

**Resource Management  
Guidance and  
Development  
Framework**

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# Resource Management Guidance and Development Framework

## Introduction

Following the work carried out by the Scottish Library and Information Council to produce “Implementing Best Value in Public Library Services : a toolkit for performance management”, it was agreed by Heads of Public Library service that work was required to assist in the development of integrated stock management policies, which would underpin their Best Value reviews and developing services. The Best Value toolkit indicated that few authorities had comprehensive written policies and to remedy this SLIC undertook to support a group to develop a framework, which would underpin local needs.

It is essential that a stock management policy is the framework within which the library service offers its services. It should be embedded in the day to day running of the library service. The following guidance notes, sample policy and appendices are intended to ensure that all public library authorities have appropriate policies in place, which help to ensure quality of service and value for money.

The following timetable is suggested for its implementation

May 2000	Draft initial policy
June 2000	Consultation with staff at all levels
Identify processes that need to be put in place to ensure success	
July/Aug 2000	2 <sup>nd</sup> draft and Public consultation
Sept 2000	Seek approval by council
Oct 2000	Implement policy

## Working Group

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## **Policy Statement**

*'Every authority should prepare and approve a collection policy...The provision of a comprehensive and well balanced stock, which is relevant to the needs of the community is essential for all library services' COSLA Standards for Public Library Services. 1995*

The establishment of Best Value in the day to day running of library services dictates that all authorities should have a comprehensive resource and collections management policy, which is wider than the acquisition and selection process. Such a policy will also be a working tool, which ensures that resources are managed effectively for the Council by Library Staff, supports lifelong learning in communities and caters for the cultural, information and recreational needs.

A stock management policy should reflect the key council principles and objectives and will also see stock as a service wide resource.

The Library Service will endeavour to provide a comprehensive selection of stock and to get the "right items to the right person at the right place and time".

The Policy should be presented for consultation and have the formal approval of the Council.

## **Objectives**

- To maintain and provide access to quality and wide-ranging resources both book and non book
- To provide user-led services to meet the needs of communities
- To make effective use of the resources available in delivering library services to the community
- To promote and encourage lifelong learning and literacy
- To provide information services to individuals, groups and businesses
- To monitor and respond to changes in community needs
- To effectively manage stock, staff and systems to maximise the use of all resources.
- To effectively promote library resources.

## 1. ACQUISITION

### 1.1 *Community Profiles*

The library service should undertake to ensure community profiles are regularly updated to ensure that services points provide the material that is required by the community. Baseline statistical information should be sought from appropriate departments within the Council. The statistical profile should include information on age structure, community facilities, community groups and voluntary organisations and ethnic and socio-economic groups. This will indicate the other services and resources within the community, avoid duplication and highlight areas of potential partnership. Such a profile will also support decisions on other services provided to the community. Library staff should be actively involved in this process.

Community profiling is an on-going process. Appropriate staff within the authority should undertake a yearly review to ensure the profile is accurate. Community profiling for groups with special needs should be carried out authority wide and should involve other relevant departments and organisations.

This will be fed into the overall collection policy for the service and that community library to assist in the selection process in terms of subjects, formats, genre and numbers of copies.

See Appendix 7

### 1.2 *Stock Audit*

Effective stock audit should be based on sound data. This is most effectively achieved by a library management system. The library service will continuously monitor the performance of existing stock, which will:

- Take account of current demands
- Identify stock gaps
- Identify appropriate stock levels
- Identify appropriate formats
- Assist in the monitoring of the condition and currency of stock
- Assist in the allocation of resources
- Assist in the development of stock plans (Appendix 2)

The library service should regularly undertake stock inventories to identify missing any non-returned items, where serious problems are identified they will be addressed. The catalogue will be updated to reflect this audit.

