

BEING THE **BEST** WE CAN

Key results for public library services

SELF-EVALUATION

FRAMEWORK AND TOOLKIT



State Library
of Victoria



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Part 1: Introduction

Purpose

This *Framework and Toolkit* has been developed by the State Library of Victoria and Public Libraries Victoria Network to provide tools to assist libraries in meeting their service obligations and objectives.

The *Framework* focuses on planning, service delivery and continuous improvement. The self-evaluation process will demonstrate the continuing relevance, contribution and impact of public library services, and provide source information for service improvement.

The *Toolkit* provides tools and templates to support the self-evaluation process as well as a copy of this document.

Principles

The *Framework* is based on the principles¹ that public libraries should:

- Provide free, consistent, customer-focused and universal access to resources.
- Help build vibrant communities by encouraging community involvement and community-based activity, assisting in the creation of social capital.
- Promote civic engagement and democracy.
- Help minimise exclusion, be it social, digital or due to functional illiteracy.
- Support learning in the information society.
- Promote access to cultural heritage.
- Support cultural activities through the provision of information and venues.
- Encourage the public to pursue individual cultural interests through access to resources.
- Work in partnership with others to offer value-added services.

Context

Being The Best We Can is a self-evaluation and improvement framework created for public libraries in Victoria, although it may be of use to public libraries throughout Australia and in other parts of the world.

Victorian public libraries are essentially the responsibility of local government authorities in this state. They are operated under Victoria's *Local Government Act 1989* and *Local Government (Best Value Principles) Act 1999* and are primarily funded by local government. All 79 Victorian local government authorities offer a public library service to their communities.

Approximately 20% of recurrent annual funding for Victoria's public libraries is provided by the State Government through Local Government Victoria. This funding is intended to

¹ Derived from the following documents: *UNESCO Public Library Manifesto*; Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) policies and guidelines; *The Library – the key to growing the knowledge and skills of the Victorian community*, Ministerial Advisory Council on Public Libraries, Victoria (2007); and *Building on success: a public library quality improvement matrix*, Scottish Library & Information Council (2007).

ensure free access to basic library services, as defined in the *Strengthening Victorian Communities Funding Agreement*, and to support the provision of quality library services to all Victorians. The State Government's funding for public libraries is also linked to a broad vision for library services in Victoria, *The Library – the key to growing the knowledge and skills of the Victorian community*².

Victoria's Best Value Principles ensure that all Victorian local government services, including public libraries, are regularly reviewed. Additionally, many local government authorities are utilising the *Australian Business Excellence Framework*³ to review and improve their services.

Victoria's public library managers were inspired by the Scottish Library and Information Council's (SLIC) *Building on success: a public library quality improvement matrix for Scotland* to develop a framework tailored specifically for public libraries to help them to better review their services. With funding and project management support from the State Library of Victoria, they have worked with colleagues from SLIC and Australian Continuous Improvement Group to develop Being The Best We Can.

While Being The Best We Can was inspired by a Scottish model, it reflects the operating environment of Victorian public libraries. It will be a useful tool for anyone undertaking a Best Value review and Appendix A maps it against the *Australian Business Excellence Framework*. The five Being The Best We Can key result areas (KRAs) have been aligned with the principal roles of Victorian public libraries as identified in *Libraries Building Communities*⁴.

Framework overview

KRA 1: Providing gateways to information, learning and leisure

- 1.1 Sufficiency, range and suitability of resources
- 1.2 Arrangements for access
- 1.3 Staff knowledge of information tools and user support

KRA 2: Building individual skills, capability and wellbeing

- 2.1 Lifelong learning in the library context
- 2.2 Providing and promoting 21st century literacies
- 2.3 Encouraging a reading culture

KRA 3: Developing social capital

- 3.1 Welcoming civic space and sense of belonging
- 3.2 Supporting social connections and reaching out to communities
- 3.3 Working in partnerships

KRA 4: Demonstrating leadership

- 4.1 Leadership and innovation at all levels
- 4.2 Planning and community engagement
- 4.3 Building organisational capability through people

² *The Library – the key to growing the knowledge and skills of the Victorian community*, Ministerial Advisory Council on Public Libraries, Victoria (2007)

³ © SAI Global Limited

⁴ *Libraries Building Communities*, State Library of Victoria (2005)

KRA 5: Designing, managing and improving systems and processes

5.1 Implementation of policies and procedures

5.2 Obtaining and using resources

5.3 Evaluation and continuous improvement

How to use

The *Being The Best We Can Self-evaluation Framework and Toolkit* is designed for library managers and staff to evaluate the quality and effectiveness of their public library services. It has been developed as part of the Being The Best We Can project on self-evaluation by public library services through the Statewide Public Library Development Projects.

Participants should first read through this manual to gain an understanding of the structure of the *Framework* and the steps and considerations involved in completing a self-evaluation. Detailed information about the *Framework's* key result areas, themes and things to think about can be found in Part 3.

To support the self-evaluation process and outcomes, a range of tools and templates are provided on the *Toolkit* CD including:

- *Being The Best We Can Framework and Toolkit*.
- Presentations with speaker notes for managers and staff to use in the self-evaluation process.
- Final report template.
- Improvement plan template.
- Workshop agendas.
- Certificate.

What is self-evaluation?

Self-evaluation is a process in which library management and staff critically examine their library's services against rigorous criteria to judge how well they are delivering the services and identify how they could be improved.

Self-evaluation assists libraries to:

- Recognise strengths in their service provision.
- Identify areas for improvement and draw up plans for action.
- Share best practice and establish benchmarks for services to aspire to.
- Report to stakeholders on the quality of service provision.
- Demonstrate the relevance and value of the library service to their communities.

The process of self-evaluation is based on answering three simple questions:

- How well are we doing?
- How do we know?
- What are we going to do now?

Assessing current practice – how well are we doing?

Libraries need to assess the impact of their work with individuals and communities to know that the services are:

- Appropriate and based on community need.
- Of high quality and in line with best practice.
- In need of review and improvement.
- Improved by change and adaptation.

Gathering evidence to support assessment – how do we know?

Self-evaluation needs to be based on the collection and review of evidence of outcomes and impact. The *Framework* provides broad evaluation themes, under which library services are asked to identify ways in which they know and can demonstrate they are performing well. Assessments should be made about the library service's performance based on the evidence collected.

Planning and implementing improvements – what are we going to do now?

As libraries progress through the process of self-evaluation, strengths in provision and areas for improvement will be identified. Strengths in provision need to be celebrated, maintained and continuously reviewed. Areas for improvement require analysis and discussion before plans for action can be developed and implemented. The improvement plan should feed the continuous cycle of review and action.

An effective improvement plan will have:

- A small number of priorities which focus on improvement for users.
- Clearly identified responsibilities for implementation linked to individuals and/or teams.
- Clear timelines with milestones and deadlines.
- Measures of success which include performance data and stakeholders' views.

Self-evaluation is a continuous process which can be used throughout improvement planning. Libraries should use it to check their starting point and identify what they need to do. They should then monitor improvement progress and do a further evaluation to check the impact of the action taken.

Part 2: The self-evaluation process

The Being The Best We Can self-evaluation process has three important features:

1. Management and staff gather evidence and data, ensuring stakeholders and staff are successfully engaged.
2. External peer reviewers visit to review the self-evaluation information and discuss it with library management and staff. This review, coupled with the use of a common *Framework*, ensures consistency in the self-evaluations and provides an avenue for sharing best practices between libraries.
3. The process always results in a written report and service improvement action plan that can be used to demonstrate the library's performance and indicate further improvement.

Steps and timeline

A recommended timeline to complete the Being The Best We Can self-evaluation is outlined below.

