their lives.

Outcomes and impacts	Core entitlements	Quality indicators
People in Wales will be able to increase their knowledge / skills having used the library	2, 3	1, 3, 5
People in Wales will be able to take part in reading and other cultural events organised by the library service	3	4, 6, 9, 10, 12
People in Wales will feel part of a community using the library service	3, 11	1, 7, 8
People in Wales will be able to take advantage of the opportunities offered in the digital world using the library service	2, 6, 7	4, 9, 11
Personal health and well-being is enhanced by using the library	3, 4	1, 4
People in Wales can participate more fully in local affairs via the facilities in the library	3, 6	3, 11

Other core entitlements and quality indicators are concerned with the effective management of services, which underpins the effective delivery of the outcomes and impacts. All can be related to one or more of the seven goals of the Well-being of Future Generations Act; details are given in Section 5.

1.3. Fulfilling the statutory duty

The Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964[2] makes it a duty of the relevant Welsh Ministers (currently the Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Infrastructure) **"to superintend and promote the improvement of the public library service provided by local authorities and to secure the proper discharge by local authorities of the functions in relation to libraries conferred upon them as library authorities under this Act".**

[2] Available at http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1964/75/contents

Under the same Act, library authorities are required to **"provide a comprehensive and efficient library service for all persons desiring to make use thereof"**.

Since 2002, the Welsh Ministers have fulfilled this duty through the Welsh Public Library Standards (WPLS, or, the Standards). The first framework ran from 2002 to 2005 with subsequent frameworks covering the periods 2005-08, 2008-11, 2011-14 and 2014-17. Each individual framework evolved to reflect the changing needs and expectations of public library users. In addition to the fulfilment of statutory duties, the WPLS framework plays a valuable role in supporting the development of public library services.

There is general consensus among stakeholders concerned with the provision of public library services in Wales that these performance measurement frameworks, introduced and administered

by the Welsh Government for the sector, have helped public library services to improve in a number of ways and in key areas. For example, as a result of the Standards, there have been significant improvements in service areas such as the delivery of requests and provision of ICT facilities and services, leading to enhanced outcomes for library customers.

Local authorities have a statutory duty (under section 7 of the Act) to provide a library service and encourage both adults and children to make full use of that library service. The performance indicators listed here will assist the Welsh Government in assessing whether or not local authorities in Wales are fulfilling their duties under the 1964 Act, and in assessing the comprehensiveness and efficiency, in terms of the manner of delivery, of library services in Wales.

1.4. Community managed libraries

Since about 2014 the number of independent and semi-independent libraries in Wales, frequently referred to as community managed libraries, has increased. Guidance issued by the Welsh Government in 2015 on community managed libraries has now been updated and is included here, at Section 6, rather than in a separate document, as previously. It includes criteria to be fulfilled in order that a community managed library might be included in the library service's annual return as part of the statutory service, and details of the data to be provided on all community managed libraries.

1.5. The sixth quality framework

The aims of this sixth framework of Welsh Public Library Standards are to:

- enable the Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Infrastructure to fulfil the statutory requirements of the 1964 Act in respect of superintending the provision of a 'comprehensive and efficient' library service by local authorities;

- provide a robust assessment of the performance of library services;

- have clear links to the Welsh Government's programme for government[3], to ensure credibility across local government in Wales;

- be relevant and useful to all local authority library services in Wales;

- be transparent, easily understood and accepted by all stakeholders;

- incorporate outcome measures to show the benefits of using libraries;

- act as a driver for improvements to library services and local communities; and

- minimise the burden of data collection on library authorities.

[3] Taking Wales Forward 2016-2021, available at http://gov.wales/docs/strategies/160920-taking-wales-forward-en.pdf

The framework has been based largely on the fifth framework, updated to take account of the changed local authority environment within which library services must work, and continues to provide opportunities for libraries to deliver services in innovative ways and the flexibility to make best use of the resources available to them. It will come into operation on 1st April 2017, and libraries will make their first report against its requirements in the summer of 2018. This document describes the new framework in detail.

Section 2 lists the 12 core entitlements, and self-assessment prompts will be provided in the guidance for library staff.

Section 3 describes the 16 quality indicators, which are of three broad types.

- Input indicators are concerned primarily with what the library service will provide for the citizens of Wales in key areas in order that the core entitlements can be delivered.

- Output indicators are concerned with levels of use. When considered alongside input indicators, they can give an indication of the efficiency of delivery of the service.

- Outcome and impact indicators measure the direct or indirect effects of the library service on its users, and on the wider community. They show the difference libraries make to people's lives.

Most indicators will be reported every year; some may be reported once in the three year period, for example, where user survey data are required. For some indicators, formal targets are set, although such targets are not appropriate in all cases.

Libraries will be expected to compare their performance on all indicators with previous years, and to meet the targets where these are set. Benchmarking of authorities will be possible when all results are available.

[4] See http://gov.wales/topics/culture-tourism-sport/ museums-archives-libraries/?lang=en for details

The nature of the geography, distribution of population and other factors within individual authorities can cause significant variations in the approaches necessary to the planning and delivery of library services. For this reason, Welsh library authorities are offered alternatives against which to measure their services in some of the indicators described, and should choose the most appropriate to reflect their circumstances.

Definitions of the various terms and guidance on methods of data collection are not specified in this document; however these will be included with the reporting template provided to library services, and are available on request[4]. In all cases, detailed guidance on data collection and calculation will be provided to library authorities to ensure consistency and

Tudalen 34

comparability. Existing data will be utilised wherever practicable. Where appropriate, international standard definitions and methods have been adopted.

Section 4 of this document details the reporting requirements, which include an element of self evaluation and descriptive reporting in addition to key service statistics and the performance indicators, and describes the monitoring and assessment process. A holistic view of assessment will be taken.

Library performance will be judged on all the aspects of the framework, including compliance with the core entitlements, ranking on the quality indicators, how many quality indicators are met in full and in part, and the narrative providing

evidence of the impact of the service on individuals and the community.

Library provision spans a range of Welsh Government outcomes, offering a range of services which often support two or more of the outcomes simultaneously. The Well-being of Future Generations Act[5] lists seven broad areas of priority, and **Section 5** of this framework document aligns the core entitlements and quality indicators with these areas, giving examples of the contribution the library service makes.

[5] See http://gov.wales/topics/people-and-communities/ people/future-generations-act/?lang=en for details

2. Core entitlements

A set of core library entitlements for Welsh citizens was first incorporated into Making a Difference, the fifth quality framework of Welsh Public Library Standards. These entitlements have been revised and refocused for this sixth framework, to enable the public to know what they can expect from their public library service.

