

Libraries and Heritage

222 Upper Street, London, N1 1XR

Report of: Corporate Director of Children's Services

Meeting of: Environment & Regeneration Scrutiny Committee

Date: [Date of meeting]

Ward(s): All

Subject: Libraries and Heritage Quarter 1 2022-23 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 Quarter 1 2022-23 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 review the performance data for Q1 2022/23 for measures relating to Libraries and Heritage.

3. Background

- 3.1. The performance measures covered by this report are based on the Corporate Performance Indicator set, which is refreshed annually. The 2022/23 Corporate Indicators for Libraries and Heritage have been selected so that they are aligned with the key objectives in the Service Plans developed for 2022/23.

- 3.2. 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.
- 3.3. This report is currently structured using the outcome areas from the Council's Corporate Plan - *Building a Fairer Islington*. Although the 2021 Strategic Plan has been published, we are continuing to use the objectives performance for the following key outcome area of helping residents get the skills they need to secure a good job.

4. Outstanding issues and queries from Q4 2021/22 Performance Report

- 4.1. The Q4 2021/22 Performance report was discussed at the last Scrutiny Committee. There were no outstanding queries.

5. Quarter 1 2022-23 performance update - Help residents get the skills they need to secure a good job

5.1. Key performance Indicators relating to 'Help residents get the skills they need to secure a good job':

PI No.	Indicator	2020/21 Actual	2021/22 Actual	2022/23 Target	Q1 2022/23	On target?	Q1 last year	Better than Q1 last year?
5.4	Number of library visits	N/A	342,384 (Q3 & Q4 only)	800,000	185,321	No	N/A	N/A
5.5	Number of residents engaging with community activities	N/A	N/A	32000	9064	Yes	N/A	N/A

5.4 Number of library visits

5.2. The figure of library visits fell short of the quarterly target of 200,000 in quarter 1. Performance is building back to pre-pandemic levels. Libraries have been increasing activities and the offer to the public over the course of the Quarter and take up is increasing. Where some resources transitioned online over the course of the pandemic, a core of users have continued accessing them online which impacts on visit numbers.

During Quarter 1 West Library was closed for the whole of April for building works, including the installation of a lift, to a first-floor office which has been converted into a Youth Employment Hub. The closure has had an impact on visit figures and the work is expected to finish on time.

The exceptional summer weather is also likely to have had an impact on visitor figures, with residents preferring to spend time partaking in outdoor activities, rather than spending time indoors. As the days become shorter and the evenings longer, the number of visitors may increase.

In addition to this, there was an additional Bank Holiday closure on Friday 3rd June for the Queens Jubilee, which reduced Library opening hours.

The service continues to promote Library services and run a range of activities for residents of all ages. The summer holiday activities programme is the largest programme offer for a number of years, so visitor numbers are expected to increase in Quarter 2.

5.5 Number of residents engaging with community activities

- 5.3. The figure for the number of residents engaging with community activities is above target for Q1. All libraries across the borough offer a wide range of activities each week for adults and children. In-person events recommenced in November 2021 and attendance has been steadily increasing since. The weekly Baby Bounce and Under-fives sessions are particularly well-attended as well as our range of wellbeing and learning activities. Residents and their young children enjoyed activities like the summer reading challenge and Ranger Stu, who introduced them to his animals. The library teams continue to promote these sessions and anticipate that attendance will continue to be strong and grow, as visitor numbers grow.

6. Implications

6.1. Financial Implications

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

6.2. Legal Implications

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

6.3. Environmental Implications and contribution to achieving a net zero carbon Islington by 2030

- 6.3.1. There is no environmental impact arising from monitoring performance.

6.4. Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.4.1. 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.
- 6.4.2. An Equalities Impact Assessment is not required in relation to this report, because this report is looking at historical performance information and does not relate to a new policy, procedure, function, service activity or financial decision. Where a new policy, procedure, function, service activity or financial decision is mentioned in the commentary within this report, there should be a separate Equalities Impact Assessment for that specific development, rather than attached to the reporting on performance for any measures that this would affect.

7. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

- 7.1. This report has presented a detailed narrative describing the performance of Libraries and Heritage services in Quarter 1 2022-23 and the outcomes achieved and any external factors that have affected these measures. Where performance is off target, a summary of the actions being undertaken to improve performance has been included.

Appendices:

- None

Background papers:

- None

Final report clearance:

Signed by:

Corporate Director of Children's Services

Date: **Date the report received final approval**

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