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MUES (Mid Wales - Users - Ethnic Services) Ethnic services provision 2007-08. Policy guidance for Libraries for Life: Delivering the entitlement agenda for library users in Wales 2007-09

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Libraries for Life: Delivering the entitlement agenda for library users in Wales 2007-09

MUES (Mid Wales – Users – Ethnic Services)

Ethnic services provision 2007-08

Policy guidance

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1. Policy guidance

The policy guidance is based on the Inspiring Learning for All framework, using the findings of the report on Ethnic Services provision.¹ The findings for Mid Wales and rural communities are presented first, based primarily on the empirical research in Mid Wales (Sections 2 and 3).

Section 4 of the report considers what generalisations can be made, based on the empirical research in Mid Wales, indications from the literature review and experience of pilot projects elsewhere. Policy guidance for service development has to consider the possible impacts on other library service users, and services, as resources is not infinite, and time spent by staff developing services for one segment of the users may only be justified if there are spin-off benefits for other user groups. Given the uncertainties in the migration trends, and the economic situation, some scenarios have been developed to help policy development and decision-making. The evidence level for the effectiveness and sustainability of some project services is extremely weak. Trials have not generally assessed the impact of services targeted on ethnic minorities on other library users. There is little comparative information and reasons for any increase in service uptake hard to attribute – the cause and effect relationships are almost impossible to decipher. In addition, attitudes and awareness in areas with a long history of inward migration from a number of countries, such as Birmingham, Leeds, Cardiff and London are likely to be markedly different from rural areas without that tradition and where migrants are likely to be more dispersed.

2. Outcomes

2.1 Learning outcomes for users

The Inspiring Learning for All framework suggests the following:

- People enjoy themselves and are enriched and inspired by the experience
- People use the services and facilities to develop their knowledge and understanding
- People develop skills as a result of using museums, archive and libraries
- People become more self-confident, questioning, motivated and open to others' perspectives
- People decide to do something different in their lives

¹ Thomas R. MUES (Mid Wales – Users – Ethnic Services), Ethnic services provision 2007-08. Aberystwyth: Department of Information Studies with Mid Wales Library and Information Partnership, April 2008.

Other user outcomes

- People feel welcomed, respected and supported in their learning
- People have access to the learning opportunities that they want.

The report suggests that feasible learning outcomes for ethnic minority service users throughout Wales (with emphasis on rural communities) are:

- **People have easy access to the Internet to keep in contact with home and family news as well as UK official government services.**

Rationale: public libraries were used mainly for Internet access. The new economic migrant population is sometimes transitory, and probably larger than existing official estimates, but they have immediate needs for information on government services, health services, and employment.

- **People have access to library services that suit the needs of their families for enjoyment and education**

Rationale: some indications that some new economic migrants were present with families, and there will be a need to support English language learners of all ages – children to adult.

- **People have access to library services that suit their needs for residency plans – a small proportion of new migrants may wish to become British citizens**

Rationale: the report indicated that the majority of the new economic migrants from EU countries were not interested in the citizenship tests. On the other hand, a wide variety of other nationalities may be interested, but these people are likely to be highly dispersed.

2.2 Outcomes for the museum, archive or library

The Inspiring Learning for All framework suggests the following:

- A broader range of people use the museum, archive or library
- New learning opportunities are created as a result of partnerships
- Staff, volunteers and members of governing bodies are effective advocates for learning
- People who work in and for the organisation are continuously learning and developing their practice.

The report suggests that feasible learning outcomes for library services are:

- **A wider range of people using the library services (but remembering that usage of public libraries will be focused on use of Internet), with more emphasis on ensuring the people are using the appropriate library service**

Rationale: FE college libraries could expand provision of materials to suit the extended learning needs of ESOL (English Speakers of Other Languages) users, in co-operation with the public libraries and other

academic libraries with special collections of foreign language material. Users need to be made aware of alternative collections open to them.