These entitlements are initially self-assessed by each authority. A number of questions are specified in the Guidance document, which the authority is required to take into account when making their self-assessment. It is not necessary to be able to answer every question positively to meet the core entitlement, but justification for the assessment, which could refer to other relevant provision, should be provided in the return. The self-assessment will be moderated by MALD, the Independent Adviser, and a small Reference Group of senior librarians to ensure consistency between authorities.

WPLSCE 1 Libraries in Wales will be free to join, and open to all.

WPLSCE 2 Libraries in Wales will ensure friendly, knowledgeable and qualified staff are on hand to help.

WPLSCE 3 Libraries in Wales will provide access to a range of services, activities and high quality resources in a range of formats to support lifelong learning, personal well-being and development, community participation, and culture and recreation.

WPLSCE 4 Libraries in Wales will provide appropriate services, facilities and information resources for individuals and groups with special requirements.

WPLSCE 5 Libraries in Wales will provide appropriate safe, attractive and accessible physical spaces with suitable staffed opening hours.

WPLSCE 6 Libraries in Wales will lend books for free, and deliver free access to information, including online information resources available 24 hours a day.

WPLSCE 7 Libraries in Wales will provide free use of the Internet and computers, including Wi-Fi.

WPLSCE 8 Libraries in Wales will provide access to services, cultural activities and high quality resources in the Welsh language.

WPLSCE 9 Libraries in Wales will work in partnership to share catalogues and facilitate access to the resources of all Welsh libraries.

WPLSCE 10 Libraries in Wales will work with a range of partners to promote and deliver services to new and diverse audiences, enabling more people to benefit from those services.

WPLSCE 11 Libraries in Wales will regularly consult users to gather their views on the service and information about their changing needs.

WPLSCE 12 Libraries in Wales will provide access to the library service's strategy, policies, objectives and vision, in print and online, in a range of languages appropriate for the community.

Tudalen 36

3. Quality indicators

The quality indicators in this sixth framework build on the previous framework, and include additional measures covering the outcomes and impact of the library service. They fall into two broad types; those which are provided for monitoring and benchmarking performance over time and between authorities, and those which have specific targets.

WPLSQI 1 Making a difference

This selection of indicators assesses the impact of library use on people's lives in a variety of ways. Although some are relevant to other areas of this framework, they are grouped together here as being key to the overall customer experience.

Authorities will report, at least once in the three year period:

a) the percentage of adults who think that using the library has helped them develop new skills;

b) the percentage of young people who think that the library helps them learn and find things out;

c) the percentage of adults who have found helpful information for health and well-being at the library;

d) the percentage of adults who experience the library as an enjoyable, safe and inclusive place;

e) the percentage of adults who think that the library has made a difference to their lives.

Data will be collected from user surveys of adults and of children, which should be conducted in accordance with good statistical practice, at least once during

the three-year period of this framework. Authorities will be given guidance on the conduct of the survey and wording of questions to ensure comparability. Respondents answering 'not applicable' or 'don't know' should be excluded from the calculation.

Authorities may conduct more frequent surveys if they wish to do so and report accordingly.

WPLSQI 2 Customer satisfaction

Customer satisfaction is a key element of library performance. As with the indicators concerned with library impact (QI 1), some of these are relevant to other areas of this framework, but are grouped together here as being key to the overall customer experience.

Authorities will report:

a) the percentage of adults who think that the choice of books available in the library they use is 'very good' or 'good';

b) the percentage of adults who think that the standard of customer care in the library they use is 'very good' or 'good';

c) the percentage of adults who think that the IT facilities provided in the library they use are 'very good' or 'good';

d) the percentage of adults who think that overall the library they use is 'very good' or 'good';

e) the average overall rating out of ten awarded by users aged 16 or under for the library they use.

Data will be collected from user surveys of adults and of children, which should be conducted in accordance with good statistical practice, at least once in the three-year period of this framework.

It is appreciated that not all authorities wish to use the CIPFA PLUS suite of survey instruments (from which the above indicators are drawn), and guidance will be issued to ensure that authorities which

choose to use their own surveys will have comparable results. Authorities may conduct more frequent surveys if they wish to do so and report accordingly.

WPLSQI 3 Support for individual development

Libraries shall ensure that the following services are offered in all static service points open for 10 hours per week or more:

a) basic support in the use of the ICT infrastructure provided (including Wi-Fi) and in accessing the range of electronic information resources available;

b) training to improve literacy, numeracy, information and digital skills, and assistance in developing or enhancing capabilities to identify and access appropriate resources efficiently and effectively; critically evaluate information; and apply information appropriately to further objectives, such as educational, employment, health and well-being.

Training programmes may be developed and delivered with appropriate partners outside the library service;

c) support for users to access local and national e-government resources;

d) reader development programmes/ activities for both adults and children.

The format of the support offered and frequency of any specific timetabled sessions should be appropriate both for the size of the service point and local community needs.

WPLSQI 4 Support for health and well-being

a) Libraries shall ensure that the following services are offered in all static service points open for 10 hours per week or more:

    i.   Book Prescription Wales scheme

    ii. Better with Books scheme

Tudalen 39

iii. Designated health and well-being collection

iv. Information about healthier lifestyles and healthy behaviours - leaflets, books etc

v. Signposting to health and well-being services

b) Authorities will report the number of static service points open for 10 hours per week or more in which the following services are available on a regular basis

i. Shared Reading groups (reading aloud together)

ii. Book clubs (discussion of chosen book)

iii. Macmillan cancer or other health information partnerships

iv. Dementia Friendly services

v. Mental health awareness activities

WPLSQI 5 User training

This indicator assesses the extent to which sessions offered match local need, and the impact of those sessions for the participants. Reader development sessions; literacy, numeracy, information and digital skills sessions; ICT sessions, etc., should all be included. Include sessions arranged in collaboration with partner agencies. User training may have a general audience, or be targeted towards specific sub-groups of the population e.g. children, carers, unemployed persons, etc.

Sessions may require advance registration, or be open to all on a drop-in basis. Include sessions also reported under WPLSQI 4.

Authorities will report:

a) the total number of attendances at pre-arranged training sessions organised and/or hosted by the library service at its own service points or at other locations within the authority during the year, divided by the resident population, multiplied by 1,000;

a) Authorities will report the total number of attendances at events and activities organised by the library service at its own service points or at other locations within the authority during the year, divided by the resident population, multiplied by 1,000.

