

Report To:	Education and Communities Committee	Date:	7 May 2019
Report By:	Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development	Report No:	EDUCOM/46/19/AW
Contact Officer:	Alana Ward	Contact No:	01475 712347
Subject:	How Good Is Our Public Library Service – Review of Inverclyde Libraries		

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Education and Communities Committee of the recent validated self-evaluation of Inverclyde Libraries by the Scottish Library and Information Council (SLIC).

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 Library staff recently undertook a self-evaluation exercise, measuring the vision, strategy and continuous improvement of the service against the *How Good Is Our Public Library Service* (HGIOPLS) framework. A panel of representatives from SLIC visited Inverclyde on 28 February 2019 to review the evidence and self-evaluation undertaken, visit selected libraries in the area, and meet with staff, stakeholders and library users to validate the self-evaluation.
- 2.2 The assessment panel endorsed Inverclyde Libraries' self-evaluation grades as below:

Theme	Grade
Vision, innovation and management of change	5 – Very Good
Engagement with community development processes	5 – Very Good
Planning, developing & enhancing the library service	5 – Very Good

- 2.3 Inverclyde Libraries has participated in self-evaluation processes validated by SLIC on four occasions since a public library-specific self-evaluation process was first launched in 2007. The results range from a 2 (Weak) in 2007 to a 5 (Very Good) in 2019, and show a clear upward trajectory in terms of Inverclyde Libraries' continuous improvement journey.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That the Committee notes the positive SLIC report on Inverclyde Libraries.
- 3.2 That the Committee notes the upward trajectory in respect of Inverclyde Libraries' continuous improvement journey as evidenced by self-evaluation undertaken by the service since 2007.

Ruth Binks
Corporate Director
Education, Communities & Organisational Development

4.0 BACKGROUND

4.1 Developed by the Scottish Library and Information Council (SLIC) and launched in 2014 as a replacement for the Public Library Quality Improvement Matrix (PLQIM), the *How Good Is Our Public Library Service* framework focuses on planning, service delivery, and continuous improvement and assists Scottish public libraries to demonstrate the quality of their services and the impact they have on communities. As a validated self-evaluation process, a team of library staff evaluate the service provided under a number of quality indicators and then participate in a review day, where an assessment panel of two peer assessors and a Chair, drawn from Scottish libraries and trained by Quality Scotland, validate the self-evaluation process, through a robust review and challenge of evidence provided; visits to libraries in the area; and discussions with staff, stakeholders, and library users.

4.2 Assessment of quality indicators is made using the following six point scale:

- (6) Excellent: Clearly excellent and world-class
- (5) Very Good: Major strengths, high standard of provision, lots of examples of good practice
- (4) Good: Important strengths, some examples of good practice
- (3) Satisfactory: Strengths just outweigh weaknesses
- (2) Weak: Weaknesses have a negative impact on the quality of individuals' experiences
- (1) Unsatisfactory: Major weaknesses in provision, immediate remedial action required

The highest grade achieved by any Scottish library service for any aspect of provision since HGIOPLS was launched in 2014 is a 5 (Very Good).

4.3 Inverclyde Libraries undertook an assessment of Quality Indicator 5: Vision, Strategy and Continuous Improvement. A working group was established in late 2018 to carry out a self-evaluation of this indicator, and a review day was held on 28 February 2019. The review panel was chaired by the Director of Library Services from Glasgow School of Art and peer assessors came from Moray and Dundee City Library Services. Visits were carried out to South West and Gourock Libraries, and the panel met with a number of staff, stakeholders and library users over the course of the day.

4.4 The final report has been provided to the service, is appended to this report, and will be published on SLIC's website (<http://www.scottishlibraries.org>) later in the year.

5.0 CURRENT PROVISION

5.1 Through a robust self-evaluation process, the library staff working group assessed three aspects of QI5, with the grades assigned as below:

Theme	Grade
Vision, innovation and management of change	5 – Very Good
Engagement with community development processes	5 – Very Good
Planning, developing and enhancing the library service	5 – Very Good

The panel from SLIC validated these grades, endorsed the areas for improvement outlined by the working group, and provided a report on the review of library services, appended to this report.

5.2 The report highlights four particular strengths:

- The service vision and mission are succinct and memorable. The six aligned strategic goals are clearly linked to local council corporate plans, local Cultural Partnership plans, and to the national strategy for public libraries;
- The annual and project processes are robust with recently updated planning

documentation ensuring that the gathering of meaningful evidence of impact is consistently considered at the earliest stages of planning. The annual and project outcomes are specific targets linked to strategic goals;

- A strategic commitment to ongoing staff training and excellent staff communication contributes to a staff group highly engaged and supported to develop and implement innovative practice;
- Good track record of securing external funding to drive service improvement and innovation.

The report endorses areas for improvement outlined by the library staff working group:

- A more strategic approach to the use of volunteers;
- A further alignment of funding to desired outcomes;
- A continued emphasis on staff training and development;
- Extension of transparent and robust consultation with communities through large scale user survey.

