![SLiC — Scottish Library & Information Council logo]

HOW GOOD IS OUR
PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICE?

A Public Library Improvement Model for Scotland

The Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba

Acknowledgements

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Part 1: Introduction

Purpose

This *"How Good is Our Public Library Service: A Public Library Improvement Model for Scotland"* builds on a framework originally developed in 2007, *Building on Success: A Public Library Improvement Quality Improvement Matrix for Scotland* produced by the Scottish Library and Information Council (SLIC). It sits alongside *Ambition and Opportunity: A Strategy for Public Libraries in Scotland 2015-2020* and the Public Library Improvement Fund as the cornerstones of developing and enhancing Scotland's public libraries.

This revised version, developed in 2013, takes into account the changing environment in which public libraries currently operate, and provides a quality assurance tool to assist Scottish public libraries in meeting their service obligations and objectives in a challenging economic climate.

This *Framework* focuses on planning, service delivery, and continuous improvement. The self-evaluation process will demonstrate the continuing relevance, contribution and impact of public libraries, the ways in which public libraries make a difference in their communities, and provide source information and documentation for continuous improvement. This framework can enable service improvement to assist in the transformation of public services, enabling people to fulfill their potential, creating social capital and enhancing the wellbeing of individuals and communities.

An accompanying *Toolkit* is available online at scottishlibraries.org, and provides tools and templates to support the self-evaluation and peer review process, along with a digital version of this document.

Principles

For over 150 years public libraries have adapted to user needs and interests, and sought to achieve the underpinning principles in the original 1853 Public Libraries Act (Scotland) "for the Instruction and Recreation of the People" and local authorities continue to have a statutory duty to provide an adequate public library service. This framework was developed, and revised, in order to support and inform the adequate provision of universal public libraries services throughout Scotland. An adequate service is delivered through **a planned strategic network of public libraries reflecting core functions:**

• Providing universal access to hardcopy and electronic resources which is free, consistent and customer focussed
• Enabling access to resources for reading, information and learning
• Creating social capital by encouraging community involvement and community-based activity
• Helping to minimise social and digital exclusion
• Supporting learning and information needs in the information society and knowledge economy
• Promoting access to Scotland's cultural heritage and promoting cultural and creative activities
• Encouraging the public to pursue individual interests
• Promoting social justice, civic engagement and democracy
• Working in partnership with other agencies and organisations to offer value added services
• Strategic network provision

Despite the changing environment in which 21st century public libraries find themselves operating in, the principles of equity of access to information, the right to know, freedom of expression, the right to participate fully in a democratic society, and a professional and objective ethos remain as fundamental in the digital age as they were when public libraries were first established.

Since the implementation of the People's Network, the role of the public library in the community, as well as the expectations of library users, have developed considerably. Libraries play a pivotal role in providing access to, and encouraging use of, digital technologies, information and learning opportunities. Successful public library service provision requires a delicate balance of nationally determined priorities (such as digital participation) which are sensitive to local needs and which reflect the strategic priorities of the Community Planning process.

The contribution of the staff to the success of the service cannot be overestimated. Individual users' experiences and satisfaction depend on the quality of knowledge, expertise, customer service and professionalism at all levels. The role of staff in public libraries encompasses supporting the public in areas such as ICT, digital participation and literacy as well as reader development and access to information.

VISUAL EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

RECOMMENDATIONS | NATIONAL OUTCOMES

STRATEGIC AIM 1 Reading, literacy and learning
- Ensure access to library services for all citizens using new technology
- Develop and promote the core offer from public libraries in Scotland

We have tackled the significant inequalities in Scottish society

We are better educated, more skilled and more successful, renowned for our research and innovation

STRATEGIC AIM 2 Digital inclusion
- Develop Scotland-wide digital access resources
- Ensure WiFi is available and accessible in all public libraries

STRATEGIC AIM 3 Economic wellbeing
- Develop partnerships with advice services, job centres and enterprise organisations
- Mainstream activities to improve STEM skills
- Test and replicate provision of co-working spaces for small businesses

We realise our full economic potential with more and better employment opportunities for our people

STRATEGIC AIM 4 Social wellbeing
- Create strong national, regional and local partnerships with all public services and community planning partners
- Share best practice on how to create effective and accessible public service or community hubs
- Build on current practice to become champions of community engagement and empowerment
- Develop guidelines on the appropriate use of volunteers

We live longer, healthier lives

We have improved the life chances for children, young people and families at risk

STRATEGIC AIM 5 Culture and creativity
- Develop and strengthen national, regional and local partnerships with arts and culture organisations
- Pilot a collaborative venture to provide access to eBooks from Scottish publishers
- Support librarians to become effective voices for freedom of information and expression

We take pride in a strong, fair and inclusive national identity

STRATEGIC AIM 6 Excellent public services
- Continue to develop methods for reporting on the impact and outcomes of library activities through 'How Good is Our Public Library Service?'
- Develop and implement a learning and development programme for all library staff
- Explore alternative approaches to generating financial investment
- Engage proactively with models for efficient procurement of goods and services at national level

Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs

VISION Scotland's public libraries are trusted guides connecting all of our people to the world's possibilities and opportunities

MISSION Scotland's public libraries are part of a shared civic ambition to fulfil the potential of individuals and communities

Ambition & Opportunity A Strategy for Public Libraries in Scotland 2015-2020

Context

It is recognised that public library services have been in a period of transition from their more traditional role and moving towards meeting the needs of the 21st century context.

The vision for Scotland's public libraries is outlined in *Ambition and Opportunity: A Strategy for Public Libraries in Scotland 2015-20* which provides a clear strategic approach. *Ambition and Opportunity* highlights that our public libraries are trusted guides connecting all of our people to the world's possibilities and opportunities. Scotland's public libraries are also part of shared civic ambition to fulfil the potential of individuals and communities and every step that those individuals and communities take towards fulfilling their potential adds to Scotland's social, economic and cultural wellbeing.

Public libraries in Scotland have a key role to play in supporting the Digital Participation agenda, regarded as a key element in ensuring *"Scotland is well placed to take full advantage of all the economic, social and environmental opportunities offered by the digital age"*. www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Economy/digital

It is generally regarded that increased digital participation can improve people's quality of life, boost economic growth and transform the delivery of public services.

This *How Good is Our Public Library Service* framework for self-evaluation takes account of central and local government outcomes, the Best Value agenda and reflects the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) Framework, which is widely used within local authorities. This framework

has been mapped against Scottish and local government priorities as outlined in *Libraries, How Good is Our Public Library Service*, and the National Performance Framework (SLIC, 2013) (see Appendix 2) indicating how it links with the Strategic Objectives and National Indicators, which support the outcomes-based approach to performance. *How Good is Our Public Library Service* sits alongside other quality improvement frameworks employed in local authorities such as *How Good Is Our Culture and Sport*.

This approach will enable public library services to demonstrate the impact which they have on individuals and communities, and how well the services meet the needs of users and the wider community. The evidence gathered by local authorities should clearly demonstrate outcomes which articulate and demonstrate the local authority's delivery of standards of cultural planning activity and entitlements, involving local people, and other local government processes. Relevant evidence can be linked across all strands of the quality evaluation process.

The Community Planning agenda, as part of public service reform in Scotland, and The Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 (see Appendix 1 for excerpt), helps public agencies work together with the community to plan and deliver better services which make a real difference to people's lives, and aims to improve the connection between national priorities and those at regional, local and neighbourhood levels. www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Government/PublicServiceReform/CP

How Good is Our Public Library Service has the Community Planning agenda firmly embedded in the framework of self-evaluation, peer review and continuous improvement.

Framework Overview
– Quality Indicators

The five Quality Indicators offer a framework for self-evaluation with guidance on key questions to ask and why they are important.

Quality Indicator 1 – Access to Information

1.1 Sufficiency, range and suitability of resources
1.2 Arrangements for access
1.3 Staff knowledge, interaction and user support

Quality Indicator 2 – Readers' Experience

2.1 Identifying and satisfying readers' needs and interests
2.2 Reader development activities and resources
2.3 Provision for readers with differing needs

Quality Indicator 3 – Learning Culture

3.1 Stimulating and motivating learning environment
3.2 Lifelong learning opportunities in the library and in partnership with others
3.3 Provision and support for all learners

Quality Indicator 4 – Individual And Community Engagement

4.1 Sense of identity and pride in civic space
4.2 Enhancing individual and community wellbeing
4.3 Fostering community heritage and culture

Quality Indicator 5 – Vision, Strategy And Continuous Improvement

5.1 Vision, innovation and management of change
5.2 Engagement with community development processes
5.3 Planning, developing and enhancing the library service

The six point scale
- the quality indicator levels

The original Public Library Quality Improvement Matrix (SLIC, 2007) self-evaluation framework considered a number of options for describing the quality of service provision, and given the practice in local authorities, the description framework currently used by Education Scotland was judged suitable for the needs of library and information services.

Education Scotland currently assess the effectiveness of performance on a six point scale. Awarding levels requires considerable professional knowledge. The starting point for allocating levels should always be positive, using a combination of the evidence, the level descriptors and Performance Illustrations at level 2 and level 4 (included in the online Toolkit) to identify a level for the service. There should be sound arguments to support the level, backed up with evidence. Use of the EFQM Framework's RADAR© assessment methodology provides a means of objectively considering which aspects are working well and where there are opportunities for improvement. The six levels are

- Level 6 Excellent
- Level 5 Very good
- Level 4 Good
- Level 3 Satisfactory
- Level 2 Weak
- Level 1 Unsatisfactory

How to use this framework

The *How Good is Our Public Library Service* framework is designed for public library managers and staff to evaluate the quality and effectiveness of their service provision, identify areas for improvement, and demonstrate their contribution to overall corporate performance. Five Quality Indicators have been identified as a framework for the self-evaluation. These indicators, and the accompanying materials available online, provide a toolkit for managers and library staff to use in the self-evaluation and peer review process.

To get an overall understanding of the structure of the framework and the steps involved in undertaking a self-evaluation process, those involved should first read through this guide. Detailed information about the Quality Indicators, key themes and things to think about are included in Part 3 of this guide.

To support the self-evaluation and peer review process, a range of tools and templates are provided in the online *Toolkit*, including:

- *How Good is Our Public Library Service* framework (a digital version of this document)
- Planning template
- Self-evaluation template
- Self-evaluation report template
- Improvement plan template
- Benchmark statements
- Performance Illustrations
- Peer Review Guidance
- Guidance on Gathering Evidence to demonstrate impact

What is self-evaluation?