Each library should adjust the timeline to suit their own circumstances, taking into account staff availability and competing priorities; however, to maintain momentum, it is recommended that the self-evaluation be completed within five months (at the very latest) from the date of your preliminary evaluation workshop.

It is important to set your key milestone dates in advance with your evaluation team. This provides an impetus to evaluation team members and ensures momentum is maintained as the team works towards the agreed target dates. Scheduling regular evaluation team meetings during the evidence gathering and report drafting phase can also help keep the process on track.

Recommended timeline	Activity
Week 1	Determine scope, consider evaluation team and workshop participants Orientation presentation
Week 2	Select evaluation team and workshop participants
Week 3	Training and preliminary evaluation workshop: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Self-evaluation Framework – the five key result areas ▪ Conduct a self-assessment ▪ Identify strengths and areas for improvement ▪ List the evidence base
From Week 4	Gather evidence against key result areas Assess evidence and assign performance ratings Draft report Develop an improvement plan

Recommended timeline	Activity
By Week 10	Finalise draft report and provide to peer reviewers along with key evidence
By Week 11	Peer reviewers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review the report ▪ Visit libraries, observe activities and view evidence ▪ Provide feedback to library management team, staff and stakeholder representatives
By Week 13	Complete written report on the self-evaluation with peer review feedback
By Week 14	Peer reviewers present feedback to stakeholders
By Week 16	Commence implementing the improvement plan

Determine scope, consider evaluation team and workshop participants

Library services can choose to complete one, several or all key result areas and themes as part of the Being The Best We Can self-evaluation. Considerations around whether to complete all or a selection of key result areas and themes include: time, resources, areas that need to be specifically addressed, etc.

Library service managers/CEOs should consider participation by different levels of staff in the Being The Best We Can process. It is crucial to engage your managers and staff in the self-evaluation process to ensure a shared understanding and ownership of the strengths, areas for improvement and the outcomes for your library service.

The **workshop participants** should represent a cross section of managers and staff from different branches, specialist areas and newer and more experienced staff from a range of bandings. Composition of the break-out teams (for each KRA) needs to be considered prior to the workshop to avoid knowledge gaps on the day.

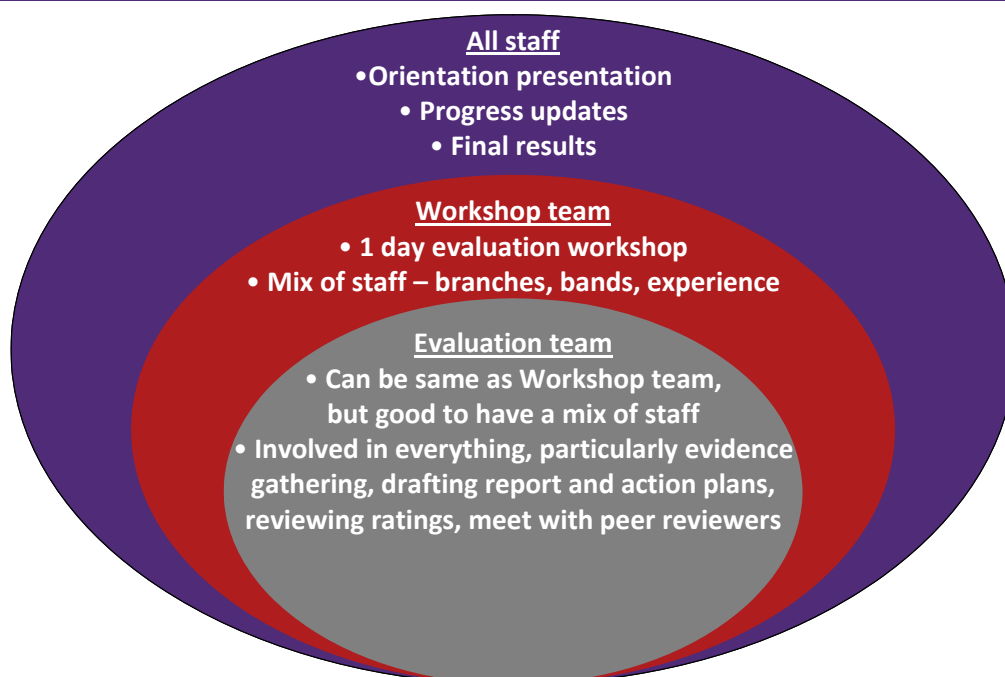
The **evaluation team** is made up of some or all workshop participants – the size of the team is up to each library. The evaluation team are the managers and staff who will see the project through all its processes: refining the workshop outputs, collecting evidence, drafting reports, etc.

Appointing **KRA leaders** is a great way to approach the workshop and evaluation stages. A KRA leader facilitates and leads the discussion for the allocated KRA during the workshop, oversees the evaluation stages and presents the strengths and areas for improvement during the peer review.

Managers and staff should be invited to participate in the evaluation team or as a workshop participant; alternatively, you could ask for nominations from staff.

Potential team composition

	Smaller library service	Larger library service
Orientation presentation (1 hour)	All staff meeting or cascade information through team or branch meetings	
Workshop participants (approx. 1 day)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Library service manager ▪ Branch manager/s ▪ 1 staff member from each branch ▪ Specialist staff (e.g. IT coordinator, collections coordinator) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Library service manager ▪ Senior managers ▪ Branch manager/s ▪ Specialist staff ▪ 1 or more staff members from each branch, mix of new and experienced
Evaluation team	Same as workshop	Approximately 1–2 volunteers per KRA from workshop participants (and KRA leader)
Peer review (up to 1 day)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Library service manager ▪ 1–2 members of the evaluation team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Library service manager ▪ KRA leaders ▪ Members of the evaluation team
Feedback on final results (1 hour)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All staff meeting or cascade information through team or branch meetings ▪ Council management meeting ▪ Corporation Board meeting 	



Things to think about	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How many KRAs will your library complete? ▪ How will your library approach the self-evaluation process? ▪ What are the timelines for the process? ▪ Who will be on the evaluation team? Who will attend the workshop? How will you identify these participants? ▪ Review and update the Schedule with key dates to map out the stages for your library service. The schedule template [BTBWC_Framework&Schedule.doc] is included in the <i>Toolkit</i>. See <i>Appendix B</i>
What do you need?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Being The Best We Can Framework and Toolkit</i> ▪ Framework and Schedule

Orientation presentation

The orientation presentation introduces the concept and benefits of self-evaluation, talks through the expected outcomes and key success factors, outlines the self-evaluation process and timelines, and provides an overview of the key result areas and themes covered by the *Framework*. Managers and staff then have the opportunity to ask questions and clarify expectations.

Managers and staff who are directly participating in the self-evaluation process should attend the orientation presentation. However, if possible, it is beneficial for all staff to have an understanding of the project to enable support for those directly participating. The presentation can be cascaded to team meetings if an all staff meeting is impractical.

Things to think about	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The orientation should take approximately 1 hour. Who to invite? When? Where? Who is presenting? ▪ Review and update the Orientation presentation with library specific information. The presentation template [BTBWC_Orientation.ppt] is included in the <i>Toolkit</i>. See <i>Appendix C</i>
What do you need?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Orientation presentation handout ▪ Framework & Schedule handout

Training and preliminary evaluation workshop

The workshop participants (including the evaluation team) get together to gain a deeper understanding of the *Framework* and the self-evaluation process and requirements. A preliminary evaluation is then conducted with the participants. Next steps are identified and tasks assigned to evaluation team members.

Purpose and objectives

The purpose of the workshop is to lead participants through an assessment of current practices, processes, systems and performance against the requirements of the *Being The Best We Can Framework*.

