

Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee

10 November 2022

Item B11 – Libraries and Heritage Performance Report

1. Quarter 2 2022-23 performance update

1.1. This supplementary report provides the latest available data for Quarter 2 2022/23.

Set out below are the 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	Q2 2022/23	On target?	Q2 last year	Better than Q1 last year?
5.4	Number of library visits	N/A	342,384 (Q3 & Q4 only)	800,000	367,981	No	N/A	N/A
5.5	Number of residents engaging with community activities	N/A	N/A	32000	18,507	Yes	N/A	N/A

5.4 Number of library visits

1.2. There were 182,669 visits to the libraries in Q2. The cumulative total of the first part of the year stands at 367,981. The figure of library visits fell short of the quarterly target of 400,000 in quarter 2 but on the whole, performance is better than for this period last year.

Despite visitor figures building back to pre-pandemic levels, the Service was below target in in Q1 and Q2. The likely reasons for this are:

Q1 – West Library was closed for the whole of April due to building works. There was also an additional Bank Holiday closure for the Queens Jubilee, which reduced library opening hours in the month of June.

Q2 – The exceptional summer weather may have impacted on visitor figures as many users preferred to be outside, and the summer was fairly quiet generally; attendance at some of our summer events was lower than we expected. This summer was also the first time for two years that some families were able to go away, which many did.

In Q2, there was a 3-day closure at Mildmay Library caused by storm damage and there was also an additional Bank Holiday for the Queen's funeral which reduced library opening hours in September.

Use of online resources continues to be strong and this impacts on visitor numbers.

Libraries managers continue to promote library services and run a range of activities.

5.5 Number of residents engaging with community activities

- 1.3. The figure for the number of residents engaging with community activities is above target for Q2. There were 9,184 residents engaging with activities in Q2 bringing the total during the first half of the year to 18,507.

All of the Libraries offer a wide range of activities each week for adults and children. The service restarted in-person events in November 2021 and attendance has been gradually increasing. The weekly Baby Bounce and Under-fives sessions are particularly well attended as well as our wide range of excellent wellbeing and learning activities, which continue to be promoted across the borough.