Include events with literary, cultural or educational intent, e.g. author visits, reading groups, literary discussions, digital and information literacy workshops, genealogy workshops, health literacy, financial literacy, job seeking etc.

Events specifically for children are included, such as storytelling, poetry, music. Include events delivered by partner organisations in collaboration with the library service.

b) Libraries shall ensure that events or activities for those who have special requirements are offered in all static service points open for 10 hours per week or more. The events or activities may be promoted specifically for an intended group, or open to all, but with a clear target group in mind.

Special requirements can include physical and health impairment, economic disadvantage (e.g. long-term unemployed), cultural difference (e.g. non-native speakers, new arrivals), educational background, or other circumstances that require special library services. Authorities should provide specific examples of such events and list joint working with relevant social inclusion organisations and partners.

b) the percentage of attendees at such sessions who said that attendance helped them to achieve their goals;

c) the number of customers helped by means of informal training during the year, divided by the resident population, multiplied by 1,000.

Part b) of this indicator should ideally be derived from a simple feedback form offered to all attendees, but may be based on sessions during one or more sample periods.

Part c) of the indicator may be derived by sampling. Authorities will be provided with guidance to ensure consistency of reporting.

WPLSQI 6 User attendances at library events

The purpose of this indicator is to estimate the attraction of library events for the library's population to be served, and the extent to which such events meet local need.

WPLSQI 7 Location of service points

No stipulation is made with regard to minimum opening hours of static libraries (on a site by site basis) however, authorities are asked to consider the viability of service points which are open for fewer than 10 hours per week. Equally, no stipulation is made with regard to length or frequency of mobile library stops, however it is expected that mobile libraries will visit each scheduled stop at least 12 times per year.

Authorities shall ensure that they meet the following criteria for the location of service points and mobile library stops, according to their population density:

Population density	% of households	Distance from library
20 or more persons per hectare	At least 95%	Within 2 miles of a static service point
More than 1 but fewer than 20 persons per hectare	At least 75%	Within 2.5 miles (or 10 minutes travelling time by public transport) of a static service point, or within ¼ mile of a mobile library stop
1 person or fewer per hectare	At least 70%	Within 3 miles (or 15 minutes travelling time by public transport) of a static service point, or within ¼ mile of a mobile library stop

WPLSQI 8 Library use

Seven measures of use of the library are required, covering the physical and the electronic resources provided. Together, they assess the library's success in attracting users to its services.

Authorities will report:

a) the total number of visits to library premises during the year divided by the resident population, multiplied by 1,000;

b) the total number of external visits to the library's website during the year divided by the resident population, multiplied by 1,000;

c) the total number of active borrowers divided by the resident population, multiplied by 1,000.

d) the total number of library members

e) the total number of book issues (adult and children separate)

f) the total number of audio-visual issues

g) the total number of electronic downloads

The data used should be those as reported to CIPFA for the public library actuals return.

WPLSQI 9 Up-to-date and appropriate reading material

This and the next indicator are designed to ensure adequate investment and an appropriate balance of resources across various sections of the community.

a) Library authorities should achieve

- either a minimum of 243 items acquired per 1,000 resident population or a minimum spend of £2,180 per 1,000 resident population annually.

Books and e-books, periodicals, audio-visual material and electronic resources are all included.

Authorities should include their contribution to consortium purchases where relevant.

b) Library authorities will report

- The percentage of the material budget spent on resources for children.

WPLSQI 10 Welsh language resources

This indicator is designed to ensure materials in Welsh are provided in line with local requirements and the socio-demographic characteristics of the population.

a) Authorities should achieve:

Either a minimum of 4% of the material budget, or, a minimum of £750 per 1,000 Welsh speaking resident population.

Authorities will also report:

b) Total issues of resources in the Welsh language per 1,000 Welsh speaking resident population.

WPLSQI 11 Online access

a) Every static library should provide

i. A minimum of one device giving public access to the Internet and networked digital content. Computers, laptops, tablets, and other mobile devices are all included.

ii. Wi-Fi access for users to bring their own laptops or mobile devices.

b) Authorities will report the total number of devices giving public access to the Internet

i. Available in static libraries, per 10,000 resident population

ii. Available in mobile libraries.

Computers, laptops, tablets, and other mobile devices are all included.

c) Authorities will report the percentage of available time allocated for use of public access ICT equipment actually taken up by users. This should be aggregated across all libraries in the authority, including mobiles.

WPLSQI 12 Supply of requests

This indicator measures the efficiency of the public library service in responding to requests for material which is not immediately available.

Authorities should achieve:

a) A minimum of 64% of requests for material to be notified to the user as being available within 7 calendar days of the request being made;

b) A minimum of 79% of requests for material to be notified to the user as being available within 15 calendar days of the request being made.

Requests for pre-publication material shall be counted from the date of publication. Material which is not owned by the library but must be acquired by purchase or by inter-library loan is included in the calculations.

WPLSQI 13 Staffing levels and qualifications

i. Library authorities shall achieve total establishment staffing levels for the service of 3.6 (full time equivalent) per 10,000 resident population. Staff who do not work directly in service provision, e.g. cleaners, are excluded. Include only those staff paid from the library service budget.

ii. The total number of staff (full time equivalent) holding recognised qualifications in librarianship, information science or information management per 10,000 resident population should not fall below 0.65. Staff with qualifications in cognate areas, such as ICT, heritage or leisure management or education and learning may be included in the calculations if they occupy posts on the library staff establishment which require those qualifications, and when the qualifications held are relevant to their current roles and functions within the library service.

Tudalen 43

Include only those staff paid from the library service budget.

iii. The designated operational manager of the library service shall, either be the holder of recognised qualifications in librarianship, information science or information management, or, have undertaken relevant library management training within the last 3 years.

Authorities will also report:

a) where this post sits within the local authority management structure;

b) the post held by the most senior professional librarian (where different); and

c) where that post sits within the local authority management structure.

iv. A minimum of 1% of aggregate staff working hours should be spent in training and personal / professional development during the year. All library staff should be encouraged to undertake training and development relevant to their role and responsibilities, and to improve their skills.

v. Library authorities may offer members of the community the opportunity to volunteer, to support additional services in libraries managed and run by the library authority. Such opportunities can, for example, enhance the life skills and employability of individuals, contributing to tackling poverty outcomes.

Where there is community involvement in delivering the library service at a branch level, we expect there to be paid staff working alongside the volunteers in the libraries, for some of the time.

