

Report

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Report to:	Education Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	31 August 2010
Report by:	Executive Director (Education Resources)

Subject:	Outcome of External Evaluation of the Library Service by the Scottish Library Information Council (SLIC)
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1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ♦ advise on the outcome of the external evaluation of the library service by the Scottish Library Information Council (SLIC).

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Committee is asked to approve the following recommendation(s):-

- (1) that the outcome of the evaluation report, published by SLIC, on the library service and the assessments made in relation to the Public Library Quality Improvement Indicators 3 (Meeting Readers' Needs), 4 (Learners' Experiences) and 5 (Ethos and Values) be noted; and
- (2) that the areas identified for development, as detailed in paragraph 4.2, be incorporated into an improvement plan and a progress report made at a future date.

3. Background

3.1. The use of the SLIC quality framework enables public library services to demonstrate the impact they have on individuals and communities and how well the service meets the users' needs.

3.2. Evaluation of the performance of the Library Service in South Lanarkshire in relation to three of the seven quality indicators (two were already inspected in 2008) was agreed with SLIC.

3.3. The format of the evaluation process involved a presentation to SLIC's Director and Assistant Director on 26 May 2010 and these were followed by discussions with the library service's management team, observation of practice and discussions with partners and users.

4. Findings of SLIC Inspection Team

4.1. The evaluation report received from SLIC was very positive and identified the following key strengths of the service:-

- reader development and reader-centred training had been undertaken by 75% of employees
- evidence based stock management analysis had been introduced
- good range of provision for readers of all ages

- all IT equipment is regularly refreshed and less than 4 years old
- range of learning opportunities (formal and informal) is so popular that advertising requirements are minimal
- very good range of partnerships
- service is creative and opportunistic and senior managers are solutions orientated

4.2. The evaluation report also identified the following as the main areas for improvement:-

- more strategic and operational use of evidence based stock management to ensure best value in purchase and management of library stock
- ensure libraries have adequate budgets to spend across the year and consistently meet demand, add to the collections and improve against benchmarking authorities
- develop learning offered to children and young people, including clear links to Curriculum for Excellence
- continue to develop partnership working with Community Learning and Development and others
- continue to seek external funding to support joint initiatives
- continue to seek and respond to customer feedback and surveys

4.3. These main points for action will be incorporated into an improvement plan. The improvement plan will address these areas for development and will form part of the agenda for improvement by the Library Service.

5. Overall evaluation of the service

5.1. The overall evaluation of the service was good in relation to the following:

- identification of reader interests
- choice of activities and resources
- opportunities to improve literacy and numeracy
- range of learning opportunities
- reception and atmosphere

5.2. The overall evaluation of the service was very good in relation to:

- extent to which the environment stimulates and motivates learners
- provision for learners with differing abilities and aptitudes
- partnerships enabling progression
- sense of identity
- customer service

5.3. A copy of the Scottish Library Information Council report is available in the members' areas.

6. Employee Implications

6.1. The outcome of the external evaluation by the Scottish Library Information Council (SLIC) will be shared with employees.

7. Financial Implications

7.1. Participation in evaluation of library services by SLIC is a pre-requisite for funding applications to that body.

8. Other Implications

- 8.1. The risk assessment on the impact of the SLIC evaluation on the South Lanarkshire Library Service is deemed to be low and will not have an adverse impact on the future delivery of this service.

9. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements

- 9.1. There is no requirement to carry out an impact assessment in terms of the proposals contained within this report.
- 9.2. The outcome of the evaluation will be published and shared with stakeholders.

Larry Forde
Executive Director (Education Resources)

12 August 2010

Link(s) to Council Objectives

- Increase involvement in lifelong learning

Previous References

- Education Resources Committee 18 September 2007
- Education Resources Committee 6 May 2008

List of Background Papers

- “Building on Success: a Public Library Quality Improvement Matrix for Scotland” (PLQIM)
- South Lanarkshire Council – report of a visit on 26 May 2010 by the Scottish Library Information Council

Contact for Further Information

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:-

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