The objectives are to:

- Train participants in the necessary skills to conduct a self-evaluation.
- Do a first-pass evaluation.
- Agree further actions and timetable.

By the end of this workshop, participants will:

- Understand the self-assessment process for learning, development and service improvement.
- Be able to conduct a self-evaluation.
- Have agreed a baseline evaluation.
- Have agreed follow-up actions and timetable for refining the self-evaluation and forming an improvement action plan.

Approaches

The workshop can be approached in different ways. Considerations include: the number of KRAs being completed, number of participants, time constraints – all day, half-day, etc.

Some approaches to consider if you are doing all five key result areas:

- Break into five teams and each team considers one key result area in detail [suggested approach for a large number of workshop participants] – half day workshop [**BTBWC_WorkshopAgenda1.doc**].
- Consider one key result area together and then break into two teams and each team considers two KRAs in detail [suggested approach for a smaller number of workshop participants] – all day workshop [**BTBWC_WorkshopAgenda2.doc**].
- Consider each key result area together [possible approach for a very small team] – all day workshop [**BTBWC_WorkshopAgenda3.doc**].

Workshop activities

The workshop leader makes a presentation to brief the team about the workshop. The presentation template [**BTBWC_Workshop.ppt**] is included in the *Toolkit*.

Working in teams, each team member reviews and provides feedback on each KRA theme. Questions to think about and focus discussion for each theme are provided in Part 3 of the *Framework*.

To ensure all team members are encouraged to contribute to the self-evaluation, sticky notes on flipcharts are an effective way to record ideas for 'what we do', 'evidence', 'strengths' and 'areas for improvement'. The KRA leader leads the discussion, provides guidance and timekeeping, and should encourage all team members to contribute their thoughts.

Each note should record enough information that anyone could understand its contents. It is important to frame note-wording positively and focus on the issue, rather than personalising it. For library service strengths, describe why it is a strength not just that it is a strength.

Discussion should be encouraged, and it is crucial to respect staff member perceptions of issues, strengths or areas for improvement. The reason for diverse workshop attendance is to gather a variety of views of what is happening in your library service. Ensuring there is evidence to support divergent views is also important. This can be followed up after the workshop.

Where workshop self-evaluation discussion has been broken into teams, it is good practice to allow 30–45 minutes towards the end of the workshop for attendees to wander around and review other team’s sticky notes/discussion notes. This review process helps identify gaps and clarify recorded issues. While this is happening, it is good for a team member to remain with the notes to help explain any points that need clarification.

The first step following the workshop is to record the notes from the self-evaluation. The Final Report template has been provided for this purpose.

Five-star ratings

The *Framework* applies a five-star rating system to indicate the quality of library service performance. Use the following descriptions to make an assessment against each theme, then use the combined ratings for the relevant themes to allocate an overall rating to each key result area.

Star rating	Description
★★★★★	Outstanding delivery of core and a range of enhanced services Excellent World-class Sector-leading and worthy of wider dissemination
★★★★	Major strengths High standard of provision Any weaknesses do not impact on users’ experience
★★★	Important strengths that have a positive impact Weaknesses do not have substantial adverse effect Weaknesses are recognised and action is being taken to improve
★★	Satisfactory provision of core services A few strengths and examples of good practice Weaknesses have some adverse effects on some users
★	Limited range of services or weaknesses in a core service Weaknesses have a significant impact on the quality of the users’ experiences Planned action required for improvement

Things to think about	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Location? Catering? ▪ Who is facilitating? ▪ Roster/coverage for staff participating. ▪ Approach to workshop – agenda. Templates [BTBWC_WorkshopAgendaX.doc] are included in the <i>Toolkit</i>. <i>See Appendix D</i>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review and update the workshop presentation. The presentation template [BTBWC_Workshop.ppt] is included in the <i>Toolkit</i>. See <i>Appendix E</i>
What do you need?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Flipcharts or butchers paper for each theme – divided into four sections: what we do, evidence, strengths, areas for improvement ▪ Sticky notes ▪ Pens and permanent markers <p>For each participant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Workshop agenda ▪ <i>Part 3: Being The Best We Can Framework</i> handout (which includes the five-star ratings)

Gathering evidence

It is important to have a wide range of sound evidence to inform assessments and help evaluate how the service is performing. Evidence should be relevant and concise.

Evidence helps to support self-evaluation processes by demonstrating proof of activity and/or impact. It can help in demonstrating how well the service is meeting users' needs. Evidence can be quantitative or qualitative.

Quantitative evidence reports what can be measured, for example: number of registered users, number of loans per user per annum, number of hits on a website, etc.

Qualitative evidence relies on non-numerical information, for example from written documents, verbal and visual records, interviews, observations and photographs, and may be structured or unstructured. Qualitative evidence will seek to draw out the value which users may put on services.

Library services have a long history of collecting statistical information on how they provide services. Statistical, quantitative and qualitative evidence help shape the evidence base for an evaluation of services.

Note: libraries should focus on listing and organising evidence to report on a theme, not just responding to the key question or 'things to think about'. Evidence should be gathered to support the rating and areas for improvement rather than gathering evidence for every point covered.

Evidence can be gathered by:

- Examining documentation and resources.
- Consulting users, non-users and staff.
- Considering measurable outcomes.
- Observing activities.

Taken together, the evidence from these complementary sources should provide a complete picture of the library's performance.

The evidence gathering stage should take approximately 7–10 days over 7 weeks.

Examining documentation and resources

Evidence sources include but are not limited to:

- Library service strategic plan.
- Council strategic plan.
- Community plan.
- Library service operating plans and budgets.
- Plans and reports of library service involvement in internal and external partnerships.

A detailed list of examples of source documentation follows.

Consulting users, non-users and staff

Consultation-based evidence includes but is not limited to:

- Feedback, oral or written, from discussions with individuals and staff about specific activities.
- Formal discussion with individuals, non-users, councillors, other council departments and library staff, as part of community engagement activities.
- Surveys.

Considering measurable outcomes

Quantitative evidence includes but is not limited to:

- Analyses of quantitative evidence from sources such as the annual survey and the library management system.

Observing activities

Evidence based on observation includes but is not limited to:

- Examining the use of the library.
- Reviewing the range of resources and services available.
- Observing individuals and staff across a range of activities.
- Reviewing the library environment.

Standardised terminology

These terms may be useful in clarifying discussion of the evidence gathered for the self-evaluation:

- All: 100%
- Almost all: 91–99%
- Most: 75–90%
- A majority: 50–74%
- A minority: 15–49%
- A few: less than 15%

Examples of source documentation

We have broken our evidence list into ‘core’ and ‘other’ documentation. ‘Core’ evidence are the documents that most, if not all, libraries should provide as evidence – if available and applicable. ‘Other’ evidence is nice to have and should only be provided if you feel it is required to support a specific strength or area for improvement.

Note: Photographs of library activities and other branches are useful to demonstrate particular strengths or areas for improvement. But don’t go overboard providing photographs for every activity.