### 1.3 *Underpinning Selection principles*

The **COSLA Standards for the Public Library Service in Scotland** will be used as a guideline for additions to stock, which indicate they should generally be

Adult 280 items per 1000 population  
Children 100 items per 1000 population

Selection Criteria will be applied to ensure that the most effective use of available resources is made and that standards of quality are maintained throughout the service. ***The agreed criteria should apply to all media and formats.***

The following should be considered:

### ***Non Fiction***

- **Content** Quality, accuracy, currency of information it contains and its authority
- **Relevance** to the development of the collections, both community and service wide
- **Accessibility** physical content and format of the item
- **Cost** cost should be balanced the benefits of the item to overall stock provision
- **Scottish content** such material should be looked upon preferentially. The findings of SLIC report “ A National Strategy for Scottish Material” (Appendix 5) will be taken on board, but against the background of the above criteria
- **Local Material** will be purchased preferentially and against a background of the above criteria
- **Cultural Diversity** works which reflect diversity of life and global culture

### ***Fiction***

- **Potential popularity** due to author or genre. Automated system reporting should provide this information
- **Accessibility** physical content and format of the item
- **Cultural contribution** Scottish Authors and context may be given preference
- **Great Works** Quality literary works – classics
- **Authority Connection** works where the author/content has a local connection
- **New Authors** Will be supported within the above criteria, where possible
- **Cultural Diversity** Works which reflect diversity of ways of life and global cultures

## ***1.4 Definition of Areas and or Genres***

The scope of particular material can be defined to offer a framework for the procedures applied to the selection and management of stock. Appendix 1 has examples detailed definitions of the under-noted categories.

- **Adult Fiction**
  - Scottish
  - The Unknown
  - Adventure/Thrillers
  - Crime
  - Science Fiction/Fantasy
  - Classics

- Contemporary Writing
- Family Sagas
- New Novels
- Light Fiction
  - Romance
  - Western
- **Adult Non Fiction**
- **Local History**
- **Reference, including business information, government information, newspapers, journals and maps**
  - Book resources
  - Electronic resources
- **Community Information**
- **Children**
  - Fiction , including Picture Books
  - Non Fiction including Parent’s collection and electronic information
- **Teenage**
- **Graphic Novels**
- **Audio**
- **Video/DVD**
- **CD ROM/Electronic resources**
- **Lifelong Learning**

Material that ensures that learners of all ages are supported. It should include Basic skills material, electronic learning resources
- **Minority Languages**, including Gaelic
- **Special Needs**
- **Requests**

Request services should operate with minimal barriers to users to obtain material.

### **1.5 Censorship**

“The function of a library or information service is to provide, as far as resources allow, all publicly available information in which its users claim legitimate interest”<sup>1</sup> Library

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<sup>1</sup> Intellectual Freedom and Copyright. The Library Association. 1998

services should adopt The Library Association's policy on Intellectual Freedom and Censorship [www.la.hq.org.uk/directory/prof\\_issues/itac.html](http://www.la.hq.org.uk/directory/prof_issues/itac.html) ( Appendix 4).

### **1.6 Methods of selection**

Methods of selection should be selected with the aim of achieving the objectives outlined in the stock plan. Experienced and appropriately skilled staff will contribute to the selection process

The following methods will be used as appropriate

- Approvals
- Pre Publication Lists
- Specialist Suppliers
- CD ROM/ Internet/EDI
- Publisher Catalogues/Lists
- Showroom Visits
- Special Collections defined by identified stock gaps through stock use monitoring and customer demands.
- Trade publications e.g. The Bookseller

### **1.7 Funding**

Library Services will ensure that selection is viewed as a service wide resource and that resources should be allocated appropriately to manage stock effectively. The allocation of funds can be approached in a number of ways.

- Centrally
- Service Point
- Stock Development Fund
- Consortium purchase, in particular electronic and reference resources

### **1.8 Involvement of Users in Selection Process**

Under Best Value user consultation is a key element. The library service should ensure that users will be involved at an appropriate level in the development of stock plans and stock selection criteria.

The Stock Management Policy should be made available for public consultation at each service point. Their involvement could extend to the following

- Preview of pre publication materials via library catalogue available on the web
- Web suggestions pages, with reviews and previews
- User Visits to showrooms with fixed budgets
- Focus Groups

### **1.9 Suppliers**

Choice of supplier is crucial to the effective procurement of resources for the library service. It is important that the suppliers are not judged solely on the level of discount

offered, but the range of material they are able to source, including their ability to source Scottish material, speed of delivery, ability to supply accurate MARC records for loading to systems, servicing costs etc. This should be done in line with the National Acquisitions Group Guidelines. (See bibliography)

## **2. MANAGEMENT OF COLLECTIONS**

### ***2.1 Circulation of Stock***

#### *Criteria*

The Library Service should identify appropriate methods to obtain best use and best value from stock. A range of issues should be addressed stock genre, lending period, length of time allocated to a particular service point etc.