- **More opportunities for ethnic minority service users to volunteer or contribute to projects with museums, libraries and archives**

Rationale: New economic migrants were often heavily reliant on a small and close knit community of friends and relations for information, and employers were the next source of information and advice. For libraries to penetrate these networks, they need to have some new economic migrants on their staff or acting as volunteers.

- **Effective working partnerships between FE college librarians and ESOL tutors, and between ESOL tutors and schools library services**

Rationale: More provision of graded readers for ESOL students centrally within FE college libraries would be helpful to ESOL students. School library services will need to stock such materials – graded readers of ‘adult’ and ‘teenage’ interest material- to help family members of new economic migrants when they enter school and have to catch up with English.

3 Process indicators for Inspiring Learning for All

3.1 People – providing more learning opportunities

The Inspiring Learning for All framework suggest that a service:

- Engages and consults with a broad range of people to develop learning opportunities
- Provides opportunities for people to learn
- Broadens the range of learning opportunities to engage with new and diverse users
- Stimulates discovery and research
- Evaluates learning outcomes of services, programmes and activities.

The report indicates that providing more learning opportunities for ethnic minority service users is challenging with the new EU migrants and others, particularly in rural areas as:

- A large number of nationalities are represented – although Poles are the dominant group
- Lessons learned with provision of physical library services to discrete groups in urban areas (e.g. services to Somali groups) do not necessarily transfer to more dispersed needs in wider geographical areas.

- Although English language classes are a good point of contact, many of the new economic migrants are unable to attend classes regularly as their work is not near classes (this applies particularly to men) and the shift patterns may vary from week to week.

Possible routes forward need to capitalise on the services already used, and the fact that access to services may be required outside normal opening hours.

Objective: To set up a book review blog (on the graded reader collection)

Rationale: Encourages ESOL readers in a sense of community with other ESOL students, encourages FE college library joint working with ESOL tutors, and possibly also with school library services, and helps ESOL students who cannot attend classes regularly.

3.2 Places - Creating inspiring and accessible learning environments

The Inspiring Learning for All framework suggests that libraries:

- Create environments that are conducive to learning
- Develop staff to provide support for learners
- Promote themselves as a place for learning, and inspiration

The report confirms a lack of awareness on both sides – libraries are unaware what ethnic minorities need as ethnic minorities make little use of services around the book and resource collections. That lack of usage often reflects lack of language skills.

Objective: Hold events, or theme weeks to celebrate the history and culture of the countries represented by ethnic minorities

Rationale: Should develop the interests of staff in the countries represented, encourage collection development and sharing among libraries, provide opportunities for volunteers to come forward to help – to contribute in a meaningful way, and perhaps to widen their own circle of acquaintances, and for other library users to learn more about the countries from which some of their new neighbours come.

3.3 Partnerships – Building creative learning partnerships

The Inspiring Learning for All framework suggests that services:

Identify potential partners and evaluate the benefits of working in partnership to support learning

Work with these partners to plan and develop learning opportunities

Invite people from outside the museum, archive or library to bring new perspectives and broaden the range and appeal of learning opportunities

The report noted that many of the ethnic minorities sampled were not working in jobs for which they were qualified, and the range of work is wide. Learning requirements focus on learning English, and for those who might be staying for some years, some support in learning 'English for special purposes' may be necessary. Ethnic minorities may still wish to read in their own language for leisure purposes – and this may be important for families who wish their children to be bilingual (at least).

Objectives:

FE college libraries to work more closely with public libraries and with ESOL tutors in FE, and their colleagues in HE, to identify the range of learning materials – to develop a list of recommended readers and other materials for English language learning.

FE college libraries and public libraries and HE libraries to collaborate to open up special foreign language collections

3.4 Policies, plans, performance – placing learning at the heart of the museum, archive or library

The Inspiring Learning for All framework suggests that services:

- Identify and seek to influence national, regional and local initiatives
- Reflect national, regional and local developments in plans and priorities
- Demonstrate that the museum, archive or library is a learning organisation through staff development and evaluation processes.

