Quality Indicators Performance Illustrations

QI 1 Access to Information

Level 2
Access to current information resources is limited. In particular, the range of electronic resources and access to the ICT networks and hardware provision are insufficient to meet the needs of individuals and the community. Minimal provision is made for those with special needs, thorough assistive technologies, or those with special language requirements. Provision supporting those with a range of needs is not actively promoted by staff. Resources are outdated or there are deficiencies in quantity, range or suitability. Referrals to other providers of appropriate resources are inconsistent. As a result, the needs of individuals and the community are not met consistently.

Staff fulfil only limited aspects of their roles effectively, with a lack of support with basic ICT skills or digital literacy. Individual and group support is ad hoc and inconsistent. There is evidence of a need for more effective staff development to support community and individuals’ needs.

Level 4
Access to a wide range of current information resources including books, electronic resources, ICT networks and hardware, is good, and clearly signposted. There is easily-secured additional provision for those with special needs, through assistive technologies, or those with special language requirements. Resources match the needs of individuals, are in good condition and provide suitable support for the community. Where the library does not have access to the information required, referrals are made to other providers.

Staff are clearly addressing their role in supporting access to information, including providing help with basic ICT skills and digital literacy. Individual and group support is well-planned to make good use of scarce staff resources and local partnerships. Training needs analysis is regularly carried out and linked to the staff development programme in order to provide good support to meet community and individuals’ needs.

QI 2 Readers’ Experience

Level 2
Some steps are taken to match reading activities to the needs of individuals, but the support and opportunities offered are generic and staff time is not available to help individuals to make informed reading choices. Reading opportunities and participation in reading-related activities are not part of the service improvement plan, or there is a lack of coordination between literacy, learning or schools programmes. Insufficient provision is made to meet individuals’ linguistic and cultural preferences.

Individuals or groups are hindered from participation or enjoyment through limited provision for differing abilities or aptitudes. Little is done to identify individual reading needs or remove barriers to reading enjoyment. The contribution of specialist, trained staff is limited in range and only some of the reading needs of the local community are met.

Level 4
Reading activities are well matched to the needs of individuals, a good choice of reading resources is made. The support offered is such that individuals are helped to enjoy and vary their reading experiences. Helpful links are made to other reading opportunities and participation in reading-related activities. Appropriate account is taken of the individuals’ linguistic and cultural background, and appropriate provision is made for their reading preferences. Carefully judged provision is made for individuals or groups with differing abilities or aptitudes, ensuring inclusion and reading enjoyment.

Reading needs are identified and barriers to reading enjoyment, such as visual impairment, are clearly addressed through the provision of large print books or spoken word CDs. Staff are enthusiastic about specialist training and contribute effectively to meeting the reading needs of the local community.

QI 3 Learning Culture

Level 2
The library offers a learning environment which is not conducive to learning, for example there is no dedicated, quiet study area for groups or individuals to use. Learning programmes offered are generic, taking no account of individuals’ interests and abilities. Programmes may be offered without appropriate matching of individuals to learning programmes.

Individuals work without interaction with, or encouragement from, library staff. The progress through learning programmes is left to the individual, many of whom do not feel supported and some abandon their learning.

The learning programmes offered are of mixed quality and some programmes enable individuals to progress more independently than others. Courses vary in their suitability for the ability and aptitude of learners, resulting in varying demands on staff support. Individuals rarely have the opportunity to learn in groups.

Level 4
The library offers a learning environment which is stimulating and has an appropriate ethos, for example there is a dedicated learning centre for groups or individuals to use. Learning programmes reflect the individuals’ interests and abilities. Individuals are motivated to work well and enthusiastically.

The progress through learning programmes is considered by staff and the individual feels supported and enabled to make good progress towards their learning goals.

The quality of the learning offered enables individuals to progress independently and is suitable for their ability and aptitude. Learners have a good understanding of their learning objectives, and almost all are able to work without asking library staff for assistance or have support from external learning partnerships. Individuals have the opportunity to learn in groups of differing size and composition.

QI 4 Individual and Community Engagement

Level 2
Buildings and resources, including those used within partnership working, are in need of maintenance and investment to attract the public. Individuals do not share a sense of identity or loyalty to their library. Arrangements for consulting with community groups and appropriate involvement with community groups about changes affecting the library are minimal. The reception of visitors and new users is given insufficient attention. Library staff are inconsistent in their efforts to foster a good atmosphere in the library and this is evident in their interactions with the public. Relationships between the library staff and their public are not always positive.
The library is a pleasant place to use at some times in the day, however some users do not show consideration for other users or staff. Staff have little support to help them handle any problems, due to a lack of agreed policies and procedures.

