

**NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
**EDUCATION, SKILLS AND CULTURE CABINET BOARD**

29<sup>th</sup> November 2018

**REPORT OF THE HEAD OF TRANSFORMATION**  
**ANDREW THOMAS**

**MATTER FOR: INFORMATION**

**WARDS AFFECTED: All**

**PERFORMANCE REPORT NEATH PORT TALBOT LIBRARIES**

**1. Purpose of the Report**

To provide members with background information on the role and comparative performance of public libraries in NPT and illustrate the wide range of activities and events that are delivered by the Library Service.

**2. Executive Summary**

Local authorities are required to provide a public library service as part of their statutory duty under the Public Libraries and Museums Act (1964). Compliance with the act in Wales is interpreted through the Welsh Public Library Standards. These consist of 12 Core Entitlements and 16 Quality Indicators.

Libraries in Neath Port Talbot, taking their lead from the Well-being of Future Generations Act (2015), the Welsh Public Library Standards and the Authority's Corporate Plan, Shaping NPT, are delivering a wide range of events and activities that support the individual and the community.

Often working in partnership with other organisations, including those from the Third Sector, libraries are ensuring that opportunities exist for people:

- To empower themselves through learning

- To become active and healthy within their community, helping to alleviate the issue of social isolation and loneliness
- To participate fully in the cultural, leisure and social life of their community
- To retrain and upskill to get back into employment
- To contribute to their community, creating a vibrant and healthy place in which to live and to work

This report will provide an overview of the performance of Neath Port Talbot's libraries. However, it needs to be stated that measuring performance solely through statistics can be misleading and does not reflect the valuable range of work that libraries are undertaking. Therefore, whilst featuring a number of statistical tables, the report will attempt to highlight the impact that the library service has on individuals (which is often difficult to quantify) within their community. (See appendix 1 for full details of regular events and activities at libraries) It will also demonstrate how the library is contributing to Neath Port Talbot's well-being objectives of improving the well-being of children, young people and adults.

### **3. Background**

Below are a number of tables that show most recent (2017-18) performance for branch libraries.

#### 1. Annual Number of Visits to Libraries (WPLSQI8)

Baglan (25)*	32478
Cwmafan (25)	74114
Glynneath (30)	69956
Neath (46)	145539
Pontardawe (40)	70799

Port Talbot (50) 131270

Sandfields (35) 75886

Skewen (30) 32419

\*Opening Hours per week

- Neath Port Talbot = 4,520 annual visits to libraries per 1000 population (4<sup>th</sup> highest in Wales)
- Average for Wales = 4,047 annual visits to libraries per 1000

## 2. Annual Number of Issues at Libraries (WPLSQI8)

Baglan 16884

Cwmafan 22095

Glynneath 21806

Neath 86768

Pontardawe 43866

Port Talbot 50383

Sandfields 49965

Skewen 33483

There was a time when libraries were measured purely by the number of book issues. However this is no longer the case. Cipfa stopped using book issues as a key measure in 2015, Welsh Government no longer provide comparative book issue data in their Welsh Public Library Standards return and the number of items issued is no longer a key performance indicator for Neath Port Talbot.

### 3. % of Available ICT Hours in Use at Libraries (WPLSQI11)

Baglan	15%
Cwmafan	24%
Glynneath	16%
Neath	40%
Pontardawe	21%
Port Talbot	47%
Sandfields	31%
Skewen	33%

- Neath Port Talbot = 34% (7<sup>th</sup> highest in Wales)
- Average for Wales = 27%

All Neath Port Talbot libraries offer wifi facilities meaning that members of the public will often prefer to use their own devices rather than the desktop computers available in the library.

### Support for Learning

Branch libraries provide a combination of formal and informal training sessions for the public on a wide range of themes, including digital technology. In 2017-18 there were 10,900 attendees at training sessions organised by the library service. This puts Neath Port Talbot as ranked as the 5<sup>th</sup> highest in Wales in providing support for learning.