Self-evaluation is a process by which public library management and staff examine critically their library service against a set of quality indicators with key themes, to assess how well the service is being delivered and identify areas for improvement. The aim of the self-evaluation process is to support a continuous cycle of improvement in public library service provision. Self-evaluation assists libraries to:

- Recognise strengths in their current service provision
- Identify areas for improvement and draw up plans for action
- Share best practice and establish benchmarks for services to aspire to
- Report to stakeholders on the quality of service provision
- Demonstrating the relevance and value of the library service to their communities.
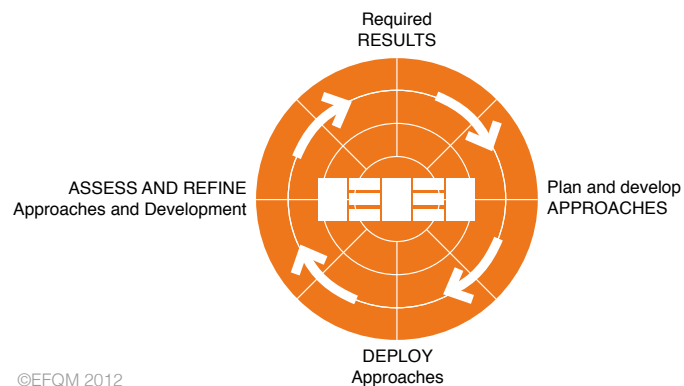
Self-evaluation can involve:
- a broad view of performance across the five quality indicators and
- a closer look at an individual indicator or theme

Previous experience of self-evaluation with the Public Library Quality Improvement Matrix identified that the broad view is useful for authorities, but that the closer examination of particular aspects of work is important in demonstrating best practice and identifying areas for improvement. The Quality Indicators include four which relate to service delivery and one which relates more closely to management, with leadership embedded in all five. The intention is to invite services to assess themselves by looking at all five Quality Indicators in a rolling programme over three years, leading to a more holistic picture of the library service and its value and impact in the community.

The process of self-evaluation is based on three simple questions:

- how well are we doing?
- how do we know?
- what are we going to do now?

RADAR© will be particularly helpful here.

Required
RESULTS

ASSESS AND REFINE
Approaches and Development

Plan and develop
APPROACHES

DEPLOY
Approaches

©EFQM 2012

How well are we doing? Assessing current practice.

Library services need to assess the impact of their work with individuals and communities to know that the services are:

- appropriate and based on community need
- of high quality and in line with best practice
- in need of review or improvement
- improving by change and adaptation
- offering local cultural entitlements.

How do we know? Gathering evidence.

Self-evaluation needs to be based on the collection and review of the evidence of outcomes and impact. The Framework of Quality Indicators provide a number of broad evaluation themes, and public library services are asked to identify ways in which they know and can demonstrate that they are performing well. Assessments should be made about the public library service's performance based on the evidence collected. In looking at evidence, all of the RADAR© elements should be considered to understand what aspects of performance are working well and where there are opportunities for improvement.

• Range of evidence

Evidence helps to support self-evaluation processes by demonstrating proof of activity and impact. It can help in establishing how well the service is meeting users' needs. Evidence can be quantitative or qualitative. Quantitative evidence reports what can be measured, for example numbers of registered learners. Qualitative evidence will seek to draw out the value which users may put on services, and this is often unstructured in format, for example feedback from users.

• Evidence can be gathered by:
- consulting users, non-users and staff
- observing activities
- considering measurable outcomes
- examining documentation and resources

These sources of evidence are complementary. For example, a policy statement seeking to "promote learning for all" can be observed across the range of learning opportunities offered and backed up by feedback from learners.

What are we going to do now? Planning and implementing improvements.

As library services progress through the process of self-evaluation, strengths in provision and areas for improvement will be identified. Strengths in provision need to be celebrated, maintained and continuously reviewed. Areas for improvement require analysis and discussion before plans for action can be developed and implemented. The improvement action plan should feed in to a continuous cycle of review and improvement.

An effective improvement action plan will include:

• a small number of priorities which focus on improvement for users
• clearly identified responsibilities for implementation linked to individual staff and/or teams
• clear timelines with milestones and deadlines
• measures of success which include performance data and stakeholders' views

Self-evaluation is a continuous process which can be used throughout improvement planning. Libraries should use it to check their starting point and identify what they need to do. Improvement progress can then be monitored with further evaluation to assess the impact of the action taken.

Demonstrating impact. Are we making a difference, the 'so what' question.

Public library services need to know and understand how the services they provide, or are planning to provide, will make a difference to the communities and individuals that they serve. The need to measure impact generally arises from a climate of financial constraint where public libraries need to be accountable to all their stakeholders, both internal and external. It can sometimes be hard to ask 'So what?' when examining the range of services and activities on offer in the public library. However, it is a valuable opportunity to step back and consider the value of the service to individuals and communities.

Impact evaluation can be a complex issue and can sometimes be hard to measure as a number of variables may be involved; for example, measuring the impact on an individual who attends an IT workshop in the library, may mean also gathering evidence from partners as that individual moves on to a college course or to new employment or career path. However, these impacts are substantial, especially if supported by wider statistical data which highlight patterns or trends.

One significant aspect of undertaking a self-evaluation process such as *How Good is Our Public Library Service* is to identify areas for improvement, and also to share good practice with colleagues and other library services. This process can also assist staff when considering difficult decisions such as 'should we really be doing this piece of work with this partner' or 'will this piece of work really make a difference'.

In planning to gather evidence, library services will need to act strategically and the evidence may be both qualitative and quantitative. Sophisticated quantitative data and good quality impact information should complement each other as they have different roles and purposes; the quantitative data can reassure stakeholders, but this, presented alongside the qualitative evidence, can present a broader picture and demonstrate value and impact effectively.

Part 2: The Self-Evaluation Process

The *How Good is Our Public Library Service* self-evaluation process has a number of important elements:

- An increased emphasis on the self-evaluation process, with the main aim being a mechanism for improvement in the public library service
- Management and staff work together to plan the process and gather evidence and data, ensuring all staff and stakeholders are successfully engaged
- External peer reviewers, acting as 'critical friends', visit to review the self-evaluation evidence and discuss it with management and staff. This review, using the common framework of *How Good is Our Public Library Service*, ensures consistency in self-evaluation across authorities. This peer review process provides a mechanism for identifying and sharing good practice between libraries, while also maintaining and updating the benchmark statements.
- The self-evaluation process always results in a final written report and an improvement action plan, demonstrating the library service's performance and impact, and indicating areas for enhancement and improvement.

Planning and preparation for self-evaluation

While the final grading or rating achieved as a result of the self-evaluation process of a quality indicator is useful for library services when comparing their achievements with others, the process of self-evaluation has important value in itself, especially for the staff involved. To be effective it does, however, require the involvement of a good number of staff in the evaluation teams, clarity about the process of gathering evidence and a clear focus on selecting good evidence that demonstrates the impact of services.

These activities can be very useful from a staff development perspective, particularly relevant for the Certification and Chartership qualifications, but also in terms of developing a wider understanding and appreciation of the service. The self-evaluation process can also help staff to see clearly what the library priorities are, and areas for improvement, but also what is working well. There can be a great sense of achievement in a job well done.

The importance of planning cannot be underestimated in the successful completion of this self-evaluation process. There are a number of resources included in the online *Toolkit*, including a range of templates for planning and reporting, which aim to make the process more manageable for library services. It is envisaged that these resources will be developed and adapted to suit individual local authorities, and also expanded over time, taking into account some of the elements of shared good practice, such as project planning tools and mechanisms already in use in various local authorities.

Timescales and participation
The suggested timescale for completing the *How Good is Our Public Library Service* self-evaluation process is outlined in the Planning Template. The Planning Template, an example of which can be found in Appendix 3 on p 46, has been developed to aid library service management and staff in this planning part of the process. A working copy of the Planning Template, for using during self-evaluation, can be found online in the *Toolkit*.

Individual library services should adapt this timeline to suit their own circumstances, staff availability and priorities. However, to maintain motivation it is recommended that the self-evaluation of a Quality Indicator should be completed within **five months** from the time of initial planning sessions with staff. Evidence suggests that a tighter timescale is preferred, and provides a strong focus on the process. It is also recommended that all five Quality Indicators should be addressed in a **three year rolling programme** of self-evaluation and improvement.

The importance of buy-in from all staff is recognised as providing the most effective environment for undertaking *How Good is Our Public Library Service* self-evaluation. The embedding of *How Good is Our Public Library Service* more firmly into practices at work involving all staff, and also within the service's strategic planning processes, will help to address any issues relating to a lack of understanding of what the *How Good is Our Public Library Service* self-evaluation involves. It is important that the relevance to all staff is reinforced to help change the possible mindset that quality improvement is mainly a management activity.

As part of the planning process it will be important to agree and set key milestone dates with the team involved, helping to ensure momentum is maintained and the teams are working towards agreed target dates. Organising regular progress review meetings with teams during the evidence gathering and report writing phases will provide feedback and support for the teams, while also helping to keep the process on track.

The recommended timescale for completing the *How Good is Our Public Library* self-evaluation process of a quality indicator is within five months from the time of preliminary planning sessions with staff, to peer review visits and completion.

Determine scope
In planning for the self-evaluation process, library services can choose which of the five Quality Indicators to address, fitting in with individual circumstances, plans and priorities within each library service. However, as a three year rolling programme is the recommended timescale in which to complete self-evaluation of all five Quality Indicators, it would seem an obvious plan to address 2 indicators per year with 1 in the final year. For example:

Year 1: QI 1 – Access to Information
         QI 2 – Readers' Experience
Year 2: QI 3 – Learning Culture
         QI 4 – Individual And Community Engagement
Year 3: QI 5 – Vision, Strategy And Continuous
                Improvement

One reason for undertaking QI 5: Vision, strategy and continuous improvement on its own, is that it could perhaps be regarded as 'bigger' than the other four. QI 5, as the more strategic and planning related element, could alternatively be undertaken first in the process; the numbering of the Quality Indicators in no way implies a sequence to follow.

Evaluation team – who should be involved

Library service managers should aim for participation by different levels of staff in the *How Good is Our Public Library Service* self-evaluation process. As mentioned earlier, involvement by all staff in the process is the most effective environment for undertaking self-evaluation. The evaluation teams involved with each Quality Indicator should ideally represent a cross section of management and library staff to help to ensure a shared understanding and ownership of strengths, areas for improvement and impact for the library service. However it is recognised that this is not always possible for different library services due to constraints and staffing levels, but it is something to aim for.

There should however be some sort of a communication mechanism, presentation or session involving as many staff as possible, to introduce the concept and benefits of self-evaluation, discuss the self-evaluation framework and process, the timescales involved, and aspects such as gathering evidence that most staff will be involved with at some point.

The evaluation teams would then get together to examine the framework more closely, select the Quality Indicator(s) to undertake, and brainstorm requirements and what aspects this might involve.

A preliminary evaluation session would aim to

- Conduct an initial self-assessment of the QI(s) selected
- Identify strengths and areas for improvement
- Identify preliminary evidence of impact
- Ask the 'So What' question
- List the possible evidence base

This session will enable participants to gain a good understanding of the self-evaluation process, while also doing an initial evaluation, getting some ideas of strengths and areas for improvement and identifying sources of evidence to demonstrate value and impact.

Toolkit

As mentioned earlier in Part 1, a *Toolkit* to support library services undertaking *How Good is Our Public Library Service* self-evaluation, has been developed, and it is expected that this will continue to build over time, especially the sharing of 'good' practice.