Library authorities that use volunteers to deliver additional services 'in house' (as opposed to community managed libraries) shall ensure:

• a designated volunteer coordinator

from the library service's permanent professional staff coordinates those parts of the service involving volunteer workers;

- each volunteer receives a written role description;

- legal requirements are met for each volunteer in relation to their role;

- both induction training and continuing training is provided for all volunteers;

- volunteers are appropriately supervised; and

- they have achieved, or are actively working towards, Investing in Volunteers accreditation[6].

Authorities will report:

a) the total number of volunteers across the year;

b) the total number of volunteer hours during the year;

c) whether they have accreditation status relating to the NOS or are working towards this accreditation.

Note that in order to meet this indicator in part, the service must achieve at least three of the five elements, including (iii), relating to the qualifications of the operational manager.

WPLSQI 14 Operational expenditure

In the current economic climate it is not thought appropriate to set a target for overall library expenditure, but spending on the public library service will continue to be scrutinised closely.

Authorities will report:

a) the total revenue expenditure per 1,000 resident population;

b) the percentages of this total spent on staff, materials and information resources, maintenance, repair and replacement of equipment and buildings, and other operational costs;

[6] See http://iiv.investinginvolunteers.org.uk/inyourcountry/iiv-wales for more information

c) total capital expenditure per 1,000 resident population.

Authorities which complete the CIPFA public library actuals return should use the same data here.

WPLSQI 15 Cost per visit

This indicator is useful for justifying expenditure of public funds, giving a proxy for value for money, but it must be interpreted in conjunction with demographic indicators and quality indicators relating to use. It measures the cost of the library service related to the number of library visits, including virtual visits.

Authorities will report:

- The total expenditure on library staff and materials, net of generated income, divided by the sum of the number of physical visits to library premises (including mobiles) plus the number of visits to the library web site during the year.

Authorities which complete the CIPFA public library actuals return should use the same data here. The ratio will be automatically calculated from data provided for other indicators.

WPLSQI 16 Opening hours

i.   Welsh public libraries should achieve a level of aggregate staffed (paid staff and/or volunteers) opening hours across all service points administered by the authority of no less than 120 hours per annum per 1,000 resident population.

ii.   Authorities will report the total number of unstaffed opening hours across all service points administered by the authority per 1,000 resident population.

iii.   This part of the indicator is concerned with the adequacy of the library service's maintenance programme and staffing strategy. Authorities will report:

a) the total number of hours of unplanned and emergency closure of static service points as a result of building failure or staff unavailability as a percentage of the total planned opening hours of all static service points during the year;

b) the number of mobile library stops and/or home delivery services missed as a result of vehicle failure or staff unavailability, as a percentage of the total number of planned mobile library stops and/or home delivery services during the year.

Scheduled opening hours not open as a result of adverse weather conditions, or any other cause beyond the library's control, are not included.

4. Reporting, monitoring and assessment

The statutory requirements of public library service provision in Wales are enshrined in the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964. The performance indicators listed here will assist the Welsh Government in assessing whether or not local authorities in Wales are fulfilling their duties under the 1964 Act, and in assessing the efficiency of the manner of delivery of library services in Wales.

4.1. Reporting requirements

Each year, local authorities will be required to report their performance against the various elements of the framework. The return will include a compliance rating against the core entitlements – indicating whether these are fully met, partially met, or not met, with appropriate description / explanation. For all entitlements which are not fully met, the return should also include a strategy for improvement in the following year.

Individual authority returns will also include data showing performance against the quality indicators included in this framework, together with a comparison for the previous year. Where performance has declined, the return should include the authority's strategy to halt the decline. Where targets are not met, the return should include a narrative outlining proposals and a timescale to achieve these targets. These data will be drawn together to provide an overview of Welsh public library services as a whole, to assist with identification of good practice, and of areas where action may be required to bring about improvements.

Measurement of the impact of public library services – the difference those services make to people's lives – is not easily quantifiable. For this reason, a qualitative element will be included in the reporting.

Each authority's return should include at least one, but no more than four, specific case studies describing the impact which the library service has had on an individual, or on a group of individuals, during the year. This is expected to describe not only the service provided and the use made of that service, but also the outcomes for the individuals or members of group as a consequence. Guidance will be provided on the format of the case studies and appropriate material to include. Such case studies will build into a valuable source of evidence of impact and value, and will further promote the spread of good practice across Wales.

A second qualitative element of reporting will be a narrative that demonstrates how the library service is contributing towards both local authority agendas and wider Welsh Government priorities and strategic goals, including any relevant legislative frameworks. The purpose of this strand of reporting is to encourage libraries to be aware of the wider social drivers (e.g. health and well-being; digital inclusion including information literacy; literacy, including reading and the connection with digital literacy; community engagement and community benefits, including families, children and young people, older people, welfare reform; Welsh language and culture), to which their service should be able to demonstrate a contribution, and to make explicit their relevance and value to policy makers at local, regional and national level.

A short description of the authority's future direction and plans for the library service over the following year will be included. Authorities will also be required to confirm that feedback in the form of opinion on the year's performances achieved by each library service has been

adequately considered by the member with responsibility for library services and by the relevant management, scrutiny and performance monitoring procedures.

A reporting template will be provided to authorities to ensure that reporting is consistent and comparable across Wales.

4.2. Monitoring and assessment procedures

The process of monitoring and assessing will be led by MALD: Museums Archives and Libraries division of the Welsh Government, and will follow the pattern established in earlier frameworks. Annual returns should be submitted by the deadline each year, and will be scrutinised for completeness by an independent reviewer and a peer reference group. The independent reviewer will then prepare a formal written feedback report, covering all aspects of the framework, including all quality indicators and narrative elements, which will be delivered to each authority in the autumn, in time to address any issues raised as part of their formal service planning process. This feedback will be formally disseminated to library authority chief executives and also to council leaders, scrutiny officers or performance managers as well as to the managers of library services. The annual reports will be made public, via the MALD web pages.

The independent reviewer will prepare a summary overview each year, including an analysis of overall performances, and significant trends within those performances, against the entitlements and quality indicators. The highest, lowest and median performances in Wales will be calculated for each indicator where this is possible. The overall analysis will be disseminated to all local authorities, usually during an annual seminar. At the end of the framework period a summary report will be published via the MALD web site.

The findings of these processes will be brought to the attention of the relevant Minister annually, highlighting achievements and trends and also problem areas, such as declining performances, incidences of non-compliance or recurring failure, together with a diagnosis of the causes wherever possible. Noteworthy improvements in performances and improving trends will also be drawn to the Minister's attention.

