

PUBLIC LIBRARY POSITION STATEMENTS 2003

GUIDANCE

This Guidance has been prepared by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport for the English public library authorities. It is drawn mainly from "Framework for the Future" (2003) and draws on the Department's and authorities' responsibilities under the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964.

Post Consultation version

Public Library Position Statement 2003

Guidance

A Introduction

- A.1 Following the announcement of the 2002 Annual Library Plan assessments, ALPs were discontinued as part of the Local Government White Paper implementation process. They were succeeded by Position Statements to be submitted for a maximum of two years by library authorities other than those which received an "Excellent" overall Comprehensive Performance Assessment or a "Good" overall assessment with an "Excellent" Libraries and Leisure score.
- A.2 The objective of public library position statements is to show how English public library authorities intend to shape and deliver their library services in line with the themes within *Framework for the Future* and to give an indication of their current service levels. Authorities are recommended to consider the full range of themes in *Framework for the Future* in drawing up their statements.
- A.3 We suggest that authorities should use their internal library, cultural and community planning as the basis for drafting their position statements. They should also consider the extent to which they are building on previous reports on the development of public library services, including "Building Better Library Services" (Audit Commission, 2002).
- A.4 Questions of interpretation of this guidance may be sent to the assessment team through the enquiry form on the discussions page of the public library position statement website (www.libplans.ws/discussions/faq/enquiry.asp). Answers will be sent to the enquirer, and published on the frequently asked questions section of the website. Please check this before asking a question as it may already have been answered.

B Audience

- B.1 The DCMS is the primary audience for this document. Other audiences include the authority's members, council officers, the Audit Commission, Resource and other Government departments. We encourage authorities to make the document accessible to their local communities through their websites and/or in print.
- B.2 Authorities should ask their external auditors to verify the factual accuracy of the position statement as part of their annual review of the Council and its services, following the submission of the position statement to DCMS and the return of the assessment.

C Timetable and presentation

- C.1 Authorities, other than those exempt under the CPA process, must submit their public library position statement for assessment by 30th September 2003. Electronic submission should be used, with statements being submitted in Adobe Acrobat format by email to: libstatements@ipf.co.uk or on a standard floppy disc. If submitting in an electronic format other than Adobe Acrobat, please ensure one hard copy is sent to IPF, NLA Tower, 12-16 Addiscombe Road, Croydon, CRO 0XT and one copy to DCMS. The contact at IPF for technical queries is Martin Jennings (0208 667 1144 email: libstatements@ipf.co.uk).

Public Library Position Statement 2003

Guidance

- C.2 Wherever possible authorities should concentrate on the performance of the library service, and state how they are improving it. Authorities are encouraged to quote examples of evidence of the implementation of their policies and practices.
- C.3 Authorities are requested to be succinct and to use bullet points wherever possible. They should not use appendices, nor include complete policy papers.
- C.4 Authorities should aim to keep their public library position statements within 15 pages.
- C.5 The elected member with the main responsibility for the library service (e.g. the appropriate cabinet member) should be asked to sign the position statement to indicate that the document has political backing within the authority.
- C.6 CIPFA is carrying out a survey of each authority's position with regard to the public library standards, the information from which will be made available to the assessors.

D Assessment

- D.1 Position statements will be assessed in relation to this guidance and information on authorities' performance in relation to the public library standards. An assessment framework will be published shortly. A four point scoring system (1 - weak, 2 - fair, 3 - good, 4 - excellent) will be used.
- D.2 Assessors may ask for additional information from authorities to clarify any unclear aspects of the position statements.
- D.3 Two assessment scores will be given:
- the quality of the evidence that authorities are providing excellent policies and practice to implement *Framework for the Future*, in line with local needs.
 - the quality of the evidence that authorities are meeting the public library standards, including the realism of resource provision.

Public Library Position Statement 2003

Guidance

<u>1. Corporate vision</u>	
1.1 Vision and ambition for the public library service	<p>State:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ your authority's ambition and vision for the public library service in the context of contributing to corporate objectives and meeting local needs; ▪ your assessment of the capacity of your authority to meet the vision; ▪ the headlines of evidence on which you have based this assessment.
<u>2. Response to Framework for the Future</u>	
<p>In assessing your authority's response to the three main areas identified in "Framework" (and listed below at 2.1 to 2.3) please take into account the four main factors identified at paragraph 3.5 (page 23) of the strategy document.</p>	
2. 1 Books, reading and learning	<p>Provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ a short analysis of your key strengths, constraints and challenges; ▪ the headlines of your policies and practices for adults and children; ▪ the key points of your activities to develop and evaluate your practice; ▪ a short note on how your library service fits into and/or contributes to the Authority's Educational Development Plan. ▪ your priorities and targets; ▪ the timescale for your activities.

Public Library Position Statement 2003

Guidance

2.2 Digital citizenship	<p>Provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ a short analysis of your key strengths, constraints and challenges; ▪ the headlines of your policies and practices for adults and children; ▪ a note of the library services that users may access electronically in libraries and remotely; ▪ a short note on your library service's involvement in implementing your Authority's e-government strategy. ▪ the key points of your activities to develop and evaluate your practice; ▪ your priorities and targets; ▪ the timescale for your activities.
2.3 Community and civic values	<p>Provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ a short analysis of your key strengths, constraints and challenges; ▪ the headlines of your policies and practices for adults and children; ▪ the headlines of your actions which assist library users and non-users to develop citizenship and to encourage a community identity; ▪ a short note on how your library service links into your Authority's plans to improve and develop customer services. ▪ the key points of your activities to develop and evaluate your practice; ▪ your priorities and targets; ▪ the timescale for your activities.
2.4 Building capacity to deliver transformation.	<p>Provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ a short analysis of the key strengths, constraints and challenges; ▪ your actions to improve leadership, staff capacity and skills for your service; ▪ the key points of your activities to develop and evaluate your practice; ▪ a note of the partnerships which are in place and are proposed; ▪ your priorities and targets; ▪ the timescale for your activities. <p>Outline the main points of any service or staff restructuring proposals that are being developed that would impact on the quality of your library service. Include the main points of the rationale for these proposals.</p>

Public Library Position Statement 2003

Guidance

3. Public Library Standards: Information relating to standards met or not met in the financial year to March 31st 2003.

<p>3.1 Public library standards - "Comprehensive, efficient and modern public libraries" PLS 1 to 19</p>	<p>State your intentions towards any of the public library standards you did not meet.</p> <p>Assessors will also consider the information provided to CIPFA by authorities about their performance in relation to the public library standards.</p>
<p>3.2 Public library standards - Local targets identified in "Comprehensive, efficient and modern public libraries".</p>	<p>Provide your local targets for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ services for people with disabilities; ▪ services for ethnic minority communities; ▪ services for socially excluded people; ▪ services for children; <p>State if you did not meet any of your local targets by March 31st 2003, and your intentions in relation to those you did not meet.</p> <p>If you have no local targets for any of these groups for 2002/03 state how you intend to develop and monitor such targets.</p>

4. Resources

<p>4.1 Spaces</p> <p>4.2 Stock</p> <p>4.3 Staffing</p> <p>4.4 ICT</p>	<p>Provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ a short analysis of the key strengths, constraints and challenges which impact significantly on the delivery of your service overall in each of these areas. ▪ a note of the adequacy of your resources to deliver against your priorities in these areas including the level of commitment within your authority to provide these resources. ▪ the timescale for responding to those constraints and challenges which you have identified.
---	---