The report's findings were based on a survey in a rural area, where opportunities for physical networking for ethnic minorities may be limited. There seems to be a need for better informal networking between the libraries and the organisations that represent and deal with the needs of ethnic minorities. Another perspective is not to think what services can do for this user group, but what this user group might do for libraries.

Objective: Libraries to encourage volunteers from ethnic minorities to work on special projects or as members of advisory groups drawn from the library and voluntary sector organisations.

4 Generalisations from the evidence

This is divided into sections according to the apparent degree of effectiveness and popularity of service provision for ethnic minorities. Section 4.1 lists the services that the empirical research for mid-Wales and/or the literature evidence indicates are useful. There are cross references to the relevant sections of the report, to enable readers to check how the interpretations were derived. Section

4.2 lists services and activities that may be effective, but where the level of evidence is very weak, often as it is hard to gather. Section 4.3 lists services and activities whose success may be contingent on the situation and place of delivery, and other library processes.

4.1 Services for ethnic minorities that appear to be effective

Both the Irish report (3.4.5) and the empirical research (4.3) agree that the following services are used by ethnic minorities:

- Internet access (this is the most popular library service, and one that is also attractive to younger people who may otherwise not use the library, 3.4.4)

The evidence on bookstock is patchier. For book collections:

- Graded readers popular with English language learners (3.3.1, 6.2)
- Multilingual collections (e.g. from Bright Books rental schemes) (3.4.5) are popular with Eastern European migrants, and some urban and county libraries advertise multilingual bookstock (3.4.1, 3.4.2, 6.2)
- English language learning collections (that may of course include graded readers) are used, but these are often located not in the public libraries but in college libraries, school libraries or language schools or the collections belonging to ESOL teachers. (3.4.5) There may be unmet needs here, among schools, for dual language materials (3.3) or materials aimed at children to help them learn English but given them confidence in their own native language as well. (3.4.3)

4.2 Services for ethnic minorities that may be effective

Evidence for the popular usage of newspapers is mixed. Irish pilot projects (3.4.5) note that uptake of online newspaper links is minimal. Some urban and county libraries advertise access to newspapers in a variety of community languages, but the fact that newspapers are selected to match the needs of the largest ethnic groups in a particular area (3.4.1) suggests that demand is not particularly high.

Cultural events and activities take time to organise, and are inevitably different in their content and target audience. Assessing their impact is therefore difficult (3.4.5, 6.2). The possible additional benefits for the library service include the establishment of partnerships with different organisations (3.2.1).

4.3 Services for ethnic minorities that could be effective in some places

Encouraging ethnic minorities to volunteer in libraries should help to engender a feeling of belonging as well as raising awareness among staff and other users of other cultures. The Irish report concludes that community engagement is essential (based on projects in Ireland and their review of other case studies) (3.4.5). Informal networks were revealed in Mid Wales (4.2) but there were links with the local community through employers. (4.2.1, 4.2.2). Some library websites provide links to other organisations that should support new migrants (3.4.1, but there may be initial reluctance to form support groups within the new

migrant groups (4.3). Moreover, their needs may not match those of older established migrants from the same country, or from migrant groups that have become socially excluded (3.2.1). The new EU migrants are different in many ways from the migrants who have come to be resident in the UK. There are support groups for the latter in Wales (particularly in the South Wales area (3.2.1)).

Other libraries advertise reader consultation mechanisms on their websites (3.4.2) but these may work better for established community groups. In areas where there is a history of migration it is more likely that there will be members of ethnic communities represented on the staff, but not necessarily at the professional level, and work-based CPD may be necessary for ethnic minority library staff (5.3).