The core entitlements and quality indicators set out in this framework deal with aspects of the library service which are considered by the Welsh Government to be necessary – but are not necessarily sufficient – for the delivery of a comprehensive and efficient library service under the terms of Section 10 of the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964.

As the ultimate sanction in the cases of failure to deliver a comprehensive and efficient library service, the Welsh Government can institute an inquiry, issue a direction and transfer the library functions of a library authority to itself or to another authority/organisation. Sanctions would be invoked in cases where, for example, a significant number of the core entitlements and performance targets are not reached, there is a failure consistently to reach the average performance of comparable Welsh authorities with no evidence of improvement over time, or performance across the service as a whole is consistently falling year on year.

To date, it has not been necessary to implement any of these sanctions due to constructive discussion between the relevant parties.

5. The Well-being of Future Generations Act

Libraries have a clear contribution to make to the seven goals of the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

5.1. A prosperous Wales

Development of a skilled and well-educated population is a fundamental aspect of public libraries' activity. Examples of how this is achieved include providing access to a world of lifelong learning through relevant book stock and online information, and the provision of free IT equipment, broadband and Wi-Fi , which supports education, small businesses and job seeking. Core entitlements 2, 3, 6 and 7, and quality indicators 1, 3, 5, 7, 8, 9, 12, 13 and 15 all monitor aspects of public libraries' contribution to this goal.

5.2. A resilient Wales

Social and economic resilience is supported by encouraging and promoting individual personal development, enabling people and society to adapt to changing circumstances.

Regular consultation with users ensures that the services themselves are resilient and able to adapt to changing needs. Two core entitlements are particularly pertinent here, 3 and 11, together with quality indicators 4, 11 and 14. Examples of how this is achieved in practice include support for greater community involvement in running library services, and book stock that encourages a more resilient lifestyle with access to IT so people can self-educate about the issues.

Tudalen 50

5.3. A healthier Wales

Physical and mental well-being is a key offer of public libraries, not only by providing information on which to base informed choices for the benefit of health in the future but also designated collections and schemes such as Book Prescription Wales titles loaned through libraries, which directly benefit individuals with health concerns. Relevant core entitlements for this goal are 3 and 4; quality indicators 1, 4, and 6 monitor activity.

5.4. A more equal Wales

Libraries are welcoming, inclusive and offer pro-active outreach and public engagement activities in deprived and socially excluded communities. Support for government initiatives such as Universal Jobmatch and Universal Credit enable those without IT skills or facilities to fulfil their potential. Core entitlements 1, 2, 4, 6 and 7, and quality indicators 3, 4, 11, 13 and 14, all monitor public libraries' contribution to this goal.

5.5. A Wales of cohesive communities

Libraries offer a safe neutral place within the community which provides opportunities for people to connect with each other. The one-stop-shop or hub model being developed in many areas further connects local communities with the services they need. Other examples include support for community involvement through the provision of information about the local area. Core entitlements 1, 3 and 5, and quality indicators 1, 6, 13 and 16 monitor aspects of public libraries' contribution to this goal.

5.6. A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language

With explicit provision in the current framework covering the provision of material in the Welsh language, libraries are well placed to contribute in this area. They promote and protect Welsh culture and language, and encourage participation in the arts and recreation through the availability of a good range of stock in Welsh, and a host of cultural events and activities. Core entitlements include 2, 3, 6, 8, 9, and 10, and quality indicators 2, 6, 8, 9 and particularly 10 are all relevant here.

5.7. A globally responsible Wales

A commitment to make the most efficient use of resources is embodied in the quality indicators. MALD works with the British Standards Institute and International Standards Organisation in developing and using quality indicators for libraries which conform to ISO 11620.

Further, the borrowing of books is a great recycling tool, reducing the impact on the environment. Libraries in Wales work together in book purchasing consortia, digital/e-book consortia and the All-Wales Library Management System. Core entitlement 12 is directly related to global good practice, while quality indictors 14 and 15 are related to the balance and efficiency of service provision.

6. Community managed libraries

Since about 2014 there has been a growing number of independent and semi-independent libraries in Wales, frequently referred to as community managed libraries. Guidance issued by the Welsh Government in 2015 on community managed libraries has now been updated and is included here rather than in a separate document, as previously.

Welsh Government guidance on community managed libraries recommends that for such libraries to be considered as part of the authority's statutory provision, they must meet the core entitlements contained within the Standards framework. For the purposes of the sixth framework of public library standards, community managed libraries which receive ongoing support from the local authority library service in terms of shared resources, qualified staff and a 'seamless' customer experience can be considered for inclusion in the return.

For example, libraries conforming to the following models may be eligible:

- Elements of resources and staff provided or co-ordinated by the local library service, with the building in community ownership and a contribution towards staffing from the community council with the staff employed by the library service.

- Limited resources and regular staffing (defined hours) provided by the local library service, the building in community ownership and assistance from volunteers.

Models involving the transfer of the building and resources to the community and entirely run by volunteers with minimal (or no) ongoing assistance from the local library service in managing the facility are not eligible for inclusion.

It is appreciated that different models may exist within a single authority, so that some community managed libraries may be included in the returns, while others may not. For full consideration of whether community managed libraries can be included in the statutory service, the following minimum criteria should be met, along with meeting all the core entitlements:

- A service level agreement with the local authority public library service to include resource sharing activities such as inter-library loans;

- Paid staff, whether funded by the local authority library service or from other sources (e.g. community councils) available for 50% of the library opening hours specified in the service level agreement;

- The provision of a range of material, e.g. books, multimedia/audio-visual, Internet access and staff to support access to and utilisation of these resources;

- Authority support for the ICT facilities, which should be free at the point of use;

- Full access to and use of the local authority's library catalogue including the ability to place reservations, for members of the public. Paid staff would be expected to have access to the LMS.

The purpose of these criteria is to ensure that the public receives a high quality, comprehensive and efficient public library service that is deemed worthy of the statutory service. It is possible for a community managed library to achieve all the proposed criteria outlined above, and if they meet these and the core entitlements, they could be considered for inclusion as part of the local authority's statutory provision of public library services.

As identified above, this is achievable by entering a partnership with their local authority public library service and/or working with community councils and groups.

6.1. Reporting and data collection

If community managed libraries are considered by the authority to be part of the statutory service and are included in the annual return, the guidance document on what data to gather and how applies to all the libraries. The same rigour should be used to gather data in community managed libraries as in other libraries.