KRA and theme	Core evidence	Other evidence
Overarching evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Annual Survey of Public Library Services in Victoria</i> ▪ Best Value review ▪ Council and departmental plan/s ▪ Operational plans (annual library service plan, branch plans) ▪ Strategic plan ▪ Strategic review documents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Communication strategies ▪ Community plan ▪ Council financial plans and budgets ▪ Customer feedback and evaluation ▪ Press coverage and media releases ▪ Program plans
KRA 1: Providing gateways to information, learning and leisure		
1.1 Sufficiency, range and suitability of resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Budget allocation ▪ Collection development policy and/or plan (including stock selection policies and support for specific community profiles) ▪ <i>Strategic Asset Audit of Victorian Public Libraries</i> ▪ Usage and loan statistics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Details of computer provision and internet access
1.2 Arrangements for access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Library and branch profile including opening hours ▪ Membership and conditions of use information (including fees and charges) ▪ Promotional material 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Acceptable-use policies ▪ List of assistive technologies ▪ List of mobile library stops
1.3 Staff knowledge of information tools and user support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Professional development program for staff 	

KRA and theme	Core evidence	Other evidence
KRA 2: Building individual skills, capability and wellbeing		
2.1 Lifelong learning in the library context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 'How to' guides for library customers ▪ Promotional material ▪ Training program for library customers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Adult learning guides ▪ Lifelong learning programs and materials ▪ Links to literacy and numeracy providers
2.2 Providing and promoting 21st century literacies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Library web site structure and use of social media ▪ Promotional material (physical and online) ▪ Training program for library customers 	
2.3 Encouraging a reading culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Collection development policy/plan ▪ Event and activities programs ▪ Promotional materials ▪ Reader promotion plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Book lists and recommended reading ▪ Stock selection policies, procedures and guidelines
KRA 3: Developing social capital		
3.1 Welcoming civic space and sense of belonging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Customer service training, policies and procedures ▪ Customer feedback (informal and formal) ▪ Library layout and plans ▪ <i>Building Audit</i> report ▪ Photographs of branch displays, interiors and exteriors ▪ Welcome pack for new customers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Building maintenance program ▪ Plans for new buildings or refurbishments ▪ Survey results, analysis and actions
3.2 Supporting social connections and reaching out to communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Community events and activity program ▪ Outreach service program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Information about community groups based at libraries ▪ List of mobile library stops
3.3 Working in partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Co-branded promotional material ▪ Partnership Memorandum of Understanding, Service Agreements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Evaluation reports of externally-funded programs ▪ Links to council website, partners and literacy and numeracy providers

KRA and theme	Core evidence	Other evidence
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proportion of programs delivered through partnership 	
KRA 4: Demonstrating leadership		
4.1 Leadership and innovation at all levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff surveys Staff development and engagement program Strategic plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Award certificates External award applications Report of innovative practice (e.g. <i>Showcasing the Best</i>)
4.2 Planning and community engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community and stakeholder engagement program Customer feedback (formal) Customer needs analysis Planning policy and process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marketing and publicity strategies Non-user surveys Plans for new buildings or refurbishments
4.3 Building organisational capability through people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Induction manual and process Performance management process Professional development and training – policies and procedures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff handbook Staffing structures (organisational chart)
KRA 5: Designing, managing and improving systems and processes		
5.1 Implementation of policies and procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performance reports – monthly, quarterly, annual, OHS and internal audit Policies and procedures manual (or table of contents) 	
5.2 Obtaining and using resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual budget Collection asset plan Partnership agreements Purchasing policy Roster plan Service plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council financial plans and budgets Departmental action plans External funding applications
5.3 Evaluation and continuous improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Audit program and reports (internal and external) Benchmarking reports Best Value and service review reports (e.g. Business Excellence or other organisational assessment reports) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual reviews Conference and training presentations Evaluation reports of externally-funded programs External award applications Feedback from events

KRA and theme	Core evidence	Other evidence
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuous improvement plan Risk management plan and assessment; risk register Staff and library customer survey results, analysis and actions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report of innovative practice (e.g. <i>Showcasing the Best</i>)

Things to think about	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who is recording the workshop notes? Record the workshop notes in the <i>Detailed findings</i> section of the report template [BTBWC_FinalReport.doc] included in the <i>Toolkit</i>. See <i>Appendix F</i> What evidence is recommended as core evidence for the themes completed? What evidence do you need to demonstrate particular strengths and areas for improvement? What is the best approach to gather evidence? Is it a task for KRA leaders? Or should one staff member gather evidence based on the list generated in the workshop?
What do you need?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documented notes from the workshop

Assess evidence and preliminary performance ratings

When you have completed the evidence gathering stage, you should then draft the report. The aim of this report is to document current performance and identify where improvements can be made. The report will recognise key strengths and identify ways in which improvements can be made.

The evaluation team should reconvene to consider:

- All suggested actions from the workshop.
- An improvement plan. See *below for instructions and a helpful worksheet*.
- Key strengths.
- Key opportunities for improvement.
- Reassessing the initial performance ratings.

It is important for the evaluation team to engage with management and staff, particularly workshop participants, as the information is refined and reconsidered.

When considering action plans and prioritisation, most evaluation teams (depending on the composition) would need the buy-in of their senior management team, so it is important to share and discuss the draft report and findings prior to release to wider staff members.

Improvement planning

The *Improvement planning worksheet* can be used to develop improvement ideas and rank them in order of priority.

Start with the list of opportunities for improvement identified during the self-evaluation, then group them according to themes, or similarities in likely action steps.

For each opportunity, consider alternative strategies for the improvement outcome that is being sought, i.e. the general approaches you could use to create the improvement.

Once the alternative strategies have been written onto the worksheet, score them using the criteria on the worksheet: impact, cost, time, and difficulty.

Impact of the strategy on improving the service

If it has a high impact, i.e. it would have a significant affect on improving the service, then rate it a 6. If it has a medium impact, i.e. it goes some way to improving the service, then rate it a 3. If it has low impact, then rate it 1.

Cost/resources to implement the solution

If it is a low cost alternative, i.e. it can be implemented with no extra materials, people or equipment costs, then rate it 6; if medium cost, rate it 3; and if high cost, i.e. requires additional people, a lot of materials, and/or expensive infrastructure, rate it 1.

Time to implement the solution

If the solution can be implemented in a short time, i.e. within 1 month, rate it 3; if it will take between 2 and 5 months, rate it 2; and if it will take longer than 6 months rate it 1.

Difficulty required involved in implementing the solution

If the solution can be implemented with minimal difficulty, rate it a 3; if it has a moderate difficulty using current resources, rate it a 2; and if it will be very difficult to implement, rate it a 1.

Ranking

Total the scores for each strategy and then rank the solutions in order of the scores; the highest score should be the preferred solution. Please note: due to the score weighting, options that have a high impact with low cost will be the likely preferred solutions. Libraries can change the scoring and weighting as required.

Use this to set the priorities for your action plan. Review the results and make sure they make practical sense, e.g. a low-scoring but very important strategy might still be retained if a way can be seen to achieve it.

Make a final choice of improvement implementation strategies and then develop action plans with enough detail to begin implementation.

Things to think about	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How often should the evaluation team meet to review the self-evaluation and discuss the improvement plan? ▪ How should changes to the preliminary self-evaluation be communicated to workshop attendees?
What do you need?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The final report template [BTBWC_FinalReport.doc] is included in the <i>Toolkit</i>. See <i>Appendix F</i> ▪ The improvement planning worksheet [BTBWC_ImprovementPlanning.doc] is included in the <i>Toolkit</i>. See <i>Appendix G</i>

External peer review

When the library service has finalised their self-evaluation report, it is always useful to have a comparative view. The Being The Best We Can self-evaluation process is supported by a system of peer review. Each library service should be reviewed by two peer reviewers. The external peer review should take one day.

The role of the peer reviewer is to act as part of your evaluation team and consider the self-evaluation and star ratings allocated by your library service. The peer review team will consider your self-evaluation report, visit your library service, review and consider your evidence, and ensure the overall star rating allocated by your library service is an accurate reflection of service delivery in relation to characteristics and benchmarks of other library services across Victoria. Peer reviewers also act as an aggregator of benchmarks, services and characteristics across the state and identify best and sector-leading practice.