The *Toolkit* is available online and comprises:

- *How Good is Our Public Library Service* framework (a digital version of this document)
- Planning template
- Quality Indicator self-evaluation template
- Self-evaluation report template
- Improvement plan template
- Benchmark statements
- Performance Illustrations at levels 2 and 4
- Guidance for Peer Reviewers
- Guidance on Gathering Evidence to demonstrate impact

Quality indicator self-evaluation template

A key element of this *Toolkit* to use early in the process will be the Quality Indicator self-evaluation template (see Appendix 3, p 47 for an example), which enables the team involved to gather together in one place all the elements involved, including evidence to demonstrate impact, and aspects of good practice to share. This template can also be used as a framework to guide a preliminary evaluation session conducting an initial self-evaluation of a Quality Indicator.

Report Template

Also included in the *Toolkit* is the Report Template (see Appendix 3, p 49 for an example) which is the document that library services will use to bring together all the information and outcomes of the self-evaluation process, and will be shared with the peer reviewers for their comments.

With much greater emphasis being laid on the importance of self-evaluation as a process for improvement in itself, the final reports which emerge will provide a greater blend of self-evaluation evidence from the library service, demonstrating the comprehensive team approach, as well as incorporating peer review comments from visits. Consequently, a more holistic picture of the library service emerges, more fully reflecting aspects such as measuring impact, demonstrating value and highlighting clearly the ways in which libraries make a difference in their communities.

The Report Template should also be capable of acting as a working document for library services to record planning, progress and outcomes of the self-evaluation process. The ultimate aim being that this allows for a more complete picture of the process undertaken and outcomes achieved when the peer-review panel add their final report to produce the overall assessment. Greater use of presentation aids (bullet points, tables) should make it easier to complete, for both library services and peer reviewers and thus remove the need for a long narrative final report. Similarly, the use of hyperlinks within the text is actively encouraged to enable other supporting documents to be viewed remotely.

Improvement action plan

An important and prominent part of the self-evaluation report is an Improvement Action Plan (see Appendix 3, p 48 for an example), with SMART objectives, goals and specific timeframe to achieve these. It is recognised that library services already use such action plans, however making this explicit in the report will help to draw a number of elements together for future reference. This can be used to disseminate and share information with a range of stakeholders, and help to ensure transparency in all aspects of the process. This will provide the library service with a tool with which to track their progress against key developments and can also be used to reflect on developments for subsequent *How Good is Our Public Library Service* evaluations.

Sharing of good practice

One of the key benefits of, and important outcomes from, *How Good is Our Public Library Service* is the sharing of good practice about what works well in public library services. As part of the self-evaluation process, one way of ensuring good practice is captured requires the library service to offer up examples of good practice, a snapshot or small case study, as part of the process and include a brief overview as part of the Quality Indicator self-evaluation. Examples of these will be selected by peer review panels to be shared more widely. These examples, brought together with evidence of impact and other reflections, will then be provided for SLIC to upload to a 'Snapshots of Good Practice' part of the website in order to share these experiences with others. Encouragement to also share these experiences at events such as conferences and other meetings would take this a step further, giving the teams involved more opportunities to showcase what works well in their library service, while also providing valuable opportunities for staff development.

Gathering evidence

Self-evaluation needs to be based on the collection and review of the evidence of outcomes and impact. The Framework of Quality Indicators provides a number of key evaluation themes, and public library services are asked to identify ways in which they know and can demonstrate that they are performing well. Assessments should be made about the public library service's performance based on the evidence collected.

Range of evidence

Evidence helps to support self-evaluation processes by demonstrating proof of activity and impact. It can help in establishing how well the service is meeting users' needs. Evidence can be quantitative or qualitative. Quantitative evidence records what can be measured, for example numbers of registered learners. Qualitative evidence will seek to draw out the value which users may put on services, and this is often unstructured in format, for example feedback from users, or evidence of successful learners moving on to other education or employment opportunities.

These sources of evidence are complementary. For example, a policy statement seeking to "promote learning for all" can be observed across the range of learning opportunities offered, and backed up by feedback from learners.

Examples of sources of evidence are suggested in the Quality Indicators for each key theme (see Part 3), and some more general examples are included here:

Consult users, non-users and staff
- Feedback, oral or written, from discussions with individuals and staff about specific activities
- Formal discussion with individuals, non-users, elected members, other council officers and library staff, possibly as part of community engagement activities forming part of the local Community Planning process
- Surveys and questionnaires run nationally or locally

Observe activities
- Examine the use of the library
- Review the range of resources and services available
- Observe individuals and staff across a range of activities
- Review the library environment

Consider measurable outcomes
- Analyse quantitative evidence from sources such as statutory performance indicators, CIPFA, surveys and the library management system

Examine documentation and resources
- Local authority strategic/corporate plan
- Community Learning and Development Strategy
- The Community Plan and other Community Planning information relevant to library services
- Best Value self-assessment
- Charter Mark or Investors in People reports
- Public library service objectives and improvement plan
- Event programmes for range of individuals
- Lifelong learning programmes and materials
- Range of resources in relation to community diversity profiles
- Public information documentation
- Marketing and publicity strategies and documentation
- Local press coverage
- Action plans for innovation

- Staff training programme
- Evidence of library staff involvement in internal and external partnerships
- Evaluation of externally-funded programmes
- Notes of planning meetings

Photographs of library activities, and indeed audio and video clips are also useful to demonstrate particular strengths or areas for improvement.

A list of sources of evidence is also included in the *Toolkit*, available online.

Demonstrating impact

How will you know if what you are doing, or planning to do, in the public library service will make a difference for individuals and groups in the community? We can describe, using the various 'inputs' and 'outputs', what the library does, the size of the adult fiction collection, the number of hours open, how many borrowers it has, the number of books issued to children, the various outreach programmes it is involved with and so on, but then we have to ask the question 'so what?'. How do you demonstrate the value that the various activities and services provided by the library service will have for individuals and communities served? This is where impact comes in, and involves the planning and gathering of evidence to demonstrate the value and impact of library services.

One significant aspect of undertaking a self-evaluation process such as *How Good is Our Public Library Service* is to identify areas for improvement, and also to share good practice with colleagues and other library services. This process can also assist staff when considering difficult decisions such as 'should we really be doing this piece of work with this partner' or 'will this piece of work really make a difference'.

In planning to gather evidence, library services will need to act strategically and the evidence may be both qualitative and quantitative. Sophisticated quantitative data and good quality impact information should complement each other as they have different roles and purposes; the quantitative data can reassure stakeholders, but this, presented alongside the qualitative evidence, can present a broader picture and demonstrate value and impact very effectively.

It is recognised that gathering evidence to demonstrate impact is neither an easy nor simple task. Very often the concept of impact can be difficult for some to grasp. To aid library services in this aspect of the process, specific guidance and training materials on impact are included in the *Toolkit* (available online), with a clear definition of what impact is in terms of library services, and including some exercises to work through, ideally with a group of staff, to get a clearer picture of what 'good' evidence to demonstrate impact and values might include.

Assess evidence and performance grading

When the evidence gathering stage is completed, (this may however be an ongoing process if the self-evaluation process is truly embedded in library service planning) the drafting of the Self-Evaluation Report should take place, using the Quality Indicator self-evaluation templates to draw everything together.

The teams should review the initial self-evaluation performance and consider, in the light of all the evidence and taking into account level descriptors, performance illustrations, benchmarks and RADAR©, at what level they assess their performance. The report aims to document current performance and identify where

improvements can be made. The report will recognise key strengths and identify ways in which improvements can be made. The Improvement Action Plan Template, (see example in Appendix 3, p 48), available as part of the *Toolkit*, will be a useful resource here.

Peer review process

The *How Good is Our Public Library Service* self-evaluation process is supported by a system of peer review. The self-evaluation and peer review processes that combine to make up the implementation of *How Good is Our Public Library Service* are widely considered to be appropriate and robust for an effective quality improvement mechanism, being also well embedded in a range of other public service quality improvement mechanisms.

Peer review is the solid basis for driving continuous improvement and enhancement. Peer review within the *How Good is Our Public Library Service* process exists to ensure consistency, credibility, transparency and externalisation. Those involved in peer reviewing bring with them the benefits of a wider perspective but with enough pragmatism to understand situations 'on-the-ground'.

Role of peer reviewer
The role of the peer reviewer is to act as part of the evaluation team and consider the self-evaluation process results and the levels allocated by the library service. The peer review panel will consider the self-evaluation report, visit the library service, examine the evidence, and ensure the levels allocated are an accurate reflection of service delivery in relation to characteristics and benchmarks of other Scottish public library services.

Over a series of *How Good is Our Public Library Service* self-evaluations, peer reviewers will act to moderate and standardise the assessment ratings and benchmark statements and build a common understanding of what constitutes good practice for public library services in Scotland.

Peer review is an integral aspect of the *How Good is Our Public Library Service* self-evaluation process. By inviting knowledgeable public library professionals to review their self-evaluation process, library services benefit from hearing an informed and impartial assessment from an external and knowledgeable perspective.

The peer reviewer may best be described as acting as a 'critical friend' – one who examines the library service's self-evaluation thoroughly, reviews the evidence impartially and comes to an independent assessment, along with others in the peer review team, which they share in a frank and friendly manner with the library service.

Support for peer reviewers
The introduction of any revisions to a well-established process requires support and mentoring to be put in place to assist those familiar with the pre-existing mechanism to become comfortable with changes to the framework and the process, but also to induct and mentor new recruits to peer review. Guidance and support for peer reviewers will be provided in a number of ways, and will initially focus on:

(a) the revised process (including the timescales and changes to the format of final reports);
(b) the greater emphasis on self-evaluation
(c) greater focus on impact and value

Guidance for existing peer reviewers will be provided as part of the online *Toolkit*. In order to extend the pool of peer reviewers, new peer reviewers will be actively sought from all library authorities, with mentoring and support provided for new recruits.

A regular, at least annual, meeting or forum for all those involved in peer reviewing will provide additional group support, allowing those involved to:

• reflect on, and talk through the process;
• ensure that it continues to work well;
• suggest improvements;
• update the benchmark statements as required.

This forum can also be a valuable opportunity for sharing experiences and learning from others, whilst providing elements of continuing professional development.

Constitution of peer review panels

The peer review panels will continue to comprise two peer review assessors drawn from the public library sector with experience of having gone through the process of having had their library service reviewed. It is desirable if the peer review assessors come from services of comparable size and structure to the one under review, however it is recognised that realistically this will not always be possible. It is however recommended that peer reviewers should only undertake assessments of Quality Indicators that they have experience of self evaluating within their own library service, or of comparable Quality Indicators from previous frameworks.

SLIC continues to provide secretariat and organisational services for the *How Good is Our Public Library Service*

process but it is desirable that the actual reviews are conducted at greater arm's length so independent conveners are appointed to chair reviews.

All assessors will have completed training on the process, including the use of RADAR© to add value to the self-assessment and reporting process.

Conveners

The convener acts as the SLIC representative to ensure consistency and reliability of the application of the process. The convener will chair the review panel and have responsibility for compiling the views of the panel regarding the self-evaluation, the ratings and the experiences on the day of the visit. These observations and comments will be included in the final summary report which will be circulated to the library service for factual corrections before being presented back to SLIC for formal ratification.