Two further recommendations are made:

- Create and seek opportunities for the good practice, in terms of vision, strategy, planning and continuous improvement, that is developed and implemented within Inverclyde Libraries, and the related knowledge and expertise of staff to be shared with peer organisations;
- Ensure that evidence of impact is gathered in ways that make it possible to share and ideally benchmark against peer organisations.

The areas for improvement from the report have been built in to Inverclyde Libraries' Service Improvement Plan for 2019-20 and will be addressed over the coming year.

- 5.3 Inverclyde Libraries has participated in self-evaluation processes validated by SLIC on four occasions since a public library-specific self-evaluation process was first launched in 2007. The results are below, and show an upward trajectory in terms of Inverclyde Libraries' continuous improvement journey.

Year	Quality Indicator	Grade
2007	Meeting Readers' Needs	2
2011	Access To Information	4
2018	Access To Information	4
2019	Vision, Strategy & Continuous Improvement	5

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Finance

There are no financial implications.

Financial Implications:

One off Costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Years	Proposed Spend this Report £000	Virement From	Other Comments
N/A					

Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact £000	Virement From (If Applicable)	Other Comments
N/A					

Legal

6.2 There are no Legal implications.

Human Resources

6.3 There are no Human Resources implications.

Equalities

6.4 Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out?

Yes See attached appendix

No This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a change to an existing policy, function or strategy. Therefore, no Equality Impact Assessment is required.

Repopulation

6.5 There are no Repopulation implications.

7.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 Review of Inverclyde Library Services (Appendix 1).

REVIEW OF INVERCLYDE LIBRARY SERVICES

Introduction

This report is the Self-Evaluation and Peer Review of Inverclyde Library Services into the following quality indicators:

- QI 5 – Vision, Strategy & Continuous Improvement

The Self-Assessment was undertaken by members of staff within Inverclyde Libraries with quality indicator 5 being led by Alana Ward.

Peer Review

The Peer Review visit took place at Inverclyde Libraries HQ / Central Library on 28th February 2019 and was conducted by Alison Stevenson (Convener), Shona Donaldson and Rona Stephen. The assessors met with a variety of stakeholders including partners, users, and elected members during the lunch session. Visits were also undertaken to South West Library and Gourock Library.

Results

The Peer Review Panel commend Inverclyde Library Service for their work undertaken for the review. Both the report on the previous HGIOPLS Assessment for Q1 and the self-evaluation for Q5 have clearly resulted in targeted work being undertaken to refine and improve some areas of provision (e.g. new Consultation and Engagement Strategy and new Communications Strategy and Action Plan) demonstrating a commitment to raise service performance to excellent.

Quality Indicator 5: Vision, Strategy & Continuous Improvement

The evidence presented in the self-evaluation demonstrates that there are some notable strengths in provision here, including:

- The service vision and mission are succinct and memorable. The six aligned strategic goals are clearly linked to local council corporate plans, local cultural partnership plans, and to the national strategy for public libraries.
- The annual and project processes are robust with recently updated planning documentation ensuring that the gathering of meaningful evidence of impact is consistently considered at the earliest stages of planning. The annual and project outcomes are specific targets linked to strategic goals.
- A strategic commitment to ongoing staff training (including annual performance reviews) and excellent staff communication contributes to a staff group highly engaged and supported to develop and implement innovative practises
- Good track record of securing external funding to drive service improvement and innovation.

The self-evaluation report and associated documentary evidence were very much brought to life during the peer review visit through the presentations from team members and conversations with staff, partners and users which spoke to the on the ground impact of the service commitment of strategically planned continuous improvement.

The Peer Review Panel endorse the Self-Evaluation Report and agree with the rating given by the Library Service

Quality Indicator 5 (Vision, Strategy & Continuous Improvement) is LEVEL FIVE (Very Good)

- Major strengths.
- A high standard of provision, examples of good practice to share.
- Any weaknesses do not impact on users' experience.
- Services will take opportunities to improve and strive to raise performance to excellent.

Quality Indicator	Self-Evaluation rating (1-6)	Peer Review rating (1-6)
QI5 - Vision, Strategy & Continuous Improvement	5	5

IMPROVEMENT ACTION PLAN

The Peer Review Panel endorse the Improvement Action Plan for Inverclyde Library Service (Self Evaluation Report [pg36-37]) and summarised below:

Quality Indicator 5 - Vision, Strategy & Continuous Improvement

- A more strategic approach to the use of volunteers
- A further alignment of funding to desired outcomes
- A continued emphasis on staff training and development
- Extension of transparent and robust consultation with communities through large scale user survey.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT ACTION PLAN

The Peer Review Panel, while endorsing the Improvement Action Plan for Inverclyde Library Service, make the following additional key recommendations:

- Create and seek opportunities for the good practice, in terms of vision, strategy, planning and continuous improvement, that is developed and implemented within Inverclyde Libraries, and the related knowledge and expertise of Inverclyde Library staff to be shared with peer organisations.
- Ensure that evidence of impact is gathered in ways that make it possible to share and ideally benchmark against peer organisations.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

The Peer Review Panel wish to express their thanks to all members of staff at Inverclyde Library Services for preparing the self-assessment report and for their engagement on the day of the Peer Review visit. We would also thank all stakeholders who met with us.

Alison Stevenson

Shona Donaldson

Rona Stephen