Preparation is important as it clarifies the format of the peer review visit. Thorough planning helps the visiting peer reviewers to use their time effectively, while providing the library service with the information they need in order to prepare properly for the visit.

Tip: It is helpful if one staff member is given the responsibility of keeping time (as there is a lot to cover in a peer review visit) and to take notes on peer reviewer feedback.

Things to think about	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Consider the peer review schedule:<ul style="list-style-type: none">~ Proposed date and time of visit – will depend on availability of host staff (some or all of the evaluation team or KRA leaders depending on size) and peer reviewers.~ Location of peer review – we recommend holding the peer review in a branch to reduce the travelling required between branches. A separate meeting room is required. Another separate room or space for the peer reviewers to discuss their findings is preferred.~ Length of visit – will depend on the number of KRAs to be reviewed and the number of branches visited.~ Who will be your peer reviewers?~ Catering?▪ Consider the visit plan:<ul style="list-style-type: none">~ Presentation by your library service which highlights the strengths and areas for improvement for each KRA and the star rating you have given yourself. This is intended as a conversation point between the library service and the peer review team.~ Visits to different branches or service points to observe buildings and activities and to speak to the public and staff. The branches should be representative of the library service and must be open at the time of the visit. We recommend a maximum of two branches.~ Time for peer reviewers to review the evidence and confer between themselves.~ Time to provide feedback from the peer review team, to identify best practice and to agree areas for improvement.
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	<p>~ Agreement about the self-evaluation star rating will be reached based on state-wide benchmarks and in discussion between the library service and peer reviewers.</p>
What do you need?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A peer review visit schedule template [BTBWC_PeerReviewVisitSchedule.doc] is included in the <i>Toolkit. See Appendix H</i> ▪ The evidence. ▪ Peer Review Presentation template [BTBWC_PeerReviewPresentation.ppt] is included in the <i>Toolkit. See Appendix I</i> ▪ Send your completed draft report, the visit schedule and key pieces of evidence (strategic plan, annual report and any planning reports) to your peer reviewers a week before your peer review visit. It is expected that peer reviewers will have read those documents thoroughly before the peer review visit. It may also help to provide the following notes from the peer review guide [BTBWC_PeerReviewGuide.doc] which is included in the <i>Toolkit. See Appendix J</i>

Peer review guide

Peer review is an important and integral part of the Being The Best We Can self-evaluation process. By inviting knowledgeable outsiders to review their self-evaluation, library services benefit from hearing an informed and impartial assessment from an external perspective.

Over a series of Being The Best We Can self-evaluations, peer reviews act to moderate and standardise the assessment ratings and build a common understanding of what constitutes best practice for library services.

Role

The peer reviewer may best be described as acting as a ‘critical friend’ – one who examines the library service’s self-evaluation thoroughly, reviews the evidence impartially and comes to an independent assessment which they share in a frank and friendly manner with the library service.

Skills and competencies

Desirable competencies for peer reviewers include the following:

- A good understanding of total library service delivery and/or a deep understanding of one or more key result areas.
- Good communication skills.

A peer reviewer should:

- Act as a ‘critical friend’, be at ease with asking candid questions and receptive to what they hear in response.
- Phrase comments in positive and supportive ways.
- Be comfortable with making challenging observations in the spirit of encouraging improvement.
- Work with all staff levels.

- Understand and articulate relationships between wider service issues and the library service.

Process

Prior to the peer review visit, the library service sends a copy of its draft self-evaluation report, the agenda and key pieces of evidence (strategic plan, annual report and any planning reports) to each member of the peer review team. Each member of the peer review team considers the self-evaluation report and prepares for the visit by making notes on significant items in the report they feel are worthy of follow-up on the day of the visit.

The visit opens with a short presentation by the hosts on their library service. The peer reviewers and their host team then work through each of the key result areas (KRAs), discussing in detail the self-evaluation results, viewing assembled evidence and commenting on the star ratings given by the library service. The peer reviewers make brief notes in the area provided in the self-evaluation report – these notes will be incorporated into the final report. The peer reviewers then do a walk-through of several branches, focusing on areas of interest they have identified during the earlier discussions.

Towards the end of the day, the peer reviewers hold a short meeting on their own to consolidate their joint impressions and prepare for the closing meeting with the host library service team. At the closing meeting, the peer reviewers give their overall impressions of the self-evaluation and invite final comments from their hosts with an opportunity for discussion.

After the peer review visit, the peer reviewers should transcribe their detailed notes and send them to the host library manager who will incorporate them into the final report. Notes should provide enough detail and context for all stakeholders to be able to understand what they mean.

Reporting

A final consolidated report that includes the peer review feedback should be drawn together by the host library. A copy of the final report should be distributed to stakeholders and staff.

Final results presentation

It is important to share the results of the self-evaluation and peer review process with library staff and/or stakeholders. Depending on the approach taken, you may choose to have the peer reviewers present to the evaluation team, workshop participants, all library staff, your corporation board or council management team.

It is an opportunity to celebrate and recognise the star rating received and also to share the next steps and improvement plan resulting from the process.

Following completion of the self-evaluation process, we encourage libraries to:

- Implement their improvement plan.
- Share best practice ideas with others.
- Share knowledge of the processes and support others to complete the self-evaluation.
- Share any local council or media follow-up with the wider network.

Things to think about	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Given the findings from the self-evaluation process, who is the best target audience for the peer review presentation? ▪ Date? Time? Location?
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What do you need?

- A presentation [**BTBWC_Feedback.ppt**] and certificate [**BTBWC_Certificate.ppt**] template is included in the *Toolkit*.
See Appendix K for a copy of the peer feedback presentation and Appendix L for a copy of the certificate.

Part 3: Being The Best We Can Framework

Key result areas

The *Being The Best We Can Framework* describes criteria that libraries should consider when evaluating their services. They are organised into five key result areas (KRAs) considered most relevant to libraries.

A number of themes have been identified under each KRA to clarify their scope. Each KRA and theme is explained in detail over the page.

A set of questions and ‘things to think about’ are included under each theme to provide detailed guidance for assessment. This will help libraries find and organise their evidence.

Note: libraries should focus on listing and organising evidence to report on a theme, not just responding to the key question or ‘things to think about’. Evidence should be gathered to support the rating and areas for improvement rather than gathering evidence for every point covered.

Libraries are also prompted to think about the extent the specific theme is a strategic imperative to the library service, recognising that libraries services tailor their services to meet community need.

KRA 1: Providing gateways to information, learning and leisure

- 1.1 Sufficiency, range and suitability of resources
- 1.2 Arrangements for access
- 1.3 Staff knowledge of information tools and user support

KRA 2: Building individual skills, capability and wellbeing

- 2.1 Lifelong learning in the library context
- 2.2 Providing and promoting 21st century literacies
- 2.3 Encouraging a reading culture

KRA 3: Developing social capital

- 3.1 Welcoming civic space and sense of belonging
- 3.2 Supporting social connections and reaching out to communities
- 3.3 Working in partnerships

KRA 4: Demonstrating leadership

- 4.1 Leadership and innovation at all levels
- 4.2 Planning and community engagement
- 4.3 Building organisational capability through people

KRA 5: Designing, managing and improving systems and processes

- 5.1 Implementation of policies and procedures
- 5.2 Obtaining and using resources
- 5.3 Evaluation and continuous improvement

Allocating ratings

Use the five-star rating system to allocate a performance rating for each theme under a KRA. Use the combined ratings for each theme to derive an overall rating for the KRA.