The tentative conclusion might be that volunteering among ethnic minority library users is a good start for libraries in areas where migration is new, links with employers and language classes are a good way to foster community engagement, with the expectation that ethnic minorities be considered for professional library posts, with support and 'buddying' with library services that have ethnic minority staff.

Language learning classes sited at the library seem popular in urban areas (3.4.5) but there are variations in the offerings, and much may depend on the library facilities, relationships with ESOL teachers, and other language learning provision, as well as community demand for language exchange sessions.

Provision of multilingual leaflets or other information about library services (e.g. Web site translations, 3.2.1) seems useful as an initial promotional device – though of limited use as English is still required to deal with most of the library services when visiting. There needs, perhaps, to be some follow-through with access to a team of staff who have had training in supporting ethnic minorities who are English learners. The evidence for the type of training and awareness programme that is most effective is limited (3.4.3, 3.4.5). Some ongoing professional development and informal learning – through outreach community activities, participation in cultural events, may be as effective as formal training.

5 Development scenarios

These take the Delphi scenarios (*Section 6*) as the basic idea. For each possible future scenario, the impact on library services, processes and community impacts are considered, and performance indicators developed. The trends and impacts are estimated for the services most likely to be effective.

5.1 Scenario one – increased migration

In this scenario, migration from the new EU countries increases, and some migrants settle permanently. Migration from other countries continues at the same rate as before.

Economic conditions in the UK improve, although at a slower rate than in the previous five years, and continued decline in some of the traditional industries in Wales. The rural economy has ups and downs, with investment in environmental projects (wind farms, reforestation, green tourism), and some spin-off developments from university science and business parks. The oil price increases have some adverse effects on the rural economy in Wales, but there are positive benefits too, as visitors prefer to take short breaks within the UK.

Migrants are less likely to visit their home countries with increases in air fares, and services from the low cost carriers are reduced. Migrants, even if they return to their home country eventually, are more likely to stay in the UK for longer periods. They have established networks among their own communities (based on country of origin), but they also have social networks based on their workplace and other social activities (e.g. churches, sports). On balance, the effect of inward migration is positive on the economy, with migrants involved in the establishment of new businesses and revival of some existing businesses.

This scenario is the 'Settling in – and Stirring up' scenario.

Library service /activity	Trends in usage	Notes on side-effects
Provision of specialised collections (multilingual)	Demand continues to increase	Existing library users may resent specialised provision for incomers. Discussions with migrants over collection development may raise awareness of other cultures among library staff. Opportunities for partnership between public, school and college libraries in language learning (non-English).
Provision of graded readers, English language materials	Demand increases	Better English language skills help migrants to obtain better jobs and to integrate into the community. Potential for new businesses – run by migrants and/or staffed by migrants. Opportunities for partnership between public, school and college libraries in language learning and literacy. Graded readers of use in basic literacy provision.
IT access	Demand increases	Possible competition for IT access between ethnic migrants and some socially excluded groups. Competition may decrease if migrants are settled, and able to access other broadband connections.

Scenario one: Settling in and Stirring up

5.2 Decreased migration

In this scenario, the increase in migration from the new EU countries stabilises and may decrease over time. The difference between the economies, and

exchange rates, may mean that the UK is not such an attractive prospect as it has been.

Migrants are still attracted to coming to Wales, but the emphasis is on obtaining work experience in an English speaking country, to obtain language skills of value to business and employment opportunities on return home. They are not interested in starting up new businesses, although they may work for businesses that have been set up by previous migrants, and such employment is obtained through connections (friends and family).

Economic conditions in the UK decline, with continued decline in some of the traditional industries in Wales. The rural economy has ups and downs, with investment in environmental projects (wind farms, reforestation, green tourism), and some spin-off developments from university science and business parks. The employment in rural areas in Wales is dominated even more by 'quangos' and short term projects established in the hope of pump priming development. Future investments are very dependent on the comparative exchange rates between the dollar, Euro and pound sterling. Younger people may leave Wales for employment opportunities elsewhere.