In addition, the Welsh Government wishes to monitor the support and resources provided to community managed libraries within the authority, and the extent to which they have been included in the indicators in this framework.

All authorities will therefore be asked to provide the following information, as part of the contextual data in the return:

a) The number of community managed libraries for which the authority provides

    i. Paid staff

    ii. Full access to and use of the local authority's library catalogue for members of the public

    iii. Support for the ICT facilities

    iv. Shared and rotated stock services

    v. A service level agreement including resource sharing activities such as inter-library loans

b) The total annual aggregate opening hours of community managed libraries within the authority.

c) The total number of staff hours per annum dedicated to supporting community managed libraries. Include front-line staffing and management support and administration time.

Separate figures for the above will be sought for those community managed libraries included in the return (i.e. those meeting all five bullet points above), and those not included, where available.

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Page 1: Wrexham Central Library

Page 3: Ken Skates AM (image: © Crown copyright (2017) Visit Wales)

Page 5: Top: Llanelli Library, Middle: Rhyl Library, Bottom: Torfaen Libraries

Page 7: Top: Computer training group, Prestatyn Library, Bottom: Cwmbran Library

Page 8: Llanelli Library

Page 9: Carmarthen Library

Page 11: Shared reading group at Ty Cae Nant Residential Home, Torfaen Libraries

Page 12: Reading at home service, Torfaen Libraries

Page 14: Baby and toddler group, Prestatyn Library

Page 18: Reference room, Llanelli Library

Page 19: Seren Walker, Cwmbran Library

Page 21: Welsh language discussion group, Aberkenfig Library

Page 24: School visit, Maesteg, Bridgend

Page 26: All Stitched Up, Blackwood Library

Page 28: Risca Library

Welsh Public Library Standards Sixth Framework: Rhondda Cynon Taf

Annual Assessment Report 2022/2023

This report has been prepared based on information provided in Rhondda Cynon Taf's annual return, impact statements and narrative report submitted to the Culture Division of the Welsh Government.

1. Executive summary

Rhondda Cynon Taf met all of the 12 core entitlements in full. Of the 10 quality indicators which have targets, Rhondda Cynon Taf is achieving 5 in full and 1 in part. Four were not met.

Rhondda Cynon Taf libraries are clearly valued by members of the local community. The number of visits per capita, and customers rating the choice of books, customer care and library overall 'good' or 'very good' are all above the median for Welsh library authorities. It would appear that users are gradually returning to the service after the Covid pandemic, and visits per capita are above the median for Welsh library authorities. However, Rhondda Cynon Taf is facing a challenging financial situation. The planned cuts to staffing and the book budget are a serious concern given that the service is already falling short of targets in these areas. The proposed reduction in staffing may well hamper the service's ability to make improvements in other areas where it is not currently able to meet targets, including opening hours and activity provision.

- Rhondda Cynon Taf performs well for many areas of customer feedback; customers rating the choice of books, customer care and library overall 'good' or 'very good' are all above the median (QI2).
- User training opportunities are well-supported; attendance at pre-arranged user training is now recovering from the pandemic and is above the median for Welsh library services (QI5).
- The library space is well-used; visits per capita are in the top quartile of Welsh library services (QI8).
- The service did not experience any unplanned closures or missed home deliveries (QI16).

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 these areas. A narrative assessment of the authority's performance is provided in Section 3.

2.1. Core entitlements

Rhondda Cynon Taf reported meeting all 12 of the Core Entitlements in full through self-assessment, providing detailed and helpful commentary within the return on each area covered. The independent assessor agreed with the self-assessment.

2.2. Quality indicators with targets

There are 16 quality indicators (QIs), of which 10 have constituent targets. Of these, Rhondda Cynon Taf is achieving 5 in full and 1 in part. Four were not met.

Quality Indicator	Met?	
QI 3 Support for individual development:		Met in full
a) ICT support	√	
b) Information literacy and skills training	√	
c) E-government support	√	
d) Reader development	√	
QI 4 (a) Support for health and well-being		Met in full
i) Book Prescription Wales scheme	√	
ii) Better with Books/Reading Well scheme	√	
iii) Designated health & well-being collection	√	
iv) Information about healthy lifestyles and behaviours	√	
v) Signposting to health & well-being services	√	
QI 6 all static service points offer events/activities for users with special requirements	x	Not met
QI 7 Location of service points	√	Met in full
QI 9 Up-to-date and appropriate reading material		Not met
Acquisitions per capita	x	
or Materials spend per capita	x	
QI 10 Welsh Language Resources		Met in full
% of material budget spent on Welsh	√	
or Spend on Welsh per capita	-	
QI 11 Online access:		Met in full
a) i) Public access to Internet	√	
ii) Wi-Fi provision	√	
QI 12 Supply of requests		Not met
a) % of requests satisfied within 7 days	x	
b) % of requests satisfied within 15 days	x	
QI 13 Staffing levels and qualifications:		Partially met
i) Staff per capita	x	
ii) Qualified staff per capita	x	
iii) Head of service qualification/training	√	
iv) CPD percentage	x	
QI 16 Opening hours per capita	x	Not met

2.3. Impact measures

The framework includes three indicators aimed at assessing the impact of library use on people's lives. These indicators do not have targets, and authorities were only required to carry out user surveys for QI1 once over the original three-year period of the framework (2017-20). The summary figures (lowest, median and highest) are

based on all authorities providing data in the 2022-23 return. Rankings reflect the numbers of respondents, where 1 is the highest scoring authority. However, it is important to bear in mind that some authorities have conducted surveys since 2020, whilst others report survey data from before the Covid pandemic. Some responses therefore reflect the situation several years ago, whilst others may have been affected by disruption during the pandemic period. As a result, there are limitations on the extent to which these data might be considered comparable.

Rhondda Cynon Taf completed its adult user survey in March 2022 and its children's user survey in March 2023.

Performance indicator	*Rank*	Lowest	Median	Highest
QI 1 Making a difference				
b) % of young people who think that the library helps them learn and find things out:	90%	=7/16	58%	90%	98%
e) % of adults who think that the library has made a difference to their lives:	85%	11/16	41%	86.5%	96%
QI 5 b) % of attendees of training sessions who said that the training had helped them achieve their goals:	96%	=9/17	82%	96%	100%

Authorities are also asked to provide an impact statement describing the impact which the library service has had on an individual or on a group of individuals during the year. Rhondda Cynon Taf provided an impact statement about the provision of increased space and activities for local communities to support more non-traditional use of the library and to help combat loneliness and isolation. This provides customers a chance to connect with others in a warm, safe, welcoming, non-judgemental environment. With the closure of other community venues and the cost-of-living crisis, this was seen as especially important. Initially, as part of the Places to Connect programme, three Coffee and Craft sessions were set up in three libraries and were attended by a total of 95 people and attendee feedback was positive. Building on the success of these events, eight other events were organised and attended by 239 people. A crochet club has been started at Treorchy library and 'Community Puzzle' tables set up at several libraries. Feedback from two Ukrainian settlers has led to the establishment of a library 'Coffee and Chat' group for people whose first language is not English. The events have reportedly contributed to increased confidence and wellbeing for many community members and resulted in more diverse use of the library space.