#### *Model*

An example of a model stock plan is included in Appendix 8

#### *Reserve Stock*

The general principles outlined in the selection of stock should be applied to reserve stocks

Reserve stock should be monitored for its use and relevance to overall stock. Scottish Material will be given preference to support the principles outlined in A National Strategy for Scottish Materials. (Appendix 5)

### ***2.3 Access through Catalogues***

The Library Service should ensure that users have the widest possible access to resources, both within the library services and wider. To enable this the Library service will ensure that catalogue records are created using internationally agreed standards eg. MARC and ACCR2. Catalogues of resources should be available through the World Wide Web to enable citizens to access resources anytime, anywhere and any place.

Library services should strive to ensure that users can interact effectively with services using available technologies, for example they should be able to place and review their library transactions including reserving library materials, both at service points and via the world wide web.

The library service should ensure that resources are easy to locate within services points and appropriate categorisation and guiding is in place.

### ***2.2 Stock exploitation/ Display/ Promotions***

Displays should form a vital part of “selling” the library services to customers. Library staff should ensure that library stock is exploited in this way. Library users should also be encouraged to access the range of resources themselves, (See 2.1)

Libraries should develop a promotions strategy which will ensure new and existing stock is fully exploited in a cost effective manner. The service should seek sponsorship and partners to produce quality promotional material.

Libraries should strive to reflect the approach of contemporary bookshops in order to achieve a welcoming environment and “sell” the resources and services of the library. For example: greater use of dumpbins and better library display. Display skills should be assessed and nurtured and where staff have obvious talents they should be used throughout the service.

Library staff should be encouraged to develop their own personal reading and be supported to interact with users to advise and encourage the reading habit. The introduction of reading groups and book discussion groups should be considered to promote the enjoyment of reading and encourage user involvement.

### **3. CARE AND MAINTENANCE/CONSERVATION**

It is the responsibility of all staff to monitor the quality of stock on the library shelves and remove any stock from circulation, if it is poor physical condition, due to wear tear or damage.

Conservation measures, such as binding or microfilming, extend the shelf life of an item or preserve it from day to day handling in making decisions about conservation the following factors should be taken into account. Criteria for specific stock areas should also be established in order that the life cycle of the item is defined as clearly as possible from the date of purchase. These should reflect:

- The contribution of an individual item to the collection as a whole
- The cost of replacing the item relative to the cost of binding or another form of conservation
- The availability of a value for money replacement or there being adequate coverage of a specific stock area
- The available budget for conservation
- Where a work is seen as having a significant value to the collection and is irreplaceable, every effort will be made to conserve it

The library service will develop a disaster plan which takes into account not only local history and archives but the whole service.

#### **3.1 *Lending Services***

All staff should be aware of the procedures, which apply to the condition of stock in relation to:

- Binding
- Re-jacketing
- Discard

Appendix 1 includes an example of this

#### **3.2 *Reference/Local History Conservation Policy***

The objectives of such a policy should:

- create, as far as is reasonably possible, a secure environment suitable for all stock
- ensure the identification of valuable and at risk material
- identify appropriate material for conservation, microfilming and digitisation
- maximise resources for the purposes of conservation
- determine methods of exploitation with the demands of preservation
- take account of archival policies and seek guidance from Archive Services and agencies
- define the key collections of the authority, which are considered valuable, rare or unique.
- outline a disaster plan

#### **4. DISPOSAL**

Items for disposal will have been identified through the stock management process by not being included in the retention policy (See Appendix 3) of the authority. Materials then identified for disposal will be dealt with through appropriate means. The library service should consult their finance department to ensure compliance with internal audit requirements. For example

- Offer for book sale at set rates
- Offer for Book sale at reduced rates
- Offer to other public institutions, locally
- Offer to Charities, such as Ranfurly
- Pulp

#### **5. MONITORING – CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT**

The library service will monitor the policy in terms of increased use of resources, increased stock coverage, less material being disposed of in a short timescale, customer comments. In the first instance the following benchmarks from “Implementing Best Value in Public Library Services” should be used initially for internal purposes.

