

REVIEW OF PERTH AND KINROSS LIBRARIES AND INFORMATION SERVICES

- **QUALITY INDICATOR 5: VISION, STRATEGY AND
CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT**



**HOW GOOD IS OUR
PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICE?**



REVIEW OF PERTH AND KINROSS LIBRARIES AND INFORMATION SERVICES

Introduction

This report is the Self-Evaluation and Peer Review of Perth and Kinross Library Services in the following quality indicator:

• QI 5 – Vision, Strategy and Continuous Improvement

The Self-Assessment was undertaken by members of staff within Perth and Kinross Library and Information Services with quality indicator 5 being led by the following team members.

Library Services Manager (chair)
Operations Manager
Senior Officer – Communities
Senior Officer – West Locality
Senior Officer – Perth Central
Digital Development Officer
AK Bell Librarian
Libraries Supervisor
Libraries Supervisor

Peer Review

The Peer Review visit took place at A.K. Bell Library, Perth on 27th June 2017 and was conducted by a Convener and two other assessors. In addition to the members of the service's self-evaluation team, the assessors were joined by the Chief Executive and the Head of Libraries and Information Services. The assessors also met with a variety of stakeholders including partners, volunteers and wider Cultural team members during the lunch session. In the afternoon, an assessor visited the North Inch Community Library, Auchterarder Library and a Mobile Library and the Convener toured the A.K. Bell library in Perth where they saw a range of services and met with a variety of staff.

Results

The Peer Review Panel commends Perth and Kinross Libraries and Information Services for their diligence, energy and enthusiasm in facilitating the review. Perth and Kinross Library and Information Service have undergone a significant transformation over recent years, with a service review in 2014 and the move into a charitable trust in 2016. Staff have clearly been supported throughout the change process and remain highly motivated and well supported as evidenced by the results of the recent staff survey. In addition CPK has introduced practices and procedures to ensure that staff are supported and developed and also empowered to be creative in helping the company achieve its' aims and objectives. CPK have recently introduced a number of cross service posts that will further support Libraries and other service teams to work collaboratively and productively.

Quality Indicator 5: Vision, Strategy and Continuous Improvement

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

- Strong vision, mission and strategy statements that are clearly articulated and linked to operational plans.
- A comprehensive improvement plan that not only illustrates a clear understanding of current and future challenges but also provides a detailed road map to service improvement.
- KPI measures and targets that support service development and continuous improvement.
- Strong corporate commitment to and investment in, staff development.
- Effective leadership at all levels.
- Highly motivated, creative staff.
- Effective partnership and planning with wider Trust services and colleagues as well as a wide variety of community partners.
- Effective use and management of volunteers to further extend library services.
- Effective management of resources e.g. participation in the SCOPPL consortium to achieve best value locally while facilitating for wider service development initiatives.

Although, relatively recently formed, Culture Perth and Kinross and the Library and Information Service have a clear direction of travel as outlined in the various policies that constitute the golden thread. They have established a strong framework for success and are in the process of implementing operational and improvement plans to support and deliver clearly identified business objectives. A key feature will be introducing and consolidating measures to a) increase participation and b) measure the impact of services on customers and communities. It is clear that the team have a blueprint to deliver success through their planning and operational frameworks.

The panel was impressed by a number of initiatives throughout the assessment that illustrated services that were creative, of high quality and clearly valued by recipients. Partners and stakeholders were very enthusiastic in their support for Library Services and the Libraries team is clearly valued for the professional approach and assistance it offers.

Some examples highlighted during the assessment are as follows:

- Jump into Libraries days and The Platform Festival – the example discussed during the assessment, and followed up over lunch, of the Comrie art project in particular was inspirational.
- The Wee Free Libraries Scheme, supporting community languages.
- The Staff Ideas and Suggestions scheme, empowering all staff to continuously improve the service.
- Partnership with HMP Perth and Castle Huntly prisons
- Community schools provision delivered demonstrable benefits to both schools and communities.
- The secondment of a member of the Libraries' team to the Children's University project to increase participation across the Trust and reward achievement.
- Partnership with Citizens Advice Scotland to provide Benefits Advice in Libraries generated a substantial uptake in successful benefits claims.
- The formation of a Friends of Lochleven Library group to deliver added value through extended opening hours with a basic library service plus ad hoc events such as an 'Open Mic. Afternoon' being provided by a group of trained volunteers.
- Effective use of Collection HQ evidence based stock management software generated 124,000 additional issues from items classified as 'Dead Stock' making Perth & Kinross the most successful Scottish user of transfer options.

In addition, during the assessment process it was clear that CPK value their staff. The investment in staff development; the various forums and mechanisms to secure staff engagement and participation and the commitment to complementing libraries with other teams to improve the overall cultural offering are all highly commendable.

While agreeing with the Library Service's self-assessment that the rating should be a 4 – Good, it was evident to the panel that there are examples of some very good and excellent initiatives that would have doubtless resulted in a higher rating given the time to bear fruit through implementation and evaluation.

The Peer Review Panel endorses the Self-Evaluation Report and the rating given by the Library Service.

Quality Indicator 5; Vision, Strategy and Continuous Improvement is 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.

Quality Indicator	Self-Evaluation rating (1-6)	Peer Review rating (1-6)
Q15 - Vision, Strategy and Continuous Improvement	4	4

IMPROVEMENT ACTION PLAN

The Peer Review Panel endorses the Improvement Action Plan for Perth and Kinross Library and Information Service (Self Evaluation Report page 39 and summarized below:

Quality Indicator 5 - Vision, Strategy and Continuous Improvement

- Gathering evidence of impact; Improve the planning and evaluation process by modifying the project planning profile used by staff and exploring additional methods of gathering and collating evidence and analysis of data.
- Working with communities in line with National Standards for Community Engagement
- Gather best practice from partners and other organizations embedding National Standards for Community Engagement and exploring the use of LEAP and equivalent frameworks.
- Following a recent staff suggestion, the Library Management Team are looking to introduce a “Re-Induction” process for staff who have worked in the organization for a while, but feel they need some refresher training or induction
- Introduction of a Leadership Development Programme for Senior Officers and Managers evidences a commitment to management training and succession planning.
- Holding regular Business Breakfasts and Staff Network Sessions shows a real commitment to encouraging effective communication between staff of all levels.
- Encourage uptake of learning and development opportunities at all levels within the organization.
- 10 year Library Strategy to be produced in 2017.
- KPI information is to be published quarterly
- Production of a simple leaflet, bookmark or credit card sized item with vision, values and aims on it which can be shared with staff, volunteers and others.
- Extending reach and impact of Platform Festival and Review Jump Into Libraries Days to build on pilot’s success.
- The marketing strategy is currently being developed.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT ACTION PLAN

The Peer Review Panel, while endorsing the Improvement Action Plan for Perth and Kinross Library and Information Services, make the following additional key recommendations:

- Implement a range of robust qualitative and quantitative measures to monitor the impact of projects, programmes and services on individuals and communities.
- Continue to develop and implement a range of strategies and plans at Trust and local level to further engage with communities and increase participation.
- Further develop opportunities to stimulate financial growth and offset any future budget challenges. This may include linking collaborative working with wider Trust colleagues to further promote Trust services and initiatives and generate income.
- Consider establishing a baseline survey of customer satisfaction and usage of key aspects of the service that will allow progress to be measured and evidenced and will facilitate benchmarking with other organizations.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

The Peer Review Panel wish to express their thanks to all members of staff at Perth & Kinross Libraries and Information 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.