

Report to	Cabinet
Date of meeting	19 th November 2019
Lead Member / Officer	Cllr Tony Thomas / Liz Grieve
Report author	Bethan Hughes
Title	Library Strategy 2019-22

1. What is the report about?

1.1. The Library Strategy 2019-22 which outlines the vision for the public library service in Denbighshire and what it aims to achieve in the next three years. It also demonstrates how our libraries contribute to local and national strategic goals and plans.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

2.1. To provide information about the vision, strategic context and key strategic priorities for the public library service in Denbighshire to 2022.

2.2. A published strategy for an authority's library service is one of the core entitlements required within the Welsh Public Library Standards.

3. What are the Recommendations?

3.1. That the Committee confirms that it has considered and endorsed the strategy

3.2. That the Committee confirms that it has read, understood and taken account of the Well-being Impact Assessment (Appendix 2) as part of its consideration.

4. Report details

4.1. The Library Strategy 2019-22 outlines the vision for the public library service in Denbighshire and what it aims to achieve in the next three years. It also demonstrates how our libraries contribute to local and national strategic goals and plans.

4.2. The vision for the library service is that:

- libraries are the beating hearts of the communities they serve – trusted, neutral places where everyone is welcome regardless of their age, background, or financial circumstances.
- reading is vital to everyone's wellbeing, learning, and prosperity, and that libraries give everyone access to the reading and literacy skills and resources they need to fulfill their needs.
- everyone is entitled to access information and knowledge in all its forms – printed, digital and human – and that libraries' role is to help people access the information and skills they need to engage fully in modern life.

4.3 Key performance statistics demonstrate that Denbighshire is ranked in the top 10 authorities in Wales for physical and virtual visits, the % of active members (members who have actually borrowed an item or used a computer in the previous 12 months), digital assistance sessions, attendances at events, and participation in the Summer Reading Challenge.

4.4 The overall cost of the service in 2018-19 was £1,549,135, working out at £2.94 per library visit. A 2013 study in Wales, commissioned by ALMA-UK (Archives Libraries Museums Alliance), calculated an average library user's spend in local shops/cafes etc to be £8.07. Based on this figure, Denbighshire Library Service makes a contribution to the local high street economy which is nearly 3 times its cost.

4.5 The Library Service contributes to key local, regional and national strategies, and the strategy details the key strategic areas of activity and these anticipated outcomes:

- People's lives are enriched and informed by reading
- People can access the resources and information they need to live well

- People can access digital services and have the skills and confidence to do so
- People can access information and services locally
- People can participate in a vibrant local culture

5. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?

5.1 The strategy demonstrates how the Library Service contributes to the following priorities:

- The Council works with people and communities to build independence and resilience
- Communities are connected and have access to goods and services locally, online and through good transport links
- A place where younger people will want to live and work and have the skills to do so
- Equalities
- Promoting the Welsh language

6. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?

6.1 Within existing budget. No additional budget required

7. What are the main conclusions of the Well-being Impact Assessment?

7.1 The Well-being Impact Assessment shows that this strategy will make a positive impact across all 7 areas, with an overall 19/30 for the sustainability of the approach.

7.2 As this is a draft strategy, engagement with stakeholders will follow and the hope is to improve the score as result. In consultation with customers and current and potential partners, we intend to ask how they can help to deliver the

strategy, to integrate it further with the community, and to increase community involvement - eg delivering the volunteering strategy

7.4 We cannot foresee any negative impacts and we will review this assessment when consultation is complete.

8. What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?

None

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

9.1. In the current environment of limited finances it is important that the strategy can be delivered within existing, and possibly decreasing, budget over future years. It will therefore be important that the service continues to look at innovative ways to both deliver and fund the service going forward.

10. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?

None

11. Power to make the decision

Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964