

## Report of: Interim Director of Children's Services, Corporate Director

<b>Meeting of:</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>Ward(s):</b>
Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee		All

<b>Delete as appropriate</b>		Non-exempt
------------------------------	--	------------

### **SUBJECT: Libraries and Heritage Services Quarter 4 2021/22 Performance Report**

#### **1. Synopsis**

- 1.1 The council has in place a suite of corporate performance indicators to help monitor progress in delivering the outcomes set out in the council's Corporate Plan. Progress on key performance measures is reported through the council's Scrutiny Committees on a quarterly basis to ensure accountability to residents and to enable challenge where necessary.
- 1.2 This report sets out 2021-22 Quarter 4 progress against targets for those performance indicators that fall within the Libraries and Heritage outcome area, for which the Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee has responsibility.

#### **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 To note performance against targets in 2021-22 Quarter 3 (1<sup>st</sup> April – 30<sup>th</sup> March 2022) for measures relating to Libraries and Heritage outcomes in Environment and Regeneration.

#### **3. Background**

- 3.1 A suite of corporate performance indicators have been proposed for 2018-22, which help track progress in delivering the seven priorities set out in the Council's Corporate Plan - *Building a Fairer Islington*. These continue to be reviewed, to ensure that they are fit for purpose, both providing Committee with a measure of overall performance, as well as stretching services to meet the exceptional economic circumstances we now face. Targets are set on an annual basis and performance is monitored internally, through Departmental Management Teams, Corporate Management Board and Joint Board, and externally through the Scrutiny Committees.
- 3.2 The Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee is responsible for monitoring and challenging performance for the following key outcome area of delivering an inclusive economy, supporting people into work and helping residents get the skills they need to secure a good job.

#### 4. Quarter 4 performance update – Outcome: Help residents get the skills they need to secure a good job

##### 4.1 Key performance indicators relating to 'Help residents get the skills they need to secure a good job'

PI No.	Indicator	2019/20 Actual	2020/21 Actual	2021/22 Target	Q4 21-22	On target?	Q4 last year	Better than Q4 last year?
JM8	<b>Corporate Indicator:</b> Number of new library members since library closures, with sub-target for:	N/A	1,425	1,400 (Q1 and Q2 only)	<b>4,716</b>	Above	1,425	Yes
	<b>Corporate indicator</b> Number of library visits, with sub-targets for:	1,023,635	Was replaced due to Covid	500,000 (Q3 and Q4 only)	<b>342,384</b>	No	N/A	N/A
JM9	<b>Corporate indicator</b> a) Take up of e-resources (e-audio books, e-newspapers and magazines)	N/A	242,372	240,000	<b>244,920</b>	Yes	242,372	Stable
	b) Number of online and face-to-face events and activities	N/A	151	240	<b>1,108</b>	Above	151	Yes

##### 4.2 Corporate Indicator JM8 - Number of new library members since library closures / Number of library visits

The corporate indicator reporting the number of library visits was replaced by the "Number of new library members since library closures" indicator due to Covid-19 in 2020-21. Due to ongoing restrictions, the service continued to report on this indicator during the first half of 2021-22 as the libraries started to reopen. The service achieved its target of 1,400 new members set for Q1 & Q2 with 4,716 new library members during this period.

From quarter 3 onwards, as the libraries fully re-opened, the service was once again able to report on "The number of library visits" indicator. Visit figures for Q3 and Q4 were below the target of 500,000. The target was an estimate based on previous visits figures in 2019. However, this estimate did not take into account the continuing impact of COVID and the ongoing prevalence of the virus in the community. This has impacted on the number visits and library members have not returned to their pre-pandemic visiting habits. Library members still appear to be nervous about returning to shared public spaces. In addition to this issue, Central Lending library was closed between 4 Oct - 30 January for a complete refurbishment, which impacted upon visit figures. The library is the largest and busiest library that records the highest number of visits.

In order to improve visit figures and encourage library users to return to us, the service restarted in-person events and over the past two quarters have seen a month-on-month increase in usage. The service has an e-bulletin where activities, events and news are promoted to users with a view to encouraging them to return to us. The active Twitter account promotes events and stock and

encouraging users to visit. During the lockdown, we saw a massive increase in take up of our online resources.