2.4.   Quality indicators and benchmarks

The remaining indicators do not have targets but allow services to monitor and benchmark their performance over time, in comparison with other authorities. The following table summarises Rhondda Cynon Taf's position for 2022-23. 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 was not available from some authorities. Indicators 'per capita' are calculated per 1,000 population unless otherwise noted.

Performance indicator		Rank	Lowest	Median	Highest
QI 1 Making a difference					
a) % of adults who think that using the library has helped them develop new skills	62%	12/16	24%	69.5%	90%
c) health and well-being	42%	14/16	35%	66.5%	94%
d) enjoyable, safe and inclusive	93%	=14/16	93%	97%	100%
QI 2 Customer satisfaction					
a) 'very good' or 'good' choice of books	94%	=4/16	80%	91%	99%
b) 'very good' or 'good' customer care	99%	=2/17	92%	98%	100%
c) 'very good' or 'good' IT facilities	83%	10/16	65%	86%	99%
d) 'very good' or 'good' overall	99%	=3/17	94%	98%	100%
e) users aged 16 & under rating out of ten	9.4	7/16	8.0	9.3	9.7
QI 5 User training					
a) attendances per capita	17	8/22	1	10.5	222
c) informal training per capita	8	18/19	5	131	424
QI 6 attendances at events per capita	129	15/22	13	165	559
QI 8 Library use					
a) visits per capita	2,559	4/21	781	2,106	4,814
b) virtual visits per capita	490	13/22	124	537.5	7,979
c) active borrowers per capita	83	17/22	43	106.5	167
QI 10 Welsh issues per capita	44	=15/22	13	53	864
QI 11 Online access					
a) Computers per 10,000	6.82	16/22	3.32	7.99	16.99
b) % of available time used by the public	11%	=9/19	7%	11%	77%
QI 13 Staffing levels and qualifications[1]					
(v) a) total volunteers	7	-	0	8	256
b) volunteer hours	1,032	-	0	583.5	14,014
QI 14 Operational expenditure					
a) total expenditure per capita	£8,932	17/21	£6,726	£11,476	£27,330
b) % on staff	69%	7/21	46%	64%	78%
% on information resources	16%	5/21	5%	12%	21%
% on equipment and buildings	3%	=11/21	1%	3%	29%
% on other operational costs	12%	14/21	1%	15%	35%
c) capital expenditure per capita	£0	=12/21	-£479	£145	£2,865
QI 15 Net cost per visit[2]	£2.31	8/19	£0.41	£2.76	£6.22
QI 16 Opening hours[3]					
(iii) a) % hours unplanned closure of static service points	0%	=1/21	0%	0.07%	0.95%
b) % mobile stops / home deliveries missed	0%	=1/19	0%	0%	3.74%

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[1] *Following discussion with the peer review group it was decided not to include rankings for volunteers as the implications of volunteer numbers are ambiguous.*

[2] *Rankings here have been reversed, so that 1 is the lowest scoring (best performing) authority.*

[3] *Rankings here have been reversed, so that 1 is the lowest scoring (best performing) authority.*

3. Analysis of performance

The core entitlements and quality indicators can be divided into four key areas. This section of the report outlines performance under these areas.

3.1. Meeting customer needs (QI 1-5)

Rhondda Cynon Taf achieves the median for percentage of young people who think that the library helps them learn and find things out (QI1). It is below the median for feedback from adult users in relation to Making a difference, but it is acknowledged that the timing of surveys over the pandemic period may have an impact on this measure. Customers rating the choice of books, customer care and library overall 'good' or 'very good' are all above the median (QI2). Three of the four 'Living Well in Wales' campaigns took place during this period, and activities, events and information resources were organised for: Dip into reading, Age Well and Places to connect. A number of organisations involved in promoting healthy lifestyles and wellbeing make use of libraries, including Foodwise (healthy eating), baby massage and NHS long Covid and depression sessions (QI4). Whilst attendance at user training sessions is lower than pre-pandemic levels, the number of attendees has been increasing steadily throughout the year and overall, attendance at user training was above the median (QI5). Participation in informal training was below the median, however. During this period, the service has looked to both re-establish existing partnerships that were lost during the pandemic and also to create new partnerships with organisations that wish to make use of facilities to provide training sessions.

3.2. Access and use (QI 6-8)

Rhonnda Cynon Taf did not meet the target for events and activities for those who have special requirements as only 11 of the 13 static service points offered such provision. Whilst the number of events and activities increased throughout the year, event attendance was below the median (QI6). Visits per capita are in the top quartile of Welsh library services, however, and the service reports that this is now only 16% below pre pandemic levels. The number of virtual visits per capita is below the median and Rhondda Cynon Taf reflects that this may be the result of people returning to traditional borrowing practices after the pandemic. Whilst the survey reports that the number of active borrowers and adult loans have increased, the service is currently below the median for these measures, as well as for children's issues (QI8).

3.3. Facilities and services (QI 9-12)

Rhondda Cynon Taf does not meet the target for acquisitions (QI9), although it is close to the median for materials spend per capita. The service reports that performance against this target is unlikely to improve given the current financial situation and the service has been advised that a percentage of the book budget will be offered up as an efficiency saving in 2023- 2024. The service meets the target for acquisition of Welsh language materials, but issues are below the median per capita Welsh speaker (QI10). Rhondda Cynon Taf acknowledges that, whilst Welsh language issues have increased on last year, they are still remain below pre-pandemic levels. The service also offers an extensive programme of Welsh language events and activities.

Rhondda Cynon Taf is below the median for PCs per capita, but achieves the median for the percentage of time these are actively used (QI11). The service notes that the demand for, and usage of, public access computers has fallen to its lowest level since public access PCs were introduced. Whilst these computers provide the only method by which some users can gain access to the internet, increasingly library users are relying on their own devices and making use of the library WiFi. Rhondda Cynon Taf is now taking the approach of providing smaller numbers of PCs for everyday use, whilst maintaining larger numbers within IT suites in some larger libraries which can be used for classes and training purposes. The service does not meet the target for supply of requests (QI12) and notes that its performance against this target is unlikely to improve as budgetary pressures lead to a reduction in its book budget.

