

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Economic and Community Regeneration Cabinet Board

4 December 2015

Report of the Head of Transformation – A.Thomas

Matter for Decision

Wards Affected: All Wards

Welsh Public Library Standards Annual Report 2014 -15

Purpose of the Report

1. To approve the Annual Report to the Welsh Government in respect of the authorities library services performance against the Welsh Public Library Standards and to note the feedback comments and recommendations in the Annual Assessment Report 2014-15.

Executive Summary

2. This is the first year of framework 5 of the Welsh Public Library Standards, which consist of 18 core entitlements and 16 quality indicators, 7 of which have set targets.

Neath Port Talbot met 17 of the 18 core entitlements in full and partially met 1.

Of the 7 quality indicators which have targets, Neath Port Talbot achieved 3 in full, 3 in part and failed to achieve 1.

Background

3. Public libraries are a statutory service under the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964. In Wales, all local authorities are required to report annually to the Welsh Government via the Museums, Archives and Libraries Division on their performance against the current framework of the Welsh Public Library Standards, which the Welsh Government use as an interpretation of local authorities complying with their statutory function by providing a comprehensive and efficient library service as required under the 1964 Act.
4. This is the first year of the fifth framework of the Standards which covers 2014 - 2017. The new framework consists of 18 core entitlements and 16 quality indicators, 7 of which have set targets upon which the authorities' performance is evaluated.

Financial Impact

5. Following a further reduction in the library services budget in 2015 - 16 of £255,000, in order to fully comply with the Welsh Public Library Standards, Neath Port Talbot would need to increase expenditure in the following areas:
 - Book stock - an additional £185,000
 - Staffing - an additional 14 full time members of staff would be required at an estimated cost of £210,000.
 - Public Access Computers - an additional 38 public access computers are required at a cost of £19,000.

Equality Impact Assessment

6. Not applicable.

Workforce Impacts

7. There are no workforce implications.

Legal Impacts

8. The Annual Report ensures that the authority complies with its statutory duty to provide a public library service under the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964.

Risk Management

9. Due to further reductions in the library services budgets, performance against the Welsh Public Library Standards will continue to decline in 2015 - 16. This will mean that Neath Port Talbot would be failing to meet its statutory responsibility in a number of areas as highlighted by the Standards report.

Consultation

10. There is no requirement under the Constitution for external consultation on this item.

Recommendations

11. Members are asked to approve the Annual Report to Welsh Government and note the feedback comments included in the Assessment letter for 2014 -15.

Reasons for Proposed Decision

12. To enable the authority to comply with its statutory duty of providing a library service in Neath Port Talbot.

Implementation of Decision

13. The decision is proposed for implementation after the three day call in period.

Appendices

14. Appendix 1 - Neath Port Talbot - Annual Return 31st March 2015
15. Appendix 2 - Annual Assessment Report 2014 - 15

Officer Contact

16. Wayne John, County Librarian, Telephone 01639 899829.

E mail: w.john@npt.gov.uk