Public Library Improvement Fund

The awards made through the Public Library Improvement Fund (PLIF) have been a catalyst for enormous good within Scotland's public libraries and many innovative and, indeed, imaginative projects have been made possible because of this fund.

Within *How Good is Our Public Library Service*, the emphasis on self-evaluation and peer review must be as a diagnostic and enhancement tool for library services; it is not, of itself, a vehicle to financial incentive through PLIF although, clearly, one may follow the other if funding bids are appropriate and relevant. Results from How Good is Our Public Library self-evaluation processes will be taken into consideration when a public library service is bidding for funds for improvement through PLIF.

A greater emphasis on collaborative proposals, as a proportion of the overall number of awards in any given year, is to be encouraged particularly in economically stringent times. Whilst there will always be an element of 'healthy competition' between services, it is important to encourage and foster collaborative practice across Scotland's public library network.

Part 3: How Good is Our Public Library Service – Framework

Framework – Quality Indicators Overview

QI 1 – Access to Information
- Sufficiency, range and suitability of resources
- Arrangements for access
- Staff knowledge, interaction and user support

QI 2 – Readers' Experience
- Identifying and satisfying readers' needs and interests
- Reader development activities and resources
- Provision for readers with differing needs

QI 3 – Learning Culture
- Stimulating and motivating learning environment
- Lifelong learning opportunities in the library and in partnership with others
- Provision and support for all learners

QI 4 – Individual And Community Engagement
- Sense of identity and pride in civic space
- Enhancing individual and community wellbeing
- Fostering community heritage and culture

QI 5 – Vision, Strategy And Continuous Improvement
- Vision, innovation and management of change
- Engagement with community development processes
- Planning, developing and enhancing the library service

The quality indicator levels - six levels of performance

Level 6 Excellent
- Clearly excellent and world-class.
- Very best practice worth disseminating widely beyond the service.
- Users' experiences and achievements are of a very high quality.
- Outstanding delivery of core functions and range of enhanced services.

Level 5 Very good
- Major strengths.
- A high standard of provision, examples of good practice to share.
- Any weaknesses do not impact on users' experience.
- Services will take opportunities to improve and strive to raise performance to excellent.

Level 4 Good
- Important strengths that have a positive impact.
- Few weaknesses that do not have a substantial adverse effect.
- Some examples of good practice.
- Services seeking to raise performance further, and addressing areas of improvement.

Level 3 Satisfactory
- Provision where strengths just outweigh weaknesses.
- Individuals have access to core service provision.
- Strengths have a positive impact on individuals' experiences, while weaknesses have some adverse effects on the quality of the users' experiences.
- Services will seek to address areas of improvement while building further on strengths.

Level 2 Weak
- Weaknesses have a negative impact on the quality of individuals' experiences.
- Such weaknesses diminish individuals' experiences in significant ways.
- The service will need to take structured and planned action to address weaknesses.

Level 1 Unsatisfactory
- Major weaknesses in provision.
- These weaknesses will require immediate remedial action.
- Individuals' experience is at risk in significant aspects.
- Improvement requires strategic action and support from senior managers. Remedial action may involve work alongside other staff and agencies.

Quality Indicator 1
- Access to Information

Key themes:

- Sufficiency, range and suitability of resources
- Arrangements for access
- Staff knowledge, interaction and user support

Public libraries are in the front-line of the delivery of information in communities. Through the provision of free access to computers and the internet, libraries can offer consistent and equitable access to a range of resources for their communities. This access offers opportunities to connect the whole population to the information needed for democratic participation, enabling all to experience the economic, social and cultural benefits of computers and the internet, irrespective of an individual's circumstances.

Increasingly people wish to access information and services 24/7. Government increasingly employs online service delivery for a range of services and government information, and citizens require support to access these services and resources. Libraries provide access to a range of local, national and global information networks and offer professional support for finding and using information effectively, in all formats and methods of delivery. Libraries increasingly work in collaboration with other local authorities and across different library sectors to provide effective access to a wide range of information resources, and to develop new ways of extending access to information resources and services.

Having access to more information than ever before is not enough. Libraries should offer support for information literacy and digital literacy to enable access and use of information services. Citizens need to develop skills to access information and enable them to participate in lifelong learning, for skills development, increase economic effectiveness and to be active citizens. Libraries are very well placed, with a knowledgeable workforce, to intervene and support people to improve their digital literacy skills.

Libraries must be innovative and entrepreneurial in their approaches to ensuring information is most effectively accessible for everyone in the community. Staff at all levels are encouraged to be innovative in their ideas for providing access to today's digital information environment, and in supporting individuals and communities with their information needs.

1.1 Sufficiency, range and suitability of resources

Key question(s) to ask	Why is this important
To what extent are the information needs of all met?	Libraries should offer consistent and equitable access to print and digital collections, the internet and other information resources for their communities. Provision of a range of resources that are fit for purpose and specific need allows individuals to make informed choices. A successful library should have a high percentage of use by its local population.

Things to think about
- To what extent is this theme a strategic imperative for this library service?
- What range of print and digital collections does the library offer across a range of user groups?
- How is the selection of print and digital resources and services made?
- What are the current levels of use of all information resources and services? What are the usage trends?
- What is the range of electronic information resources? How is the selection of new electronic resources reflected in the stock selection policy?
- How does the public access specialist knowledge?
- What mechanisms are in place to respond to customer requests for new materials?
- How does the library ensure the currency of the collection? Does this reflect users' needs and preferences?
- What is the average age of the various elements of the collection?
- Are key elements of the collection available in multiple formats and languages?
- Are all information services available for all community, branch and mobile libraries?
- What new information services or innovative projects have recently been introduced?
- How has the resources collection made a difference to individuals and communities, is there evidence that demonstrates impact?

Core Evidence	Other Evidence
- Budget allocation - Collection development policy or plan - Stock selection policies - Stock management policy - Usage and loan statistics	- Details of internet access - Stock management tools and mechanisms - Web Links to specialised departments, e.g. children's, reference, business, European information etc - Range of e-books and audio books - Languages included

1.2 Arrangements for access

Key question(s) to ask	Why is this important
How well does the library service enable access to information networks for all?	People wish to access information and services at convenient times and locations, and in appropriate formats, including access to online resources at any time. Libraries need to consider their opening hours so easy access is facilitated to collections for those who are able to visit. Libraries should ensure materials are available in relevant formats, and that access to all their services is compliant with current legislation, such as DDA. Digital services should be easy to navigate and be regularly reviewed, capable of responding to developments in technology such as social media etc. Libraries should work in partnership to provide access to these networks. Libraries increasingly work in collaboration with other local authorities and across different library sectors to provide effective access to a wide range of information resources, and to develop new ways of extending access to information resources and services.

Things to think about
- To what extent is this theme a strategic imperative for this library service?
- How many branches are there? How are the branches distributed throughout the local authority area, located conveniently for the majority of users?
- Do opening hours vary between branches? Why? Do the opening hours reflect the needs and preferences of the users?
- How many hours are mobile library / outreach services available to the public?
- What services are available online? What services are only available when the library is open?
- Is there a Home Library service for those who are housebound or in the absence of a mobile library?
- How does the library ensure coverage of both print and electronic reference collections?
- How does the library service use technology to promote and make information more accessible?
- Is the library service involved in any collaborative projects to widen access to information for users?
- What is the percentage use by population of PCs? How can users book a PC? Is wifi available in any, all or some of the library service points?
- Are there any areas, physical or digital, that are not accessible to all users? Does the Acceptable Use Policy reflect this?
- What are the arrangements for IT security and content filtering?
- What new services or innovative projects have recently been introduced?
- How has ensuring arrangements for access made a difference to communities and individuals, is there evidence that demonstrates impact?

Core Evidence	Other Evidence
- Library and branch profiles, including opening hours - Membership and conditions of use information - Computer provision, plans for updating - Acceptable Use policies - Stock management policy	- List of assistive technologies - Mobile library schedules and stops - Home delivery services and policies - Collaborative information projects and resources - Social networking guideline - Outreach Service programme

1.3 Staff knowledge, interaction and user support

Key question(s) to ask	Why is this important
In what ways does the public library service support individuals and organisations to locate and use information effectively? To what extent do staff enable and support information access?	Public library services offer professional mediated support for finding and using information effectively, online and offline and have a knowledgeable workforce that can support people to improve their skills. Individuals need to be able to develop skills to access and assess accurate information to participate in lifelong learning, increase economic effectiveness and for skills development. Staff should be competent and confident knowing their own collections and relevant local and global resources. Staff should offer consistent and high quality support to users – to satisfy their information requirements and to meet the community's information needs.

Things to think about
- To what extent is this theme a strategic imperative for this library service?
- How does the library implement new information services?
- How well do staff demonstrate and share the breadth of their knowledge?
- How well do staff provide accurate, relevant, and timely responses?
- How is staff knowledge of the changing content of the library's information resources kept up-to-date?
- What programmes or classes do staff run to provide mediated support for the public?
- How are staff trained in using all library collections, both print and electronic?
- What programmes or training is provided to support digital and information literacy?
- How are online resources promoted to staff?
- How do staff provide support to users wishing to access digital services such as banking, employment information, benefit applications, e-government, genealogy, health information, online travel or shopping, digital photography etc?
- What support do staff offer for individuals using e-readers, ipads etc?
- What other wider information networks are used?
- How are staff updated on new information services and resources?
- How are new information services promoted to the public?
- How are staff innovatively using electronic resources?
- What new services or innovative projects have recently been introduced?
- What evidence is there that libraries are supporting the development of information and digital literacy?

Core Evidence	Other Evidence
- Continuing Professional Development programmes for staff - Programmes and details of classes for the public in finding and using information effectively (digital literacy)	- Staff training provided by information providers - Mechanisms for cascading training to all staff - Staff awareness procedures - ECDL policy for staff

Quality Indicator 2
– Readers' Experience

Key themes:

- Identifying and satisfying readers' needs and interests
- Reader development activities and resources
- Provision for readers with differing needs

Libraries strive to meet the reading needs of individuals from pre-literacy and emergent to fluent; and across interests and age groups. People should start their engagement with reading from their earliest years, beginning with, for example, Bookbug, progressing through children and young peoples' services to become fully confident adult readers. A reader-centred approach encourages people to read widely, trying new genres and exploring new ways of sharing their reading experiences.

Reader development activities, combined with evidence based stock selection, management and control can nurture the public appetite for reading, support literacy development and increase the number of confident and capable readers. Provision should be made for those whose reading activity relies on different formats, such as large-print, spoken word, Braille or e-books, or other languages.

Basic literacy is key to accessing information services, whether print or electronic. Many with literacy problems may not have thrived in formal learning situations. Working with Adult Literacy Networks, libraries can offer an informal environment for adult literacy learners. To be successful, a range of attractive and appropriate materials must be provided and libraries should support literacy groups wherever they are based.

Libraries need to cultivate new and innovative approaches to reader development, enhancing the readers' experience in the library.