This is the 'Dashing in and Dipping out' scenario.

Library service /activity	Trends in usage	Notes on side-effects
Provision of specialised collections (multilingual)	Demand declines or stabilises	Opportunities for partnership between public, school and college libraries in language learning (non-English) focus on the main EU languages
Provision of graded readers, English language materials	Demand increases, but will be difficult to predict	Better English language skills help migrants to obtain better jobs, faster. Opportunities for partnership between public, school and college libraries in language learning and literacy. Graded readers of use in basic literacy provision.
IT access	Demand increases, as migrants transitory	Possible competition for IT access between ethnic migrants and some socially excluded groups.

Scenario two: Dashing in and Dipping out

5.3 Scenario comparisons

If these predictions are accurate, library services in Wales probably need to make provisions for new services that are closely aligned with other Welsh Assembly Government policies, for speedy integration of migrants into the community, to avoid the social exclusion observed with previous waves of immigrants. English language learning and activities around English language learning (e.g. the book review blog) are therefore likely to be the focus.

For either scenario, provision of English language learning materials (such as graded readers) should be successful, and sustainable, as such materials can be used by other groups in the community, for basic literacy provision. Graded readers are not the same as 'quick reads' but English language learners who have mastered graded readers would probably gain from reading the 'quick reads' range as these cater for UK tastes and may give an insight into some aspects of British culture. There are opportunities for the public, academic and school libraries to pool their expertise in supporting language learning.

Provision of multilingual materials works for scenario one, but is less sustainable for scenario two. Using book rental schemes may avoid some of the problems of buying materials that have no readers in the future.

IT access is a very popular service in either scenario but libraries may need to devise ways of controlling the demand or developing the Internet cafe model to ensure that provision of computers can be funded from receipts from coffee and food. Wi-fi connections, with the availability of cheaper computer hardware could also avoid some of the competition for computer time in libraries.

5.4 Performance indicators

5.4.1 Performance indicators scenario one

For **scenario one**: Settling in and stirring up – performance indicators for service development will be as follows.

Input/output indicators:

Usage of graded reader, English language collections. Gross lending statistics are easy to collect, but a better assessment might be the usage divided by the number of registered pupils in ESOL classes.

Provision of specialised multilingual collections. Gross lending statistics are easy to collect. It must be pointed out that if the desired social outcome of immigration is integration into the community, the usage indicator should not increase and decline could be a good sign.

Provision of IT access. Success is not necessarily measured in the number of sessions booked or used, as not every potential user may be able to use the Internet when they wish. The number of 'turnaways' may indicate dissatisfaction with the service. Libraries may need to monitor the use of Internet facilities by 'user group segment' to ensure that the service provided is equitably delivered.

Process indicators. Indicators may be developed for joint projects across the educational and public library sectors for language learning (and literacy) support. These could include: number of joint projects, collection sharing projects – and if evidence can be gathered for new users accessing the

collections, this might help indicate whether the joint working has useful outcomes for users.

Outcome indicators

These are likely to require gathering information across the library sectors involved, and other local authority functions. For example, for children of new migrants, exam and test scores (and changes in those scores) might indicate the effectiveness of English literacy support provided.

Similarly, the results of English language tests, and the number of successful certifications for adult learners is another indication of successful outcomes.

5.4.2 Performance indicators scenario two

For **scenario two**: Dashing in and dipping out, the main performance indicator of use will be the English language learning indicators as in scenario one. Performance indicators for use of multilingual collections are not likely to be useful to the library services, and the performance indicator for IT access could (as indicated for scenario one) provide misleading information.

Input/output indicators

Usage of graded reader, English language collections. Gross lending statistics are easy to collect, but a better assessment might be the usage divided by the number of registered pupils in ESOL classes.

Outcome indicators

The results of English language tests and the number of successful certifications for adult learners is an indication of successful outcomes.