##### **Stock Management**

1. a. *Total number of titles added to stock per 1000 population*  
b. *Total number of copies added to stock per 1000 population*

This is intended to indicate the range and scope of the titles purchased by an authority

2. a. *Annual total number of requests per 1000 population*  
b. *percentage of requests supplied from existing stock*

This is intended to reflect the effectiveness of stock selection policy. Purchase of material prior to publication is increasingly important, due to the shorter print runs and the fact that more stringent economic factors are applied before reprints are published. Although requests are a small amount of the total material issued

this would be a more appropriate indicator. There may however be problems with systems being able to identify these accurately.

3. *Annual total of withdrawals per 1000 population*

This is intended to indicate that stock management policies review stock provision and could be linked to the rate of stock purchase.

4. *Average processing time of new stock expressed in weeks from the time of arrival to ready for delivery to branch.*

This would measure Support/Bibliographic Service performance and how current your stock is. A sample week, twice per annum.

5. *Average time taken to place book orders. The date of order at service point until a “live” order is placed at the bookseller. Could be split into key copy and requests.*

The intention here is to demonstrate the responsiveness of the service to customer requests. It may be relevant to split into sections e.g. Fiction, Non fiction, Children’s, Audio-Visual. Quarterly sample

### **General Lending Services**

1. *Issues per 1000 of the resident population (Already calculated for COSLA via Scottish Library Association)*

This would enable analysis of patterns of borrowing across authorities

2. *Average number of issues per borrower(Already calculated for Accounts Commission)*

To benchmark more closely contextual information will be important, especially the number of items that can be borrowed at any one time.

3. *Expenditure on lending materials per 1000 of the resident population (CIPFA)*

This would enable analysis of patterns of purchase across authorities

4. *percentage of lending stock on loan, excluding reserves.*

This would allow analysis of the use of “live” stock. At present this count is done for CIPFA on 31<sup>st</sup> March of year. It may be more useful to carry this out quarterly, as this would reflect quarterly variations, and then produce a yearly average of these figures,

8. *percentage of lending stock on loan in specific subject areas ( Dewey) and should be linked to stock management policy.*

9. *percentage of lending stock rotated annually*

These indicators will highlight the effective use management and monitoring of stock purchases. Library automated systems now enable easy transfer and management of stock and these should be utilised to their fullest extent.

- 10 a. *percentage of lapsed borrowers against the total population*  
 b. *percentage of new library borrowers against total population.*

A lapsed borrower would be defined as someone who had not used his/her ticket in 3 years. The combination of these indicators and identification of these should enable marketing strategies to be put in place in relation to lost users and the expectations of the new users. Library Services may, for their own use, choose to define a different timescale e.g. for marketing purposes to encourage lapsed users to use the service once

**Reference and Electronic Services**

1. *Access to electronic resources*  
 a. *Number of service points*  
 b. *Number of terminals*  
 b. *Other services as outlined below*

<u><i>Service</i></u>	<i>Adult</i>	<i>Young People</i>	<i>Service</i>	<i>Adult</i>	<i>Young People</i>
<i>Public Access Catalogue</i>			<i>Public Fax</i>		
<i>CD-ROM</i>			<i>Public Telephones</i>		
<i>Internet</i>			<i>Open Learning</i>		
<i>Video Conferencing</i>			<i>PC Applications e.g. word processing</i>		

2. *Use of electronic resources*  
 a. *Total number of users*  
 b. *Total number of hours the services are used*  
 c. *Average number of hours per user.*

5. *Expenditure on Reference Resources added to stock per 1000 population (all formats)*

This expenditure should include book, ICT ( include the cost of hardware and software), CDROM, Electronic journals. It would be useful to have this broken down specifically to highlight the costs of ICT in delivering the up-to-date information services.

## Appendices

1. West Lothian Council. Library Services. Stock Development Policy – draft 1999
2. George Kerr. Getting to know your stock
3. Stirling Council Library Services. Guidance Notes for Book retention
4. The Library Association. Access to Information : Intellectual freedom and censorship 1998
5. Brian D Osborne and Michael C Taylor A National Strategy for Scottish Material. SLIC 1999
6. Sample Stock management Policy
7. Bury Community Profile
8. Sample Stock plan – West Lothian
9. Sample Stock Use profile – West Lothian
10. Disk which includes all appendices and sample policy. All Scottish public library authorities have permission to use this to compile their own policies.