2.1 Identifying and satisfying readers' needs and interests

Key question(s) to ask	Why is this important
How well does the public library service identify and meet the requirements of a broad range of reading interests and needs?	Advice and guidance should be based on an assessment of readers' interests. By linking reading interests to stock selection policies, libraries can meet the reading needs of individuals across abilities, interest and age groups. All readers should be able to benefit from free access to this life-enriching, creative activity.

Things to think about
- To what extent is this theme a strategic imperative for this library service?
- In what ways are the interests of readers assessed?
- How are these needs reflected in the stock selection process?
- What staff are involved in selecting stock for different user groups, is it a team approach?
- What policies and plans are in place to meet the reading needs of individuals across abilities, interest and age group?
- What stock consultation mechanisms are in place, and do they demonstrate a reader centred approach to stock provision?
- What range of formats and languages is reading material available in?

- How are the needs of pre-literacy users reflected in the stock selection policy?
- What are the current levels of requests? Do they reflect the recognised needs of a variety of library user groups?
- Does the library service use evidence–based stock management, and how is stock rotation managed?
- What new services or innovative projects have recently been introduced?
- What difference has the library made through effectively identifying and satisfying the reading needs of its users, is there evidence of impact?

Core Evidence	Other Evidence
- Collection development policy /plan - Stock management policies - Stock selection policies, procedures, guidelines - Evidence based stock management - Community and library profiles - Guidelines on stock condition	- Book lists and recommended reading - Feedback from customers - Requests from customers - Range of formats and languages provided for - Minutes of working groups and staff meetings - Focus groups

2.2 Reader development activities and resources

Key question(s) to ask	Why is this important
In what ways does the public library service offer a range of reading choices and events?	Individuals should be encouraged to start their engagement with and enjoyment of reading from their earliest years. Libraries can encourage individuals to read across a range, trying new genres and exploring new ways of sharing their reading experiences. Libraries can demonstrate that investment in stock combined with reader development activities, good book selection and management policies can increase the public appetite for reading.

Things to think about
- To what extent is this theme a strategic imperative for this library service?
- What programmes and activities are in place to widen reading choices and enhance the reading experience from pre-literacy onwards?
- What range of reading related activities are provided for children and young people that aim to promote literacy development?
- Does the library environment include promotions on literacy and reading for enjoyment?
- How have displays been organised to target and promote stock?
- How does the library catalogue enhance the reader's selection of materials, e.g. does it include reviews, ratings, suggestions of other related materials?
- Is there a range of reading groups that reflect different user groups, genres, online access etc?
- How are reading groups collections managed, replaced and kept up to date?
- What strategies, frameworks or action plans are in place for reader development?
- What partnerships contribute to the programme of reading activities?
- Are there any activities that take a bibliotherapeutic approach?
- In what ways are these services tailored to meet the needs of the individuals or institutions?
- What roles do volunteers play in reading activities?
- Author events, book launches,
- Support for creative writing such as a children's writing competition?
- How have staff been supported in developing new and innovative activities to promote reader development?
- What difference has the library made to the community as a result of reader development activities?

Core Evidence	Other Evidence
- Reader development strategy - Reader development programmes and implementation - Book groups supported - Details of events, author visits - Bookbug scheme events and packs	- Reader development newsletter - 'Whats on' type leaflets - 'Top ten' lists - Reading and book festivals, programmes, reports etc - Library website book reviews, promotions - Library website reader development areas for different groups, e.g. young people - Partnership meetings

2.3 Provision for readers with differing needs

Key question(s) to ask	Why is this important
How well does the public library service meet the differing needs of all readers?	To be successful, a range of attractive and appropriate materials must be provided. Full participation in society demands that individuals are literate and numerate. Libraries can support the progressive development of literacy through the provision of appropriate stock and support for users, increasing the number of capable and confident readers. Provision must be made for those whose reading activity relies on different formats such as large-print, spoken word, Braille or e-books. Provision must be made in appropriate languages. Senior leaders must be able to secure staff commitment to improving services.

Things to think about
- To what extent is this theme a strategic imperative for this library service?
- How is appropriate stock selected that supports the differing abilities and aptitudes across user groups?
- What different formats are included?
- Are e-books and e-book readers provided, and is there training available for users to use them?
- How is access provided for minority groups and those who have difficulty with print?
- How many community languages are supported in the library and do they reflect the local community area profiles?
- Are any translation services provided?

- How many staff have had training in literacy programmes?
- What services do partner organisations provide that contribute towards development of literacy and numeracy?
- What links are there with schools, colleges and other educational partners?
- Are staff attentive to all user groups, e.g. potential new members, minority groups or non-traditional library users? How are needs of the minority groups represented in the library?
- What new services or innovative projects have recently been introduced?
- What difference has the library made through providing resources and services for readers with differing needs in their community?

Core Evidence	Other Evidence
- Literacy strategies - Audio and e-book policy - Range of e-book and audio books - Partner agreements relating to literacy development - Links with education partners - Staff training	- Range of stock in community languages - Reader development activities feedback, review - Support and training for using e-readers - Partnership meetings

Quality Indicator 3
– Learning Culture

Key themes:

- Stimulating and motivating learning environment
- Lifelong learning opportunities in the library and in partnership with others
- Provision and support for all learners

Public libraries have long been a natural place of learning for many. They provide access, allowing people to achieve their potential as learners and to contribute to the economic prosperity of Scotland. Libraries can offer the first step back into formal learning through the provision of a range of courses or resources for independent learning through local, national and digital networks. These learning experiences can be enriched through partnerships with careers and guidance networks.

The support of trained staff in a less formal learning environment enables individuals to acquire basic skills and the confidence they need before progressing through local learning partnerships. Libraries can offer a wide variety of choice for learners and, working in partnership, can build learning communities as an integral part of Community Learning Strategies.

Libraries need to develop new and innovative approaches to supporting learners in the library, aiming to improve the skill profile of the community and increase levels of educational attainment, and engage with the digital world throughout life.

3.1 Stimulating and motivating learning environment

Key question(s) to ask	Why is this important
In which ways does the library environment promote and support learning?	The design of a library influences the public's perception of the value of reading and learning and their ability to learn within a supportive informal environment. Learners will be motivated by attractive presentation of a range of resources which relate to their personal learning and cultural needs. Active promotion of opportunities will encourage less-confident learners to participate.

Things to think about
- To what extent is this theme a strategic imperative for this library service?
- How do the library's facilities and space contribute to learning provision?
- How is learning presented in the physical environment, e.g. is there dedicated or integrated learning spaces, noise levels, information leaflets and posters, quality of furnishings, learning in multiple languages, etc?
- Are there dedicated learning spaces in the library for both individuals and groups?
- Is this space provision across the library service or in one or two key service points?

- How is the look and feel of the space reviewed to keep pace with changing needs?
- In what ways is learning in the library promoted to the wider community?
- What new services or innovative projects have recently been introduced?
- What difference has the library made in the community and to individuals as a result of the supportive environment provided for learning?
- What impact has promoting the learning opportunities in the library had on widening access to learning?

Core Evidence	Other Evidence
- Stock management policy - Statement of vision and objectives - Customer service standards - Lifelong learning strategy - Service improvement plan	- Funding applications for new programmes - Correspondence with schools - Feedback from learners - Photos of learning centres - Copies of plans and layouts

3.2 Lifelong learning opportunities in the library and in partnership with others

Key question(s) to ask	Why is this important
How does the library encourage and support learning?	Libraries should support the learning needs of all. Staff awareness of the importance of an appropriate level and pace of learning can contribute to good progress by learners. Library staff, facilities and resources can assist learners in developing confidence in making choices, using their own learning styles, thinking independently and taking responsibility. Library staff must be able to provide information about the variety of local lifelong learning opportunities which enable progressive skills development through partnership working.
What opportunities are there for progression through partnerships for learning in the library?	Effective and well-established partnerships with a range of providers will benefit the learners' ability to progress to more formal learning opportunities and qualifications.

Things to think about
- To what extent is this theme a strategic imperative for this library service?
- To what extent do the lifelong learning opportunities support or foster economic growth in the community?
- What programmes or training are provided to build individuals skills through learning in the library?
- How does the library's learning provision support community needs?
- How does the learning provision offered by the library complement other learning providers?
- How are formal and informal learning opportunities recognised?
- How are the views of the public taken into consideration when planning learning programmes?
- To what extent do staff encourage learning?

- Are all staff members aware of the range of learning materials, online courses and local learning partnerships?
- What training have staff received to help them to support learners? How do staff develop their own skills?
- How much time do staff spend providing these support services?
- How many staff are able to assess an individual's learning needs and style?
- Do library staff design and deliver any learning programmes?
- What roles do volunteers play in supporting learning in the library?
- What new services or innovative projects have recently been introduced?
- What evidence is there of any impact on skills development in the community?
- What difference has the library made as a result of providing lifelong learning opportunities?

Core Evidence	Other Evidence
- Lifelong learning strategy - 'How to' guides for library customers - Lifelong learning programmes and materials	- Adult learning guides - Links to other learning providers - Promotional material

3.3 Provision and support for all learners

Key question(s) to ask	Why is this important
In what ways are the needs of various learners addressed?	Community learning provides the overall framework within which libraries must work. Consideration of and response to the abilities and aptitudes of individuals is necessary to enable access and achievement. Public library, equal opportunities, DDA and human rights legislation require libraries to provide appropriate learning opportunities and facilities for all individuals.

Things to think about
- To what extent is this theme a strategic imperative for this library service?
- What percentage of learners come from ethnic, disabled, unemployed or other disadvantaged groups?
- What training do staff receive to ensure equal access to appropriate learning opportunities for all users?
- Are staff able to assess an individual's learning needs and style?
- Are all libraries equipped with assistive technologies to enable learning?

- What partnerships does the library maintain to widen the provision of services to those learners with alternative needs?
- What range of languages are supported by the learning materials available?
- What formats are learning materials available in?
- What new services or innovative projects have recently been introduced?
- What difference has the library made to individuals and the community, as a result of addressing the needs of learners with differing abilities and aptitudes?

Core Evidence	Other Evidence
- Community profiles and strategies - Equal opportunities policy - Staff guidelines	- Disability awareness training - Learning needs analysis - ESOL collections

Quality Indicator 4
– Individual and Community Engagement

Key themes:

• Sense of identity and pride in civic space
• Enhancing individual and community wellbeing
• Fostering community heritage and culture

Social inclusion is a founding principle of the public library service. Libraries continue to reach and serve a broad spectrum of communities. Opportunities to participate in community life should be an integral part of the service, with libraries actively contributing to building a sense of community wellbeing and cohesion. Libraries provide a neutral, safe public space in communities, where the public can go freely to pursue individual and community interests. Libraries support access to community heritage, culture, history and identity. Libraries can also assist in providing support to new communities, and individuals moving to the area, and also targeting those who are sometimes hard to reach.

The public value libraries as trusted civic spaces (both physical and virtual), and a strategic network of public libraries should be easily accessible as part of everyday life. Library spaces must be fit for purpose with planned programmes of maintenance and improvement or replacement. Where shared or combined service points exist, these must still maintain the welcoming, neutral community space promoting inclusion, equality and fairness to ensure delivery of core library provision.