This trend has continued and our online usage for 2021/22 is slightly above 2020/21. However, this success means that users do not have to visit us as they can get access to their books and resources online.

#### 4.3 **Corporate Indicator JM9a - Take up of e-resources (e-audio books, e-newspapers and magazines)**

This was a new corporate indicator for 2020-21 that is presented as a sub-target for the "New library members since library closures" indicator.

Q4 figure of 244,920 were above the target of 240,000 take up by 2% and slightly above 2020-21 figure.

In June the Libraries service transferred to a new platform for e-newspapers and magazines and experienced some technical difficulties which resulted in a reduction in usage for the first part of the year. These technical issues were resolved in Q2 and the service is saw a continuing increase in the usage in Q3 and Q4.

Uptake of resources in 2021 in comparison with 2020

	Q1 2021	Q1 2020	Q2 2021	Q2 2020	Q3 2021	Q3 2020	Q4 2021	Q4 2020	Percentage difference for whole period
<b>E Books</b>	5,451	5,799	5173	5384	5511	4932	5797	6812	-4.0
<b>E Audio books</b>	8,021	6,679	7275	7132	8143	6668	9190	8824	+11
<b>Newspapers and magazines</b>	45,425	46,755	45,651	42,943	49171	48040	48373	50406	+1.0
<b>Digital comics</b>	278	884	105	367	156	424	216	323	-62.2
<b>Totals</b>	59,175	60,117	59,204	58,826	62,981	60,064	63,576	66,365	+1.00

#### 4.4 **JM9b - Number of online events and face-to-face activities**

This was a new indicator that the libraries service started reporting on from 2020-21 Quarter 3, reporting the number of only online events and activities. The service also measured face-to-face activities and events as part of this indicator in 2021-22.

At the end of Q4, a total of 1,108 online and face-to-face events were offered. This is considerably above the target of 240 for the financial year. This target was an estimate based on us only being able to offer online events due to continuing limitations on events due to COVID. However, the overachievement of this indicator is due in the main to us being able to restart in-person events at all libraries and the museum from 1<sup>st</sup> November 2021. School and nursery classes have also started to return to the service and we have had a number of events and activities for schools. Some of the in-person activities included Baby Bounce and Under-fives sessions in all libraries and the museum, Reading groups, Christmas craft sessions for children, HAF activities including distribution take and make food boxes to targeted families.

## 5. **Implications**

### 5.1 **Financial implications:**

The cost of providing resources to monitor performance is met within each service's core budget.

---

### 5.2 **Legal Implications:**

There are no legal duties upon local authorities to set targets or monitor performance. However, these enable us to strive for continuous improvement.

---

### 5.3 **Environmental Implications and contribution to achieving a net zero carbon Islington by 2030:**

There is no environmental impact arising from monitoring performance.

---

### 5.4 **Resident Impact Assessment:**

The council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and to advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations, between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it (section 149 Equality Act 2010).

The council has a duty to have due regard to the need to remove or minimise disadvantages, take steps to meet needs, in particular steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, and encourage people to participate in public life. The council must have due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding.

---

### 5.5 **Conclusion**

The Council's Corporate Plan sets out a clear set of priorities, underpinned by a set of firm commitments and actions that we will take to work towards our vision of a Fairer Islington. The corporate performance indicators are one of a number of tools that enable us to ensure that we are making progress in delivering key priorities whilst maintaining good quality services.

---

6. It is evident that the Covid-19 crisis has had, and will continue to have, significant impact on progress against targets for those performance indicators that fall within the Jobs and Money outcome area. As the economy and labour market change, it is likely that a corresponding evolution of the performance reports to this Committee will be needed to ensure that it is able to provide oversight and challenge to the relevant Services.

6.1 **Signed by:**

Date: 8 February 2022

Jon Abbey, Director of Children's  
Services

Akeel Ahmed, Assistant Director of  
Community Wealth Building

Sarah Callaghan, Director of Learning  
and Culture

Dave Hodgkinson, Corporate Director,  
Resources

Report Author:

Head of Service for: Libraries and  
Heritage