### 4. Number of Registered Borrowers (WPLSQI8)

Baglan	2377
Cwmafan	2907
Glynneath	2658

Neath	24937
Pontardawe	10984
Port Talbot	19644
Sandfields	6209
Skewen	4802

Total number of registered borrowers in Neath Port Talbot = 74,518 (this number does not include those registered through the 7 community managed libraries).

#### 5. Annual Attendance at Library Events (WPLSQI6, WPLSCE8)

Baglan	3778
Cwmafan	13801
Glynneath	3283
Neath	14905
Pontardawe	5159
Port Talbot	11770
Sandfields	9985
Skewen	2692

- Neath Port Talbot = 526 per 1000 population (2<sup>nd</sup> highest in Wales)
- Average Wales = 228

#### 6. Budget ( WPLSQI14)

Baglan	£52000
Cwmafan	£48000
Glynneath	£65000
Neath	£276000*
Pontardawe	£124000*

Port Talbot	£249000*
Sandfields	£90000
Skewen	£59000

- \*Includes Area Librarians Salary

#### 7. Cost Per Visit (WPLSQI15)

Baglan	£1.57
Cwmafan	£0.65
Glynneath	£0.96
Neath	£1.90
Pontardawe	£1.75
Port Talbot	£1.87
Sandfields	£1.19
Skewen	£1.85

- Neath Port Talbot (average) = £1.38 (4<sup>th</sup> lowest in Wales)
- Average cost per visit in Wales is £1.82 : Highest cost is £2-41

#### 8. Distance (miles) to the Nearest Library

Baglan	2	<i>Port Talbot, Sandfields</i>
Cwmafan	2	<i>Port Talbot</i>
Glynneath	11	<i>Neath</i>
Neath	2	<i>Skewen</i>
Pontardawe	6	<i>Neath</i>
Port Talbot	2	<i>Sandfields</i>

Sandfields	2	<i>Port Talbot</i>
Skewen	2	<i>Neath</i>

Welsh Public Library Standards Quality Indicator 7 states that at least 75% of the population of the borough should be within 2.5 miles of the nearest library. Current NPT performance against this standard is 82%

#### 9. Number of Statutory Branch Libraries (neighbouring authorities)

Neath Port Talbot	8
Swansea	17
Bridgend	12
Carmarthenshire	18
Powys	18
RCT	14

#### Community Managed Libraries

None of the data above includes the Community Managed Libraries in Neath Port Talbot. (Blaengwynfi, Cymer, Gwaun Cae Gurwen, Resolven, Seven Sisters, Taibach – both Cwmllynfell and Ystalyfera are, at present, no longer operating).

Community Managed Libraries operate independently of the Library Service, often run by Independent charitable trusts. We should commend the volunteers and Trusts that have maintained a network of community libraries, however opening hours and performance varies considerably. We are unable to provide comparative data for Community libraries at this time.

## Mobile Library

Neath Port Talbot currently operates one large mobile library with one driver providing a three weekly service to communities throughout the county. The 10 year lease on the current vehicle expires in 2019. There is a spare mobile library vehicle but that lease has already expired. The average life cycle of a mobile vehicle is 12-15 years. We will therefore need to explore options for continuation of the service from 2021.

### **4. Financial Impact**

The Standard Spending Assessment for Libraries (SSA) for 2018-19 is £2,329,190. The original budget for the library service is £1,612,753.

### **5. Equality Impact Assessment**

There is no equality impacts associated with this report.

### **6. Workforce Impacts**

There are no workforce implications associated with this report.

### **7. Legal Impacts**

None.

### **8. Risk Management**

There are no risk management implications.

### **9. Consultation**

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



## **10. Recommendation**

Matter for Information

## **11. Reasons for Proposed Decision**

Matter for Information

## **12. Implementation of Decision**

Matter for Information

## **13. Appendices**

List of regular events and activities at branch libraries

## **12. List of Background Papers**

Library Strategy 2016-2021

Connected and Ambitious Libraries: WPLS 2017 -2020

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