Library staff are a key resource and the quality of the user experience is dependent on staff interaction and support. Staff should demonstrate good customer service and must be appropriately trained and supported, with access to ongoing structured and inclusive staff training programmes. Continuous professional development must enhance the knowledge, competence and skills of library staff leading to improved levels of service provision for individuals and communities.

Public libraries, with their place in the community, their information networks and knowledgeable staff, are in a good position to support and enable individuals to make informed choices about their wellbeing. By working with healthcare partners they can support the delivery of outreach initiatives enhancing individual and community health and wellbeing.

An area of unique importance for public libraries is to ensure that local content is created, collected, kept safe for the longer term and made accessible to the wider community. Libraries do this in many ways. For many communities, the library holds much of the knowledge about the local area and heritage, and provides the individual and community with links to their past, present and future. Libraries provide environments, collections and staff, which support the development of local culture and encourage participation in community life, where people can pursue individual and community interests. Libraries play an important role in building social capital and supporting economic development in the communities they serve.

4.1 Sense of identity and pride in civic space

Key question(s) to ask	Why is this important
What are stakeholders' perceptions of the public library service?	Libraries should encourage a sense of identity and pride of place amongst the wide range of stakeholders. Stakeholders include elected members, individuals, community groups and senior Council officers amongst others. The future development and sustainability of public library services relies on continued stakeholder support. Public library services need to demonstrate this support with evidence, consistent with Best Value and the community engagement aspects of Community Planning.
In what ways do library management assess the quality of library buildings, their atmosphere and environment?	The quality of the built environment and shared social spaces must be regularly reviewed to ensure that they are fit for purpose, accessible by all, and that there is a programme of maintenance and replacement. Customer service skills must be of a consistent high quality and regularly updated, in order to provide a welcoming reception to users, ensure satisfaction, with individuals leaving the library feeling valued and wishing to return. By providing a supportive and enabling environment, libraries can encourage repeat visits.

Things to think about
- To what extent is this theme a strategic imperative for this library service?
- How are stakeholders involved in service delivery?
- How do regular users identify with the library service?
- How do libraries consult with community groups?
- How do libraries organise the reception of visitors and new members? Is this effective? How do you know?
- How does the library provide a neutral welcoming space both internally and externally?
- In what ways do library management assess the quality of library buildings?

- How is maintenance of buildings planned, managed and delivered?
- To what extent are all buildings accessible by all in the community?
- How is the use of facilities maximised, e.g. out of hours, use by partners?
- Are library services clearly signposted, both internally and externally?
- In what ways is space tailored to suit specific user groups, e.g. teens, young people, heritage or local studies?
- How do staff foster a good atmosphere in the library? How is the quality of customer service monitored and maintained?
- How has the library environment and atmosphere made a difference to individuals and the community more widely?

Core Evidence	Other Evidence
- Community plans and library profiles - Staff training in customer care - Building maintenance programmes, plans, assessment, reviews	- Signposting policies - Customer care standards - Feedback from customers

4.2 Enhancing individual and community wellbeing

Key question(s) to ask	Why is this important
How do the library's facilities and activities enhance individual and community health and wellbeing?	Libraries promote inclusion, equality and fairness and work positively with partners to facilitate communities of interest and encourage participation. By providing and supporting a choice of activities, libraries will add to community capacity building and support the development of individuals. By working with other council departments, external agencies and community groups, libraries can offer a wide range of opportunities for personal and social development to help build community strength and wellbeing. Libraries can support individuals to make informed choices about their health and wellbeing, and by working with healthcare partners they can support and deliver outreach health initiatives in communities.

Things to think about
- To what extent is this theme a strategic imperative for this library service?
- How do libraries promote inclusion, equality and fairness?
- To what extent does the library service access additional skills through partnership working?
- What activities does the library facilitate in partnership with others?
- What healthcare initiatives is the library involved with?
- To what extent does the library support individuals to make informed choices about their health?
- What health related outreach programmes does the library support or assist partners with?

- What community locations involving healthcare partners, such as doctors surgeries, does the library provide services and resources to?
- How are library staff engaged in community activities run outside libraries?
- How are library services made known to non-users?
- What community outreach work is the library involved with e.g. in prisons, with travelers?
- What new services or innovative projects have recently been introduced?
- In what ways has the library made a difference to individual and community health and wellbeing?

Core Evidence	Other Evidence
- Partnership agreements - Volunteer strategies and policies - Press releases - Community Learning and Development Strategy	- Community events and activities programmes - Photos of library activities - Information about community groups based at libraries - Outreach service programme - Feedback from library users and healthcare and other partners

4.3 Fostering community heritage and culture

Key question(s) to ask	Why is this important
In what ways does the library support community heritage and culture?	Libraries actively contribute to building a sense of community wellbeing and cohesion, supporting, recording and providing access to knowledge about community heritage, culture, history and identity.

Things to think about
- To what extent is this theme a strategic imperative for this library service?
- What library programmes and activities support and develop local culture and history?
- How do libraries promote a sense of heritage and local identity?
- What print and online resources are available for users to explore local and family history?
- How are local studies collections and materials distributed relevant to local areas or kept centrally?
- What space is allocated across the library service to community heritage, culture and history?
- Specialist local studies staff?

- Partnerships with external heritage organisations
- Volunteers involvement in creating resources, developing archives and other local heritage activities
- Joint working with local groups and individuals to develop community heritage resources
- Sharing of community heritage resources and digital histories
- Digitisation projects to widen access to community heritage resources
- Development of digital archives
- Reminiscence work with older people in the community
- What new services or innovative projects have recently been introduced?
- In what ways has work to support community heritage and culture made a difference, is there evidence of impact?

Core Evidence	Other Evidence
- Photographic archives - Local studies materials - Partnerships - Staff structure	- Press cuttings - Local authority and library and archive websites - Funding applications - Library publicity about relevant activities - Community groups based at library - Community heritage resources created

Quality Indicator 5
– Vision, Strategy and Continuous Improvement

Key themes:

- Vision, innovation and management of change
- Engagement with community development processes
- Planning, developing and enhancing the library service

For libraries to realise their full potential they must provide valued, high quality services that are relevant and accessible to all, across a planned strategic network. Libraries must provide welcoming, neutral community spaces promoting inclusion, equality and fairness. Inclusion and opportunity for all are national and local government priorities, which public libraries must engage with fully in the planning, delivery and enhancement of services. Efficient and transformational government requires public library services to deliver Best Value, demonstrating strategic priorities, service development and quality enhancement, as well as value and impact for the communities served.

Libraries play a key role in supporting wider corporate values, agendas and plans; they must work effectively with stakeholders and partners to encourage participation, community engagement and a sense of identity. In order to achieve this, local authorities must demonstrate policy objectives for a planned strategic network of public libraries as part of service improvement planning.

Libraries must have leaders who are innovative and entrepreneurial, and are focused on continuous improvement. Leaders should have a clear vision for the public library service and how it can assist in the delivery of local and national priorities. They must be responsible for securing stakeholder support for the vision.

Public library services must have service plans which link to the Corporate Plan and are consistent with the strategic vision agreed as part of the Community Planning process. Leaders must be able to influence and manage change to realise effective service development and improvement.

Libraries must review critically priorities and processes on an ongoing basis to ensure that all resources (i.e. staff, space, stock and services) are used effectively and efficiently. Budgetary decisions must reflect strategic priorities, the delivery of core functions of public libraries, be capable of responding to new initiatives, as well as demonstrating the value of the services. Comprehensive, well-balanced stock and services, relevant to the profile and needs of the community, are essential for all library services to demonstrate delivery of core provision. All library services must have Resource Management and Collections policies that are regularly reviewed working tools to ensure that services are appropriate for the community.

The library brand is highly trusted and well supported by the public. Public library services need to demonstrate how they exploit brand strength and loyalty as part of their marketing and promotional activities and demonstrate how they made a difference.

5.1 Vision, innovation and management of change

Key question(s) to ask	Why is this important
How well do leaders empower and support staff to improve services and realise the vision?	It is crucial that library management has a clearly defined and well articulated vision of the role of the service to assist in the delivery of local and national priorities. All staff must have an understanding of the vision and contribute to its development and realisation. Leaders are responsible for the development and implementation of service plans, which should be consistent with the strategies agreed as part of the Community Planning process. Performance monitoring should be in place to inform continuous service improvement.
What new services or innovative projects have recently been introduced?	It is important that stakeholders, in particular staff, are aware of the need for progress and are supported throughout the process. Leaders should be skilled in project management. Senior leaders must be able to secure staff commitment to improving services. Dialogue between staff at all levels must be in place and innovation encouraged and supported. Appropriate leadership opportunities should be available as part of a learning organisation and for staff development.

Things to think about
- To what extent is this theme a strategic imperative for this library service?
- What strategies are used to promote the vision of the library service?
- How is communication managed with staff?
- How is communication managed externally with all other stakeholders, users, council, funding bodies, partners etc?
- How well is the vision for the public library service communicated and realised?
- How are the vision and values demonstrated in the behaviour of staff?
- How good is the library service at adapting to change?
- What discussions have taken place across staff about change?
- How are staff encouraged to introduce new services or improve existing ones?
- How are staff kept informed of developments?
- Is there a strategy for involving volunteers in supporting aspects of the library service?
- How do the libraries promote inclusion, equality and fairness?
- How are new developments planned and managed? Are project planning processes in place that allow for planning, demonstrating impact and reviewing the project?
- What opportunities are there for staff development and progression, do staff undertake regular career reviews?
- How has the service built on previous self-evaluation processes and related funding, demonstrating continuous improvement?

Core Evidence	Other Evidence
- Local authority strategic/corporate/ community plans - Staff continuing professional development strategies - Annual reviews - Corporate communications strategy	- Press releases - Communication with staff and other stakeholders - Project planning documentation - Key objectives and vision for local authorities

5.2 Engagement with community development processes

Key question(s) to ask	Why is this important
In what ways does the public library service engage in activities which contribute to the Community Planning process?	Libraries can reach and serve a wide range of communities including under-represented and marginalised groups. Participation in the Community Planning process (for example, as part of local community engagement activities) demonstrates the library service's active involvement in supporting community and individual aspirations. Staff have an important role in profiling the information and other needs of their customers and planning services to optimise access and actively respond to needs.

Things to think about
- To what extent is this theme a strategic imperative for this library service?
- Is planning for library services linked to the corporate process within the framework of community planning?
- Are community planning processes being effectively used in service development?
- Are individual library plans linked to the service improvement plan?
- Are there community profiles for each library that are used as a basis for planned delivery?
- In what ways are library staff involved in neighbourhood, communities and localities planning?
- What opportunities are there to progress interests through partnerships?
- Is the library service an active participant in community planning and learning partnerships?
- How does the range of partnerships add value to users?

- How do partners reflect the contribution of the library to their objectives in policy and practice?
- How is the impact of partnerships measured?
- Are there shared service points, and is this an integration of local services, more than sharing a location?
- What involvement is there in cross-council working groups related to community development?
- How is consultation about library service delivery implemented with individuals and communities?
- How is feedback from public consultation taken into account in service planning?
- How are customers informed about changes and developments in the library?
- What new services or innovative projects have recently been introduced?