3.4. Expertise and capacity (QI 13-16)

Rhondda Cynon Taf does not meet the targets for overall staffing per capita or qualified staff per capita, although it does have a qualified operational manager. The number of qualified staff has reduced by one (as a result of retirement), but two members of staff are currently working towards professional qualifications. The service is also below the target for proportion of staff time devoted to training (QI13). Rhondda Cynon Taf notes a lower than average number of volunteers this year as the council's work placement scheme was suspended for the majority of the reporting period. Total revenue expenditure is below the median and the service reports that this is down on last year as a result of a 0.5% compulsory efficiency saving imposed on services throughout the council in response to the current financial position (QI14). Rhondda Cynon Taf does not meet the target for opening hours (QI16), but it notes that the cluster model means that at least one branch library and an area library is open in each cluster for 6 days of the week to enable access for customers within the resources available. The service did not experience any unplanned closures or missed home deliveries. Its mobile libraries are yet to return to service following the Covid pandemic and it continues to run an expanded 'At Home' service for members of the community that cannot visit a static library. A decision is expected later in the year on whether this model will be adopted as a permanent change of service.

4. Strategic context

As part of the return, authorities are asked to report on how the library service is contributing to wider Welsh Government priorities and strategic goals. Rhondda Cynon Taf highlights how libraries are contributing towards the seven wellbeing goals prioritised by the Welsh Government. Some examples highlighted are as follows.

- **A prosperous Wales**: supporting Job Clubs and back to work programmes with Communities for Work Plus and other local organisations; volunteering opportunities offered within the Library Service help people gain additional skills to improve their job prospects.
- **A resilient Wales**: the council's policy of developing local hubs with libraries at their heart provides local access to a wide range of services for education, leisure, support and advice. These help to build resilience in the community by providing network structures, social support and community bonds and

good information and communication systems that assist in informing the public.

- **A more equal Wales**: providing audio books, large print books, Welsh language stock, books in braille and dyslexia-friendly books.
- **A Wales of cohesive communities**: close ties with the Business Improvement Districts at Pontypridd, Aberdare and Treorchy allow libraries to play a key role in programmes that involve the whole community thereby raising the profile of the library whilst providing resources and locations for events to take place.
- **A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language**: supporting and participating in Welsh Language events including Parti Ponty and Shwmae Day.
- **A globally responsible Wales**: information and advice on local initiatives, plus recycling bags and battery drop off points.

5. Future direction

Reporting on the authority's future direction and plans for the library service over the following year, Rhondda Cynon Taf highlights increasing visitor numbers and issues as a priority. The service notes the challenges presented by further efficiency savings for 2023/24, which include replacing the mobile library service with an enhanced 'At Home' service, the loss of one Library Assistant post and a 10% cut to the book budget. Its priorities will therefore be:

- Continuing to build audiences, returning usage to pre-pandemic levels
- Carrying out a service review
- Working with SCL Cymru and the Welsh Government on the re-tendering process for an All-Wales Library Management System.

6. Conclusion

Rhondda Cynon Taf libraries are clearly valued by members of the local community. The number of visits per capita, and customers rating the choice of books, customer care and library overall 'good' or 'very good' are all above the median for Welsh library authorities. It would appear that users are gradually returning to the service after the Covid pandemic, and visits per capita are above the median for Welsh library authorities. However, Rhondda Cynon Taf is facing a challenging financial situation. The planned cuts to staffing and the book budget are a serious concern given that the service is already falling short of targets in these areas. The proposed reduction in staffing may well hamper the service's ability to make improvements in other areas where it is not currently able to meet targets, including opening hours and activity provision.

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Appendix 2 - Impact Statement – Places to Connect Programme

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council's Library Service has, since returning to regular service provision after the Covid-19 pandemic, seen an increase in people using libraries for longer periods of time and for more non-traditional uses.

To help to combat loneliness and isolation brought about by closure of other community venues, and the impact of the cost-of-living crisis on the ability of people to heat their own homes, the library service has provided more space and activities for local communities.

The chance to meet with people in a warm, clean, safe space with friendly and welcoming staff who would not judge or question people's reasons for being there is seen as vital.

As part of the Places to Connect programme, three 'Coffee and Craft' days were set up at three libraries with 95 people attending these events. Feedback received includes the following:

"This was a fab session, there was a good community spirit, I can't wait for the next one."

"I only intended to stay for an hour but ended up staying all day. It was great to sit and chat with people, I hadn't seen (NAME) for years!"

"This Library is excellent! It's really given me a lift to be here today."

Due to the success of these events, 8 other events were organised and attended by 239 people. In considering feedback, a crochet club has been established at Treorchy Library and 'Community Puzzle' tables set up at several libraries. These allow people to sit for extended periods of time in the library either on their own or with other community members.

Feedback from two Ukrainian settlers who attended events has led to a 'Coffee and Chat' group in the library for people whose first language is not English. The success of this group has led to discussion of further groups.

These events have increased the wellbeing and confidence of many of our community members and resulted in more diverse use of library spaces.

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Appendix 3

Welsh Performance against the Welsh Public Library Standards 2022-2023

Library Service	Core entitlements (12)	Quality indicators met in full (10)	Quality indicators met in part (10)	Quality indicators not met (10)
Blaenau Gwent (Aneurin Leisure Trust)	12	7	2	1
Bridgend (Awen Cultural Trust)	12	5	2	2
Caerphilly	12	7	1	2
Cardiff	12	9	1	0
Carmarthen	12	5	1	4
Ceredigion	10	7	1	2
Conwy	12	9	1	0
Denbighshire	12	8	2	0
Flint (Aura Leisure and Libraries Ltd)	12	8	2	0
Gwynedd	12	8	2	0
Isle of Anglesey	10	8	2	0
Merthyr Tydfil Leisure Trust	12	9	1	0
Monmouthshire	12	5	1	3
Neath Port Talbot	12	8	1	1
Newport	11	7	1	2
Pembrokeshire	12	6	2	2
Powys	10	7	1	2
Rhondda Cynon Taf	12	5	1	4
Swansea	12	7	1	2
Torfaen	12	5	1	4
Vale of Glamorgan	10	7	1	2
Wrexham	7	5	3	1

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