Star rating	Description
★★★★★	Outstanding delivery of core and a range of enhanced services Excellent World-class Sector-leading and worthy of wider dissemination
★★★★	Major strengths High standard of provision Any weaknesses do not impact on users' experience
★★★	Important strengths that have a positive impact Weaknesses do not have substantial adverse effect Weaknesses are recognised and action is being taken to improve
★★	Satisfactory provision of core services A few strengths and examples of good practice Weaknesses have some adverse effects on some users
★	Limited range of services or weaknesses in a core service Weaknesses have a significant impact on the quality of the users' experiences Planned action required for improvement

Key result area 1: Providing gateways to information, learning and leisure

In today's networked information environment, people have high expectations about the range and type of information they will be able to access and when they will be able to access it.

Librarians have an important role in helping people navigate this mass of information. The public express a high level of confidence in librarians as trusted information experts. Librarians are also seen as playing an important role in helping people develop their own skills in navigating and accessing information.

Library services hold a diverse range of print and digital collections which support individual and community information needs.

1.1 Sufficiency, range and suitability of resources

Why is this important?

Library services should offer consistent and equitable access to print and digital collections, the internet and other resources for their communities. Provision of a range of resources that are fit for purpose and specific need allows individuals to make informed choices. A successful library normally has a high level of use by its local community.

Key question to ask

- To what extent are the information, learning and leisure needs of all met?

Things to think about

- What range of print and digital collections does the library offer across a range of user groups?
- What proportion of the overall library budget is spent on the collection? How does that measure up to other comparable library services?
- How is the selection of print and digital resources and services made?
- How well are the information resources and services used by the population?
- What are the most frequently used resources and services?
- How well does the allocation of the library service's resources budget reflect community demographics, usage patterns and user demand for new materials?
- What are the current levels of use of print, digital and electronic resources? What are the usage trends?
- What is the range of electronic resources? How is the selection of new electronic resources reflected in the stock selection policy?
- What mechanisms are in place to respond to customer requests for new materials?
- How does the library ensure the currency of the collection? Does this reflect users' needs and preferences?
- What is the average age of the various elements of the collection?
- Are key elements of the collection available in multiple formats and languages?
- Are all information services available for all community and mobile libraries?

Core evidence	Other evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Budget allocation▪ Collection development policy/plan (including stock selection policies and support for specific community profiles)▪ <i>Strategic Asset Audit of Victorian Public Libraries</i>▪ Usage and loan statistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Details of computer provision and internet access

Key result area 1: Providing gateways to information, learning and leisure

1.1 Sufficiency, range and suitability of resources

Library service rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Reviewer's rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

To what extent is this theme a strategic imperative for this library service?

What we do	Evidence	Strengths	Areas for improvement

1.2 Arrangements for access

Why is this important?

People want to access library services at convenient times and locations, including access to online resources at any time. Library services need to consider their opening hours so easy access is facilitated to collections for those who are able to visit. They should ensure materials are available in relevant formats. Web and e-services should be easy to navigate and regularly reviewed to respond to changes in technology, such as the development of social networking.

Key question to ask

- How well does the library service enable access to local and wider information networks?

Things to think about

- What fees and charges does the library service levy? What is the impact on access?
- How many branches are there? How are the branches distributed in the municipality?
- Are the library branch locations convenient for the majority of users?
- How many hours is the library physically open to the public? Do opening hours vary between branches? Why?
- Do the opening hours reflect the needs and preferences of customers?
- How many hours are mobile/outreach services available to the public? How many stops does the mobile library/outreach vehicle make per rostered cycle?
- How does the library ensure coverage of both print and electronic reference collections?
- How does the library promote and present the collection to ensure maximum use (e.g. genre, bookshop displays, etc.)?
- How does the library service use technology to promote and make information more accessible?
- What are the levels of PC occupancy?
- What is the percentage use by population of PCs?
- What services are accessible online? What services are only accessible when the library is open?
- How many hours of free access to the internet are available to the public?
- How can a customer book a PC?
- What are the key strands of acceptable use policy? Do all customers have the same rights of access?
- What is the average network speed? Is it adequate?
- How many complaints have there been about access to networks? How many have been resolved?
- What are the arrangements for firewall management and content filtering?
- Does the library charge for internet access? If yes, how much?
- How does the library respond to users whose preference is print material when the library has electronic-only access?

Core evidence	Other evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Library and branch profile including opening hours ▪ Membership and conditions of use information (including fees and charges) ▪ Promotional material 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Acceptable-use policies ▪ List of assistive technologies ▪ List of mobile library stops

Key result area 1: Providing gateways to information, learning and leisure

1.2 Arrangements for access

Library service rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Reviewer's rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

To what extent is this theme a strategic imperative for this library service?

What we do	Evidence	Strengths	Areas for improvement

1.3 Staff knowledge of information tools and user support

Why is this important?

Library services offer professionally mediated support for finding and using information effectively online and off-line, and have a knowledgeable workforce that can support people to improve their skills. Staff should be competent and confident knowing their own collections and relevant local and global resources. They should offer consistent and high quality support to users – to satisfy their information requirements and to meet the community’s information needs.

Key question to ask

- How does the library service support individuals and organisations to locate and use information effectively?

Things to think about

- How does the library implement new information services?
- How well do staff demonstrate and share the breadth of their knowledge?
- How well do staff provide accurate, relevant and timely responses?
- How is staff knowledge of the changing content of the library’s information resources kept up-to-date?
- What programs do staff run to provide mediated support for the public?
- How are staff trained in using all library collections, both print and electronic?
- How does the library handle enquiries that cannot be immediately met?
- How are online resources promoted to staff?
- What other wider information networks are used?
- What are staff awareness levels like?
- How are new information services promoted to the public?
- How are staff innovatively using electronic resources?

Core evidence	Other evidence
▪ Professional development program for staff	

Key result area 1: Providing gateways to information, learning and leisure

1.3 Staff knowledge of information tools and user support

Library service rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Reviewer's rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

To what extent is this theme a strategic imperative for this library service?

What we do	Evidence	Strengths	Areas for improvement

Key result area 1: Providing gateways to information, learning and leisure

Overall star rating

Library service rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Reviewer's rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Notes

Empty text area for notes.

Key result area 2: Building individual skills, capability and wellbeing

Libraries provide a friendly environment where residents can learn the basic skills they need to take part in the economic, social and cultural life of their community. This includes supporting the development of basic reading, information and computer literacy and learning habits and skills.

Libraries are seen as having an especially important role in encouraging reading for enjoyment and promoting literacy. The varied collections held by libraries allow community members to constantly discover new material and topics of interest.

2.1 Lifelong learning in the library context

Why is this important?

Library services seek to reduce educational inequality, support people at risk and reduce barriers to workforce participation. Library services should support the learning needs of all.

As well as supporting the independent learner, libraries' active promotion of opportunities will encourage less-confident learners to participate. Staff awareness of the importance of an appropriate level and pace of learning can contribute to good progress by learners.

Library staff, facilities and resources can assist learners in developing confidence in making choices, using their own learning styles, thinking independently and taking responsibility.

Key question to ask

- How does the library promote learning?

Things to think about

- What programs or training are provided to build individuals' skills through the library or partnerships?
- How does the library's learning provision support community needs?
- How do the library's facilities and space contribute to learning provision?
- How is learning presented in the physical environment? Consider dedicated/integrated learning space, noise levels, information leaflets and posters, quality of furnishings, learning in multiple languages, etc.
- How is learning promoted outside the library?
- How are formal and informal learning opportunities recognised?
- What interaction does the library have with other learning providers?
- What are the links between the learning provision offered by libraries and other providers?
- How does the learning provision offered by the library complement other local learning?
- What percentage of learners come from ethnic, disabled and unemployed groups?
- How are the views of the public taken into consideration when planning learning programs?
- Are all staff members aware of the range of learning materials, online courses and local learning partnerships?
- What training have staff received to help them support learners?
- How many staff are able to assess an individual's learning needs and style?
- Do the library staff design and deliver any learning programs?