Core Evidence	Other Evidence
- Community planning - Marketing Plan - Staff job descriptions - Partnership agreements - Annual Library Plan / Review - Community profiles	- Community surveys and other public consultation - Co-location of services documentation, SOAs etc

5.3 Planning, developing and enhancing the library service

Key question(s) to ask	Why is this important
In what way is funding secured, allocated and monitored by library management?	Appropriate budget allocation and management must be linked to strategic priorities, service planning and performance monitoring. Monitoring of budgets must ensure that the best use of scarce resources is achieved and demonstrates Best Value. Libraries must be able to identify and secure funding which matches the service priorities.
How do library management ensure that a suitable staff team are in place to meet individual and community needs throughout the library network?	Library management must ensure that recruitment, induction and employment review and development processes secure and retain appropriate staff in optimum numbers for service delivery throughout the library service. Library management should be able to demonstrate that they have carried out training needs assessment and that library staff have the skills to deliver appropriate services.
How well are services marketed and promoted?	Public library services already have a good market share and popular support, however effective marketing and promotional activities are essential to ensure the community recognises and understands the range of services and resources available, sustaining and building on the brand, and exploiting the possibilities of digital technologies as well as more traditional promotional tools.

Things to think about

- To what extent is this theme a strategic imperative for this library service?
- What procedures are used by library management to ensure that appropriate services are delivered to the community?
- What policies and procedures are in place for e.g. staff development, marketing, promotion, health and safety, volunteers etc?
- How are policies updated in response to developments and change?
- Is there a regularly reviewed Resource Management policy?
- How is compliance with Disability Discrimination Act monitored?
- How do libraries minimise barriers to access, for both physical and virtual services?
- How effectively is stock managed, both physical and electronic resources?
- Is use of technology maximised in acquisition and management of stock?
- What proportion of the overall library budget is spent on the collection? How is that comparable with other library services?
- How well does the allocation of the library service's resources budget reflect community demographics, usage patterns and user demand for new materials?
- How effectively is Best Value employed in assigning funding?
- How are any mobile, housebound or outreach services maximised in order to meet the needs of users unable to access a branch library?
- How is the effectiveness of outreach services monitored and reviewed?
- How does staff recruitment, induction and training support customer service objectives?
- Are staffing levels sufficient and appropriate for delivery of service priorities?
- How are staff supported in resolving problem situations?
- How are staff encouraged to gain appropriate qualifications?
- How do volunteers contribute to the service provided? Are they well supported, organised and managed? Is there a volunteer policy?
- How is the online service and website designed, managed and maintained?
- Is this done in-house, a team approach, or involving others such as council IT dept?
- How is the marketing process managed, organised and reviewed?
- Is there a marketing or promotion strategy or policy?
- What is the marketing budget allocation?
- Has technology and social media been used to good effect in promotional activities?
- What is new and innovative in terms of how the service is planned or managed, or promoted?

Core Evidence		Other Evidence	
- Range of library policies and procedures - Resource Management Policy - Staff recruitment and development policies - Training Needs Analysis - Budget allocation information	- Stock Management Policy - Staffing structure - CIPFA statistics - Staff Handbook	- Stock Acquisitions and Management technologies - Complaints procedure - Promotional materials, branding - Publicity about developments, changes, events	- Marketing strategy - Library website - Social networking - Lists of Assistive technologies

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Appendices

Appendix 1

The Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 provides:

- A duty to secure Best Value (continuous improvement) in local government services, balancing quality and cost considerations by having regard to economy, efficiency, effectiveness, equal opportunities and sustainable development;

- A statutory basis for community planning, to ensure long-term commitment to engaging communities in the decisions made on public services which affect them and for local authorities and other key bodies and organisations to work together in providing better public services;

- A power to advance wellbeing – a new discretionary power which enables local authorities to do anything they consider is likely to promote or improve the wellbeing of their area and/or persons in it, freeing them to work in more innovative and creative ways in responding to the needs of communities;

- A statutory basis for public performance reporting and arrangements to improve accountability; and

- The provision of a Ministerial intervention power for the continued or extraordinary statutory failure in best value or a significant misuse of the power to advance wellbeing.

The current public library legislation places a duty on local authorities to deliver adequate free public library services. The legislation does not define the term "adequate". Although COSLA has developed two sets of public library standards, these have not produced a benchmark of the term "adequate". This new approach intends to enable a clear definition of adequate service provision, which will allow action to be taken to maintain and continuously improve public library service provision.

Local Government in Scotland Act 2003
www.opsi.gov.uk/legislation/scotland/
acts2003/20030001.htm

Appendix 2: Libraries, *How Good is Our Public Library Service*, and the National Performance Framework* (SLIC 2013)

VISION	Public Libraries: connecting communities to learning, reading, information and technology				
PURPOSE	Libraries are neighbourhood networks connecting people to the information and resources they need: to succeed in learning and gain new skills; to delight in our culture and be inspired to create; to participate as citizens in strong communities; to make healthy choices and live well, and to engage in the digital world throughout life.				
ROLE	Providing flexible learning opportunities, supportive environments and high quality resources to enable learning throughout life for all	Developing a culture of reading for pleasure and supporting literacy, enabling the whole population to thrive on a reading journey	Delivering services that have communities at the heart, in the heart of our communities, and preserving and promoting local heritage	Connecting the whole population to the information needed for democratic participation, and enabling all to experience the economic, social and cultural benefits of the internet	Enabling people to make informed choices about health and wellbeing, and working with healthcare partners to deliver outreach initiatives in our communities
WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?	Individuals have the opportunity to realise their full potential, improve their life chances, overcome disadvantage and open up job opportunities	Individuals have the core skills to improve their own educational attainment, participate actively in society, and have the capacity to appreciate the cultural and personal benefits of literature and reading	Communities have local access to services that enable them to come together, share experiences, offer support and celebrate shared cultural heritage, thus enhancing sense of belonging and fostering acceptance	Individuals are well informed, well equipped and well supported to contribute to, and participate in, their communities, wider society, the global knowledge economy and the digital world	Individuals have the right information to make the right choices regarding their health and wellbeing, and are well supported in their communities to make positive changes in everyday life
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	Wealthier & Fairer, Smarter	Wealthier & Fairer, Smarter	Wealthier & Fairer, Smarter, Safer & Stronger, Greener	Wealthier & Fairer, Smarter	Healthier
PURPOSE TARGETS	Growth, Participation, Solidarity, Cohesion	Growth, Participation, Solidarity, Cohesion	Solidarity, Cohesion	Growth, Productivity, Participation, Solidarity, Cohesion	Population, Solidarity
NATIONAL INDICATORS	Improve the skill profile of the population; Improve levels of educational attainment; Improve people's perceptions of the quality of public services; Reduce the proportion of individuals living in poverty; Widen use of the internet	Increase cultural engagement; Improve the skill profile of the population; Improve levels of educational attainment; Improve mental wellbeing; Improve people's perceptions of the quality of public services	Improve people's perceptions of their neighbourhood; Increase cultural engagement; Improve the skill profile of the population; Improve mental wellbeing; Improve people's perceptions of the quality of public services	Widen use of the internet; Improve the skill profile of the population; Improve levels of educational attainment; Improve Scotland's reputation; Improve people's perceptions of the quality of public services	Improve self-assessed general health; Improve mental wellbeing
How Good is Our Public Library Service Framework	QI 3 Learning Culture	QI 2 Readers' Experience	QI 4 Individual and community engagement QI 5 Vision, strategy and continuous improvement	QI 1 Access to Information QI 5 Vision, strategy and continuous improvement	QI 4 Individual and community engagement Q1 5 Vision, strategy and continuous improvement

*scotland.gov.uk/About/Performance/purposestratobjs

Appendix 3

This following appendix contains examples of templates that can be used to aid the self-evaluation process.

How Good is Our Public Library Service – Planning Template

The suggested timescale for completing the How Good is Our Public Library Service self-evaluation process is outlined below. Individual library services should adapt this to suit their own circumstances, staff availability and priorities. It is recommended that the self evaluation should be completed within five months but it is recognised that the planning process will have started within library services before this. Agreeing key milestone dates with the team involved will help ensure momentum is maintained and the process is kept on track. Using the different elements of RADAR© will help you to consider more thoroughly in which aspects you are doing well, and where there is opportunity for improvement. This will be particularly helpful in the activities in weeks 3 and 4.

Timeline	Activity	Responsibility
Week 1	Determine scope of the project, consider the staff team and participants who may be involved. Notify SLIC of intentions to submit in a particular QI.	[Name here]
DD MM YYYY	Deliver presentation to management and staff to introduce the concept and benefits of conducting the How Good is Our Public Library Service (HGIOPL) self evaluation process.	[Name here]
Week 2	Select and invite staff team to be involved with the Quality Indicator (QI) self evaluation process. Suggested closing date for staff interested in participating in the HGIOPL self evaluation process is: DD MM YYYY	[Name here]
Week 3 DD MM YYYY	Training and preliminary evaluation session: The HGIOPLS self-evaluation framework – the five QI areas and the QI(s) selected for evaluation in this round • Conduct an initial self-assessment • Identify strengths and areas for improvement • Identify preliminary evidence of impact • Ask the 'So What' question • List the possible evidence base	[Name here]
From Week 4	Gather evidence against QI area(s) • Assess evidence, impact, assign performance levels • Identify areas of 'good practice' to share • Draft written Self-Evaluation Report • Develop an Improvement Plan Head of Service to discuss with Convener of Panel. Agree dates of visit when panel membership confirmed.	[Name here]
By Week 12 DD MM YYYY	Finalise draft Self-Evaluation Report and provide to Peer Reviewers along with key evidence (as appropriate). Report must be with the Peer Reviewers at least two weeks prior to the visit.	[Name here]
By Week 14 DD MM YYYY	Peer Reviewers • Review the draft of the Final Report. The convener must give the library service notice of any other information required at least four working days ahead of the visit. • Visit library service, visit branch libraries, observe activities, hold discussions and view evidence • Provide feedback to library management team	[Name here]
By Week 18	Complete written Peer Review Report on the Self-Evaluation Report. This is then sent to the library service for fact checking and amendment before the Final Report (comprising Self-Evaluation Report and Peer Review Report) is presented to SLIC for ratification. The Peer Review Report should also verify that the process was conducted in accordance with the framework.	[Name here]
By Week 20	Commence implementation of the Improvement Action Plan. Library service takes improvement action plan forward into business planning and service delivery cycle.	[Name here]

How Good is Our Public Library Service – Quality Indicator Self-Evaluation Template

Quality indicators: detailed findings of self-evaluation process
[Include below details from the self-evaluation process, inserting QIs and themes as appropriate, and expanding the template to include all details. Please remember to use the different elements of RADAR© to help you to consider more thoroughly in which aspects you are doing well, and where there is opportunity for improvement].