A limited range of planned activities aimed at developing the personal and social skills of the individual and groups are offered. Staff vary in their commitment to, or support for, promoting these opportunities. There are few opportunities for individuals and groups to receive praise and encouragement for their achievements. There are few opportunities for individuals and groups to support others and to develop skills of active citizenship. The library is seldom engaged in offering opportunities for individuals and groups to develop of personal and social skills, so there is little opportunity for co-operation or peer support.

There are very few opportunities, through the library, for individuals and groups to participate in other community activities and learning experiences, such as volunteering, community group work etc.

**Level 4**

Buildings and resources, including those used within partnership working, are attractive and well maintained, with planned programmes for repair and updating. Relationships between the library staff and their public are positive. The library is a pleasant place to use at any time of the day and the public show a consideration for other users and staff. Staff handle any problems in a sensitive but authoritative way, which is backed up by agreed policies and procedures. Individuals identify with their library and are regular users. There are good arrangements for consulting with community groups and appropriate involvement with community groups about changes affecting the library. The reception of visitors and new users is well organised and welcoming and all new users receive a welcome pack. Library staff foster a good atmosphere in the library and this is evident in their interactions with the public.

The library uses a range of planned activities aimed at developing the personal and social skills of individuals and groups. Staff are committed to, and active in, promoting these opportunities. There are regular opportunities for individuals and groups to receive praise and encouragement, and their achievements are recognised and valued. Individuals and groups can take part in activities which support others and develop skills of active citizenship. There is a focus on community growth and this supports progression in the development of personal and social skills in the community. Most individuals are developing in self-esteem, as well as knowledge, skills and social values. There is a sense of co-operation and peer support. Individuals and groups have an opportunity, through the library, to participate in other community activities and learning experiences, such as volunteering, community group work etc.

**QI 5 Vision, Strategy and Continuous Improvement**

**Level 2**

The Senior leader(s) has a general idea of what is best for the service but fail to provide strategic direction. The Senior leader(s) does not successful inspire confidence in others and a number of staff do not respond well to the current management style. Members of staff, at all levels, are not encouraged to get involved in leading through ideas, introducing innovation and seeking further training opportunities. Difficulties sometimes arise in relationships with others and there are difficulties at times in creating a team approach, delegating effectively and sharing leadership.

While there is a public library service plan, links to the Corporate Plan and Community Learning and Development Strategy are not made. Key strengths, areas for development and progress towards achieving previous development priorities are not clear or well-judged. The key action points are not always well-chosen and fail to demonstrate a longer-term vision for the service. Targets within the plan, tasks and timescales are ill-defined and success criteria tend to be very general with no clear view of how successful implementation will be evaluated. Resources and staff development requirements have not been properly costed. Priorities set in previous plans have not been met or limited progress is being made towards meeting objectives. Although a good number of staff are involved in the planning process, there is a lack of
commitment to implementation. There is limited consultation with stakeholders and they are not fully aware of the library service plan’s contents.

Service delivery is sometimes unavailable because of poor planning or staff deployment. Staff, groups and individuals are not aware of which resources and services are available. Access to resources is at times unnecessarily difficult or restricted. Groups and individuals are not encouraged to access resources without staff intervention, which is not always necessary. The potential of ICT for providing efficient administrative support is not being realised in a number of areas. There is a Resources Management and Collections Policy, which is not implemented, regularly reviewed or publicly available. Displays of resources are uninspiring and seldom changed, promotional activities seem poorly managed and planned, with the lack of an effective marketing strategy or programme.

Level 4

Senior leaders provide strategic direction based on a vision for the service and the needs of all stakeholders. The senior leaders, as a team, have a wide range of personal qualities and interpersonal skills, creating confidence, motivation and inspiration for staff. Change is managed well, and leaders direct, communicate and manage staff and their development effectively. Productive partnerships have been made and there are good relationships with others. Senior leaders work well as a management team, delegating when appropriate and encouraging others to take leading roles, particularly in introducing innovation.

The public library service plan is well organised, clearly links to the Corporate Plan and Community Learning and Development Strategy, and summarises key strengths, areas for development and progress made in achieving previous development priorities. The key action points are well-chosen and demonstrate a longer-term vision for the service. Targets within the plan, tasks and timescales are clearly defined and success criteria are measurable and achievable. Resources and staff development requirements are carefully costed. Priorities set in previous plans have been effectively implemented or good progress is being made towards meeting objectives. Staff are fully engaged at each stage of the planning process and are fully committed to the plan. Stakeholders are consulted and are well aware of the library service plan’s contents.

Services are efficiently and effectively organised for good service delivery. Staff demonstrate good knowledge of what is available and are able to confidently direct users to services. Groups and individuals are encouraged to access services and receive support at times convenient to them. The management of materials is consistent with the Resource Management and Collections Policy, which is publicly available. Budget processes are transparent and linked to strategic priorities. The public library service demonstrates Best Value. There is a well organised marketing programme, producing high quality information on services, which promotes services to users and non-users.