Core evidence	Other evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ 'How to' guides for library customers▪ Promotional material▪ Training program for library customers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Adult learning guides▪ Lifelong learning programs and materials▪ Links to literacy and numeracy providers

Key result area 2: Building individual skills, capability and wellbeing

2.1 Lifelong learning in the library context

Library service rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Reviewer's rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

To what extent is this theme a strategic imperative for this library service?

What we do	Evidence	Strengths	Areas for improvement

2.2 Providing and promoting 21st century literacies

Why is this important?

Individuals require appropriate skills combined with unrestricted access to information and ideas to support the development of democratic society, including e-government. Individuals need to be able to develop skills to access and assess accurate information to participate in lifelong learning, increase economic effectiveness and for skills development. Libraries should offer support for the development of information literacy and digital literacy to enable access and use of information services.

Key question to ask

- What evidence is there that your library is supporting the development of information literacy and digital literacy?

Things to think about

- What programs or training are provided to support digital or information literacy?
- What evidence is there of any impact on skills improvement?
- How are online resources promoted?
- How are new information services promoted to the public?
- How does the library service promote the use of e-government resources?
- What training have staff received to help them support users?
- How do staff provide support to users wishing to access digital services such as banking, e-government, genealogy, health information, online travel or shopping, digital photography, etc? What groups use this service? How much time do staff spend providing this service (estimate)?
- How do staff develop their own digital skills?

Core evidence	Other evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Library web site structure and use of social media▪ Promotional material (physical and online)▪ Training program for library customers	

Key result area 2: Building individual skills, capability and wellbeing

2.2 Providing and promoting 21st century literacies

Library service rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Reviewer's rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

To what extent is this theme a strategic imperative for this library service?

What we do	Evidence	Strengths	Areas for improvement

2.3 Encouraging a reading culture

Why is this important?

To fully participate in society, individuals need to be literate and numerate. Libraries can encourage people to read across a range, trying new genres and exploring new ways of sharing their reading experiences.

Libraries can demonstrate that investment in stock combined with reader development activities, good book selection and management policies can increase the public appetite for reading and support the progressive development of literacy, increasing the number of capable and confident readers. Provision must be made for those whose reading activity relies on different formats, and provision must be made in appropriate languages.

Key question to ask

- How well does the library service meet the needs of all readers?

Things to think about

- What programs and activities are in place to widen reading choices and enhance the reading experience from pre-literacy onwards?
- How is access provided for minority groups and the print disabled, either through library stock or linkages to appropriate external services?
- What are the current levels of requests? Do they reflect the needs of a variety of user groups?
- How are the needs of pre-literacy users reflected in the stock selection policy?
- What range of reading related activities are provided for children and youth?
- Does the environment of community libraries include promotions on literacy and reading for enjoyment?
- What range of formats and languages is reading material available in?
- How many staff have had training in literacy programs?

Core evidence	Other evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Collection development policy/plan▪ Event and activities programs▪ Promotional materials▪ Reader promotion plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Book lists and recommended reading▪ Stock selection policies, procedures and guidelines

Key result area 2: Building individual skills, capability and wellbeing

2.3 Encouraging a reading culture

Library service rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Reviewer's rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

To what extent is this theme a strategic imperative for this library service?

What we do	Evidence	Strengths	Areas for improvement

Key result area 2: Building individual skills, capability and wellbeing

Overall star rating

Library service rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Reviewer's rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Notes

Empty text area for notes.

Key result area 3: Developing social capital

Libraries play a crucial role in building social capital: bringing people together from across social strata, forging greater understanding of other perspectives and other cultures, offering a safe space that embraces diversity and providing connection into the community for people who are otherwise excluded.

For many communities, the library holds much of the knowledge about the local area and gives people a link to their past, present and future. It provides a neutral public space where people can pursue individual and community interests.

3.1 Welcoming civic space and sense of belonging

Why is this important?

Libraries can encourage repeat visits and enhanced user experience by providing a supportive and enabling environment. The design of a library influences the public's perception of the value of reading and learning and their ability to enjoy activities and access services within a supportive informal environment.

Customer service skills must be of a consistent high quality and regularly updated to ensure satisfaction. Individuals should leave the library feeling valued and wishing to return.

Libraries provide environments, collections and staff which support the development of local culture and encourage participation in community life.

Key questions to ask

- How do library managers ensure library spaces meet the needs of users?
- How well are individuals welcomed into the library?
- How well does the library encourage a sense of place and identity?

Things to think about

- Is the immediate environment of the library attractive and safe?
- What efforts are made to overcome barriers for non-users?
- How do the public describe the library environment? Are displays attractive and regularly refreshed?
- Are staff attentive to all user groups, e.g. potential new members, minority groups or non-traditional library users? How are the needs of minority groups represented in the library?
- How is learning presented in the physical environment? Consider dedicated/integrated learning space, noise levels, information leaflets and posters, quality of furnishings, learning in multiple languages, etc.
- Is there a program for welcoming new users?
- How are complaints handled?
- What library programs support and develop local culture and history?
- How representative of the general community profile is the library users' profile?
- In what ways are the interests of readers assessed? How are these needs reflected in the stock selection process?

Core evidence	Other evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Customer service training, policies and procedures ▪ Customer feedback (informal/formal) ▪ Library layout and plans ▪ <i>Building Audit</i> report ▪ Photographs of branches ▪ Welcome pack for new customers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Building maintenance program ▪ Plans for new buildings or refurbishments ▪ Survey results, analysis and actions

Key result area 3: Developing social capital

3.1 Welcoming civic space and sense of belonging

Library service rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Reviewer's rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

To what extent is this theme a strategic imperative for this library service?

What we do	Evidence	Strengths	Areas for improvement

3.2 Supporting social connections and reaching out to communities

Why is this important?

Libraries promote inclusion, equality and fairness. By providing and supporting a range of activities, libraries add to community capacity building and support the development of individuals.

Outreach services are very important because not all people can easily reach a library branch. These services provide a link for the elderly, the housebound and people living in outlying areas. Staff have an important role in profiling the information needs of their customers and planning services to optimise access and actively respond to needs.

Key question to ask

- How do the library’s facilities and activities encourage community connectedness?
- How does the library provide services for those who can’t get to the library?

Things to think about

- What range of community activities are based in the library?
- What kinds of projects and initiatives have involved new users in recent times?
- How are people brought together by innovative library services?
- What feedback have you received about successful community engagement?
- How do others in the community promote the library?
- What percentage of users come from ethnic, disabled and unemployed groups? How are services tailored for their needs?
- What kinds of personal activities do users engage in that demonstrate the library supporting social connections?
- How does the staff profile reflect the community?
- What programs are there to help bring people to the library?
- What services are offered to people who are isolated or unable to access static library services? How does the library provide services for travelling people, unemployed, isolated, housebound and minority groups?
- What percentage of users are housebound?
- What is the trend for mobile library usage?
- What information services are available on mobile libraries?
- How is the effectiveness of outreach services monitored and reviewed?
- How are library staff engaged in community activities run outside libraries?
- How is learning promoted outside the library?
- How are library services made known to non-users?