QUALITY INDICATOR [Insert as appropriate]					
Theme: [Insert as appropriate] Key question:				Library Self-Evaluation (1 – 6)	
Key areas	Evidence	Strengths	Areas for Improvement	What difference have we made? Evidence of Impact:	Rating (1 - 6)
Identifying Areas of 'Good Practice' to Share – Library Self-Evaluation:			Identifying Areas of 'Good Practice' to Share – Peer Reviewers Comments:		
Peer Review Notes (during visit, summarised in the Peer Review Report):					

How Good is Our Public Library Service - Improvement Action Plan Template

The improvement areas from the self-evaluation process were reviewed and prioritised resulting in the following improvement action plan [include as many aspects as were identified from the self evaluation, and delete the QIs not relevant currently]:

Action	Responsibility	Target Completion Date	Progress
Quality Indicator 1 – Access to Information			
[Include here specific achievable elements for areas for improvement, i.e. SMART objectives and use of RADAR©]			
Quality Indicator 2 – Readers' Experience			
Quality Indicator 3 – Learning Culture			
Quality Indicator 4 – Individual and community engagement			
Quality Indicator 5 – Vision, strategy and continuous improvement			

Self-Evaluation Report Template

Executive Summary

[Insert text here and include: overall rating and brief explanation of process, key dates, highlights and challenges, high priority improvement actions, objectives and plans]

Introduction

[Insert text here to include: information about the library service, geographic spread, number of branches and locations, key services delivered, what is unique about the library service, any demographic characteristics of note (e.g. transient population, % of older people etc), organisational structure of council and where the library service fits in, reflection on the self-evaluation process, challenges and highlights.]

Key Information	
Coverage	Xx Sq Miles
Number of branches and locations	
Mobile libraries	
Opening hours (total per week)	
Population served	
Membership	
Visits	
Circulation	
Collection size	
Average age of collection	
Staffing (numbers and FTE)	
Budget	
Funding per capita	

Key Dates

Date	Activity
DD MM YYYY	Planning and preparation session
DD MM YYYY	Peer review visit
DD MM YYYY	Final Report completed (30 days after peer review visit)

Team involved in self-evaluation process

Working Groups
• [Insert names of staff here]

Peer Reviewers
• [Insert name, library service and role here]

Summary Results

The overall ratings of the self-evaluation process for the Quality Indicators are:
[Delete Quality Indicators not currently being addressed]

Quality Indicator	Self-evaluation rating (1-6)
QI 1 – Access to Information	
QI 2 – Readers' Experience	
QI 3 – Learning Culture	
QI 4 – Individual and community engagement	
QI 5 – Vision, strategy and continuous improvement	

Key Strengths
- [Insert text]

Key opportunities for improvement
- [Insert text]

INSERT IMPROVEMENT PLAN AND SELF-EVALUATION TEMPLATES

The quality indicator levels

How Good is Our Public Library Service evaluates the quality indicators based on six levels of performance:

Level 6 Excellent
- Clearly excellent and world-class.
- Very best practice worth disseminating widely beyond the service.
- Users' experiences and achievements are of a very high quality.
- Outstanding delivery of core and range of enhanced services.

Level 5 Very good
- Major strengths.
- A high standard of provision, examples of good practice to share.
- Any weaknesses do not impact on users' experience.
- Services will take opportunities to improve and strive to raise performance to excellent.

Level 4 Good
- Important strengths that have a positive impact.
- Few weaknesses that do not have a substantial adverse effect.
- Some examples of good practice.
- Services seeking to raise performance further, and addressing areas of improvement.

Level 3 Satisfactory
- Provision where strengths just outweigh weaknesses.
- Individuals have access to core service provision.
- Strengths have a positive impact on individuals' experiences, while weaknesses have some adverse effects on the quality of the users' experiences.
- Services will seek to address areas of improvement while building further on strengths.

Level 2 Weak
- Weaknesses have a negative impact on the quality of individuals' experiences.
- Such weaknesses diminish individuals' experiences in significant ways.
- The service will need to take structured and planned action to address weaknesses.

Level 1 Unsatisfactory
- Major weaknesses in provision.
- These weaknesses will require immediate remedial action.
- Individuals' experience is at risk in significant aspects.
- Improvement requires strategic action and support from senior managers. Remedial action may involve work alongside other staff and agencies in or beyond the local authority.

Peer Review Report

Template

REVIEW OF [INSERT LOCAL AUTHORITY] LIBRARY SERVICES

- QUALITY INDICATOR #: XXXXX
- QUALITY INDICATOR #: XXXXX

SL*i***C**
Scottish Library &
Information Council

HOW GOOD IS OUR
PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICE?

A Public Library Improvement Model for Scotland

FINAL REPORT: [INSERT DATE]

The Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba

REVIEW OF [INSERT LOCAL AUTHORITY] LIBRARY SERVICES

Introduction

This report is the Self-Evaluation and Peer Review of [Local Authority] Library Services into the following quality indicators:

- QI # – XXXXX
- QI # – XXXXX

The Self-Assessment was undertaken by members of staff within [XXXXX] with quality indicator # being led by [Insert names of staff] and quality indicator # being led by [Insert names of staff].

Peer Review

The Peer Review visit took place at [Insert Location] on [Insert Date] and was conducted by [Insert Chair's name] (Convener), [Insert Peer Assessors' names]. [Insert names of any others in attendance] was an observer. The assessors met with a variety of stakeholders including [e.g. partners and elected members] during the lunch session. Visits were also undertaken [insert additional locations visited].

Results

The Peer Review Panel commend [Insert Local Authority] Library Service for [insert any over-arching strengths evident from the review, e.g. being a particularly strong team or for their work undertaken in the self-evaluation for the review].

Quality Indicator #: Xxxxx

The evidence presented in the self-evaluation demonstrates that there are some notable strengths in provision here, including:

- [Insert];
- [Insert];
- [Insert]

Add narrative commentary as appropriate.

EXAMPLE ....More generally, the Peer Review Panel would emphasise the vital importance of the early consideration of a mechanism for gathering meaningful and impactful evidence in project planning, particularly in relation to quality indicator one. The Peer Review visit demonstrated (orally) examples of very good evidence of impact and value of the library service. The capture of these in a more systematic fashion for the self-evaluation is important in terms of the library's own ability to demonstrate what it does and what difference it makes to individuals and the community.

The Peer Review Panel [endorse/do not endorse] the Self-Evaluation Report and with the rating given by the Library Service (or note a different rating if appropriate).

Quality Indicator # (XXXXX) is LEVEL [INSERT] (INSERT)

- Insert descriptors for that level from main *How good is our public library service* framework.

EXAMPLE: Quality Indicator 2 (Readers' Experience) LEVEL FOUR – GOOD.

- Important strengths that have a positive impact.
- Few weaknesses that do not have a substantial adverse effect.
- Some examples of good practice.
- Services seeking to raise performance further, and addressing areas of improvement.

Quality Indicator	Self-Evaluation rating (1-6)	Peer Review rating (1-6)
QI # – XXXXX	3	Insert rating

Quality Indicator #: Xxxxx

The evidence presented in the self-evaluation again demonstrates that there are notable strengths in provision here, including:

- [Insert];
- [Insert];
- [Insert];

Add narrative commentary as appropriate.

The Peer Review Panel endorse the Self-Evaluation Report but the overall level should higher, at 4 rather than 3.

Quality Indicator # (XXXXX) is LEVEL [INSERT] (INSERT)

- Insert descriptors for that level from main *How good is our public library service* framework.

Quality Indicator	Self-Evaluation rating (1-6)	Peer Review rating (1-6)
QI # – XXXXX	3	Insert rating

IMPROVEMENT ACTION PLAN

The Peer Review Panel endorse/do not endorse the Improvement Action Plan for [Insert Local Authority] Library Service (Self Evaluation Report [Insert page number]) and summarised below:

Quality Indicator # – XXXXX

- Extract key elements from Improvement Action Plan in a bullet pointed list
-

Quality Indicator # – XXXXX

- Extract key elements from Improvement Action Plan in a bullet pointed list
-

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT ACTION PLAN

The Peer Review Panel, while endorsing the Improvement Action Plan for [Insert Local Authority] Library Service, make the following additional key recommendations:

- [Insert];
- [Insert];
- [Insert];

- EXAMPLE …..Benchmarking with other authorities is recommended to investigate solutions to the actual and perceived barriers particularly in respect of digital developments, website, social media, evidence-sharing and confidentiality issues. There are potential solutions which could be explored with other local authorities.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

The Peer Review Panel wish to express their thanks to all members of staff at [Insert Local Authority] Library Services for preparing the self-assessment report and for their engagement on the day of the Peer Review visit. We would also thank all stakeholders who met with us.

[Insert Convenor (C)]   [Insert Assessor]   [Insert Assessor]   [Insert Assessor]

Appendix 4: Recommendations for the delivery of public library services in Scotland and entitlements for the public

Recommendations for the delivery of public library services in Scotland	Entitlements for the public
1. Authorities must adopt and publish a vision and policy objectives for the public library service. 2. Public library services in a local authority area must be planned and provided in consultation with other services, consistent with the strategic priorities agreed as part of the Community Planning process. 3. Public library services must prepare, approve and publish a resource management and collection policy. This policy should be implemented and reviewed using evidence based stock management processes. 4. Public library services should ensure that stock is relevant and in good condition. This should be monitored and reported through the *How Good is Our Public Library Service: A Public Library Improvement Model for Scotland*. 5. Public library services should ensure their library management system is fully compliant with standards and the National Entitlement Card Scheme. 6. All library resources must be accessible via a web-enabled catalogue and local networks for use by individuals and communities. Catalogues should be standards compliant and be available for cross searching with those of other services. 7. Public library services must prepare and approve an Acceptable Use Policy for internet and PC use. 8. Libraries should purchase and promote Scottish material in its widest sense. 9. Public library services should be encouraged to co-operate with other library and information services, working towards greater sharing of resources at local, regional and national level. 10. Libraries should undertake regular market research, review customer feedback and develop marketing strategies for their services using robust and quality mechanisms. 11. Local authorities should carry out a review of public library services, using the How Good is Our Public Library Service: a Public Library Improvement Model for Scotland to demonstrate Best Value and the delivery, in due course, of cultural entitlements. 12. Local authorities should make the report of the How Good is Our Public Library Service: a Public Library Improvement Model for Scotland process available to the public.	1. Free access to books for lending and study and the internet through broadband networks. 2. Access to the local authority's policy objectives and vision for the public library service. 3. Access to the public library service's policies on resource and collections management. 4. Access to stock which is in good condition. 5. Public library services offered through the National Entitlement Card, which is issued locally. 6. Access to the local authority's library resources and online request and renewal service via a web-enabled catalogue. 7. Access to the public library service's policies on Acceptable Use for internet and computers. 8. Access to a range of material by Scottish authors or published by Scottish publishers. 9. Opportunity to express views about the public library service through consultations. 10. Access to the resources of other library and information services via inter-lending agreements, resource sharing co-operatives or using the services of the National Library of Scotland and the British Library.

HOW GOOD IS OUR
PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICE?

A Public Library Improvement Model for Scotland