

DBP 2014 – 17 ELS PPB Summary Information

Libraries

- Library Service Strategy
 - Inspiring a community of readers and learners
 - Employment, enterprise and developing online skills
 - Extending access through innovation and new technology
 - Providing a relevant and responsive library service
 - Workforce development
- Efficiency Review

Overview

Each local authority has a statutory responsibility under the 1964 “Public Libraries and Museums Act” to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service to those who live, work or study in the area. Through the delivery of the Library Service Strategy we aim to provide a service that meets the needs of the people of Halton.

Recent consultation has provided us with the following information about the current service:

- Satisfaction with library services is high, 62% rated the library *very good* overall, 32% rated the library *good* overall – 94% in total
- Access to books is the most important service we provide, 329 out of a total of 385 respondents used the service primarily to borrow books.
- 22% of respondents stated the provision of tables and seating is average.
- 35% of respondents said they would borrow e-books but 11% of respondents did not know what e-books were.
- 38% of respondents had heard of the Home Delivery Service with 13% of these having used it.
- 57% of respondents said the Home Delivery Service should be promoted more to customers and volunteers
- Customer service expectations are very high and staff support was rated as the second most important service provided, it will therefore be an important element and a core requirement of any future library provision.
- Access to computer facilities is a fundamental part of the library offer and valued by customers, it was rated as the third most important service provided.

- Library services are viewed as valuable, particularly in providing community meeting and quiet spaces for study, but the extent of the resources and provision available through libraries is not widely understood.

Library Service Strategy

Despite recent successes we recognise that the way people are using libraries has changed over the last few years. New technology has brought in a range of different users with demand for new services, whilst book borrowing has been declining. The strategy will provide a focus for the service over the next 3 years. We want to ensure that we have a strong set of priorities so that our financial resources are targeted where they are most needed and will be most effective.

The data gathered from Halton residents about libraries inform us on one level what the needs and expectations are for the service.

- The current level of satisfaction is high and this needs to be maintained through targeted services.
- We need to maintain the core service providing access to books and reading to our existing customers and increase these numbers through outreach. We need to develop new services to encourage readers and improve access to electronic books and online resources.
- Workforce development is essential, having the right staff with the right skills, delivering the right services in all libraries.
- There is a requirement to maintain library access to the Internet and to offer support for customers new to technology or developing new skills.
- Traditional services are the most highlighted in responses but key partnerships and project work needs to be better advocated and the profile of the service as a whole needs to be raised

Efficiency Review

The Library Service is part of Wave 5 of the council Efficiency Programme. The As Is report has been completed and a savings target of £500,000 has been identified. The To Be report and subsequent consultation with public and staff will take place this year.