

WELSH PUBLIC LIBRARY STANDARD 33 (i):

AUTHORITIES WILL PREPARE AND ISSUE A LIFELONG LEARNING ENTITLEMENT STATEMENT FOR LEARNERS INDICATING SERVICES DELIVERED BY LIBRARIES FOR LEARNERS

A. Introduction

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council is the second largest local authority in Wales and was established as a unitary authority in 1996, following local government reorganisation. Rhondda Cynon Taf Library Service is located within the Lifelong Learning Service which is part of the authority's Education and Lifelong Learning Directorate.

Maintenance and development of the Library Service's facilities for lifelong learners were recently set within the framework of the Rhondda Cynon Taf Lifelong Learning Strategic Plan 2003-2006. The key aims of the Rhondda Cynon Taf Lifelong Learning Strategic Plan were as follows:

1. To improve the quality of life
2. To enhance skills in the workforce and wider community
3. To link lifelong learning to community and economic regeneration
4. To expand access to ICT
5. To raise standards, widen access and challenge disengagement

Maintenance and development of the Library Service's facilities for lifelong learners are now set within the Bro Dysg Strategy September 2005 – September 2010. Bro Dysg is Rhondda Cynon Taf's multi agency (voluntary) partnership made up of individuals representing all the major learning and training providers active within the County Borough. The partnership heads up the "Learning for Growth" theme within the County Borough's Community Plan.

The Bro Dysg strategy provides the framework for the Education and Lifelong Learning (Learning for Growth) element of the Community Plan and outlines the key goals and priorities for how providers will work together on developmental activities to raise standards of education and the quality of experience for our learners to enable them to make more informed choices and take advantage of opportunities available in the current economic climate.

Bro Dysg's mission is "to support the development of learning communities that are inclusive, sustainable and empowered through collaborative planning and joint action". The key aims of the strategy are as follows:

1. To increase support to all learners to enable them to achieve their full potential
2. To improve the quality and accessibility of information, advice and guidance for all learners
3. To provide high quality life and work skills

B. Strategic framework

B1. The role of the Library Service as outlined in the Lifelong Learning Strategic Plan in contributing to the realisation of the 5 key aims was as follows:

B1.1. Improving the quality of life:

- through developing our heritage, making explicit linkages between heritage, social improvement and economic renewal
- expanding the Library Service's local and family history facilities and promoting greater awareness of these facilities
- creating an online heritage trail to promote pride in our local cultural identity attract more visitors to our area

B1.2. Enhancing skills in the workforce and wider community:

- achieving greater use of ICT as a tool for skills development and personal growth
- sharing resources with others to create more opportunities for lifelong learning
- supporting the work of the Welsh Language Development Officer to offer more opportunities for people to learn Welsh or through the medium of Welsh

B1.3. Linking lifelong learning to community and economic regeneration

- Supporting Out of School learning provision to encourage increased participation
- Using ICT and the internet to enhance people's access to information sources
- Promoting libraries as rich repositories of information
- Contributing to the development of tourism by promoting our culture and heritage

B1.4. Expanding access to ICT

- Increasing the numbers of those who access ICT at libraries
- Running specialised projects to develop ICT skills among older, less mobile or housebound members of the community
- Investing additional resources in our ICT community access provision within libraries

B1.5. Raising standards, widening access and challenging disengagement

- Reviewing the locations and opening hours of service delivery points so that people have better access to services at times and locations to suit them
- Improving the accessibility of our buildings for older learners and for people with disabilities

B2. The role of the Library Service in contributing to the realisation of the 3 key Bro Dysg Strategy aims is as follows:

B2.1 Increasing support to all learners to enable them to achieve their full potential

- Support children and families to increase the acquisition of basic skills
- Promote the value of non-mainstream education and informal learning
- Improve service availability and access to appropriate learning opportunities

B2.2 Improving the quality and accessibility of information, advice and guidance for all learners

- Improve parents' and childrens' awareness of learning opportunities
- Raise awareness of community and informal learning opportunities as an essential component of social and economic regeneration in communities
- Raise awareness of the benefits of learning

B2.3 Providing high quality life and work skills

- Expand the choice of engaging, relevant, good quality and flexible learning routes
- Increase the range of appropriate learning opportunities based on evidenced needs and wants

C. Library Services for Lifelong Learners:

C1. General

- Availability of library services to everyone who lives, works or studies within the county borough
- Provision of formal and informal learning opportunities
- Provision of printed and online information and learning resources
- Provision of advice and guidance on learning opportunities and facilities
- Provision of an informal, non-threatening learning environment
- Provision of study space

C2. Self service informal learning facilities

- Provision of a wide range of printed learning materials in libraries
- Liaison with learners and learning providers to identify learning materials required
- Anticipation of demand for learning materials eg by checking set books for the national curriculum/GCSE classes provided locally, in order to acquire relevant learning materials
- Provision of an inter-library loans service
- Provision of ICT facilities ie pcs, printers, scanners, digital cameras, video conferencing and a wide range of software packages including email
- Provision of photocopiers and fax machines
- Provision of consumables eg photocopies, printouts

- Provision of online learning resources available via the library website eg KnowUK
- Provision of online learning resources available on the internet via public access library pcs
- Provision of local information resources through digitisation of local history materials held in libraries accessible via the library website
- Provision of community information and information on community groups through displays in libraries and a community information database available via the library website

C3. Library staff support

- Provision of Information literacy sessions
- Provision of a signposting service to other learning providers
- Provision of information and advice relating to qualification and entry requirements for available study courses
- Provision of advice and support to learners pursuing courses of study
- Provision of a Schools Library Service to primary schools
- Provision of advice on setting up school libraries in secondary schools
- Facilitating the formation of reading groups
- Outreach work eg giving talks and presentations to community groups
- Raising awareness of libraries as lifelong learning centres and engaging more learners through implementation of the Library Service Marketing Action Plan

C4. Partnership working

- Contributing to the work of Bro Dysg,
- Provision of a wide range of classes in libraries using tutors provided by internal and external partners
- Adding value to the provision of classes hosted in libraries through the supply of ICT equipment and technical support together with general support materials
- Working in partnership with Rhondda Cynon Taf's Adult Education Service to promote adult learning opportunities eg through hosting enrolment sessions in libraries
- Provision of a variety of informal learning opportunities through special events in libraries eg author visits
- Instigating and setting up special projects with internal and external partners eg Reading Remedies
- Working in partnership with specialist officers to improve learning opportunities to targeted groups eg the Older People's Strategy Officer to improve access to ICT for older people
- Provision of activities/events/information stands at external events eg Adult Learners Week

C5. Specialised facilities

- Service delivery points open out of standard working hours ie evenings and weekends
- Provision of out of school hours homework clubs
- Facilities for excluded children and their tutors to work together with ready access to learning resources
- Provision of assistive technology eg special mice for users with arthritis, specialised facilities for the visually impaired such as Supernova software, large key keyboards etc
- Support for the work of the Welsh Language Development Officer, eg provision of Welsh language packs for learners
- Provision of free meeting facilities and support for community groups eg local history groups, reading groups
- Provision of training facilities for customised training sessions eg Shapelt.org training for community groups, e-induction sessions for council staff

Development and implementation of the Library Service's Information Services Framework Strategy and Digitisation Strategy and Marketing Action Plan has underpinned delivery of the key aims of the Lifelong Learning Strategic Plan and the Bro Dysg Strategy

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