Core evidence	Other evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Community events and activity program ▪ Outreach service program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Information about community groups based at libraries ▪ List of mobile library stops

Key result area 3: Developing social capital

3.2 Supporting social connections and reaching out to communities

Library service rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Reviewer's rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

To what extent is this theme a strategic imperative for this library service?

What we do	Evidence	Strengths	Areas for improvement

3.3 Working in partnerships

Why is this important?

By working with other council departments, external agencies and community groups, libraries can offer a wide range of opportunities for personal and social development to help build community strength.

Key question to ask

- What activities does the library facilitate in partnership with others?

Things to think about

- What opportunities are there to progress interests through partnerships?
- How does the range of library partnerships add value to users?
- How do partners reflect the contribution of the library to their objectives in policy and practice?
- How is the impact of the partnership measured?
- What partnerships exist with local adult literacy and numeracy teams?
- What partnerships exist with local schools, health agencies (e.g. Bookstart) and youth workers?
- What are the links between the learning provision offered by libraries and other providers?
- How does the learning provision offered by the library complement other local learning?
- What interaction does the library have with other learning providers?
- How is the council's value of the contribution of libraries reflected in council information and marketing?
- Are partnerships aligned with strategic objectives? How are partnerships selected? How are they documented?
- How does the library source and resource grants?

Core evidence	Other evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Co-branded promotional material▪ Partnership Memorandum of Understanding, Service Agreements▪ Proportion of programs delivered through partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Evaluation reports of externally-funded programs▪ Links to council website, partners and literacy and numeracy providers

Key result area 3: Developing social capital

3.3 Working in partnerships

Library service rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Reviewer's rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

To what extent is this theme a strategic imperative for this library service?

What we do	Evidence	Strengths	Areas for improvement

Key result area 3: Developing social capital

Overall star rating

Library service rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Reviewer's rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Notes

Empty text area for notes.

Key result area 4: Demonstrating leadership

Library services should encourage effective and visible leadership at all levels. They should develop cultures and support behaviours that are consistent with organisational values and help the organisation to achieve its objectives. Systems and processes must be in place to develop vision, values and objectives and turn them into deliverable improvement plans.

Leaders create working environments which are engaging, positive and open. They foster creativity and unify the efforts of their workforce. They encourage people to continue to develop and deploy their skills to improve service delivery.

4.1 Leadership and innovation at all levels

Why is this important?

It is crucial that library management have a clearly defined and well-articulated vision for the role of the service to assist in the delivery of local and state priorities, supported by statements of values and desired behaviours to guide staff in their implementation of the vision. All staff must have an understanding of the vision and have an opportunity to contribute to its development and realisation. Leaders must be able to secure staff commitment to improving services.

Dialogue between staff at all levels must be in place and innovation encouraged and supported. Appropriate leadership opportunities should be available as part of a learning organisation and for staff development.

Key question to ask

- How are the vision and values for the library service communicated and realised?

Things to think about

- How are staff and key stakeholders involved in the visioning process? How well are staff empowered and supported to realise the vision?
- How are the values demonstrated in the behaviours of staff?
- To what extent is the vision for the library service reflected in services?
- Where do new ideas for services come from?
- How are staff encouraged to introduce new services or improve existing ones?
- Do library staff design and deliver any learning programs?
- How do you think the public would describe the library environment in the branch libraries?
- How do you think councillors would describe the library environment in the branch libraries?
- To what extent is the vision for the library service reflected in customer services?
- How are the management team perceived by staff?
- How are staff involved in internal communication?
- What opportunities are there for staff to lead in specific areas?
- How is information from leaders in specific areas shared?
- What discussions have taken place across the staff about change?
- Can you give an example of how a new service has been developed?
- How are staff involved in the budget allocation process?
- How does the library service access external funding?

Core evidence	Other evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Staff surveys ▪ Staff development and engagement program ▪ Strategic plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Award certificates ▪ External award applications ▪ Report of innovative practice (e.g. Showcasing the Best)

Key result area 4: Demonstrating leadership and values

4.1 Leadership and innovation at all levels

Library service rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Reviewer's rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

To what extent is this theme a strategic imperative for this library service?

What we do	Evidence	Strengths	Areas for improvement

4.2 Planning and community engagement

Why is this important?

Library managers are responsible for the development and implementation of service plans that should be consistent with the strategies agreed in the Corporate or Council Plan.

Key question to ask

- To what extent does library planning engage the community and reflect the corporate objectives?

Things to think about

- How does the library service contribute to wider planning frameworks?
- How does the service engage with the community in its planning process?
- How are plans monitored and reviewed? How often are the plans reviewed?
- How is information on community planning shared with staff?
- Which staff members contribute to the community planning process? What is their role?
- How is information fed into the community planning process?
- How does the library service use focus groups?
- How does the library help to ensure public views are fed into the community planning process?
- How does the service ensure activities are connected to local, state and national priorities and broader government agendas?
- How are local needs ascertained and fed into community planning?
- How is the council's value of the contribution of libraries reflected in council information and marketing?
- How does this perception match with levels of investment?
- How does the library service provide services for travelling people, unemployed, isolated, housebound and minority groups?
- When was the last time a non-user survey was carried out?
- Does the library service have a service plan linked to the corporate plan and community plan?
- How are the views of the public taken into consideration within the stock selection process?
- When was the last review of opening hours and mobile library routes carried out?

Core evidence	Other evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Community and stakeholder engagement program ▪ Customer feedback (formal) ▪ Customer needs analysis ▪ Planning policy and process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Marketing and publicity strategies ▪ Non-user surveys ▪ Plans for new buildings or refurbishments

Key result area 4: Demonstrating leadership and values

4.2 Planning and community engagement

Library service rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Reviewer's rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

To what extent is this theme a strategic imperative for this library service?

What we do	Evidence	Strengths	Areas for improvement

4.3 Building organisational capability through people

Why is this important?

Appropriate management and leadership ensure people are engaged and make a meaningful contribution to organisational improvement, goals and success.

Recruitment, induction and employment policies and process must be developed and reviewed regularly by library management to ensure appropriate personnel are secured and retained. Library management should be able to demonstrate they have carried out training needs assessment and that library staff have the skills to deliver appropriate services.

Key question to ask

- How are staff encouraged through the staff development system to contribute to organisational success?

Things to think about

- How does the library service ensure staff have access to the right support at the right time and place?
- How does the library service ensure staff are appropriately trained and deployed?
- How well does the library service maximise the potential of its staff?
- In what ways are the training needs of staff identified and met?
- What percentage of staff have had training in delivering literacy programs, ICT programs and reader development?
- Are all staff members aware of the range of learning materials, online courses and local learning partnerships?
- What training have staff received to help them support learners?
- How many staff are able to assess an individual's learning needs and style?
- Is there a program to welcome new users?
- When was the last time staff received customer service training?
- To what extent is the vision for the library service reflected in customer services?
- What opportunities are there for staff to lead in specific areas?
- Would staff describe this service as a learning organisation encouraging staff development? If so, how is that demonstrated?
- How are staff training needs assessed?
- Is there a dedicated training officer, within the council or the library service, to support meeting training needs?
- How do library staff keep their skills up-to-date?

Core evidence	Other evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Induction manual and process ▪ Performance management process ▪ Professional development and training – policies and procedures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Staff handbook ▪ Staffing structures (organisational chart)

Key result area 4: Demonstrating leadership and values

4.3 Building organisational capability through people

Library service rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Reviewer's rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

To what extent is this theme a strategic imperative for this library service?

What we do	Evidence	Strengths	Areas for improvement

Key result area 4: Demonstrating leadership and values

Overall star rating

Library service rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Reviewer's rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Notes

Empty text area for notes.

Key result area 5: Designing, managing and improving systems and processes

Libraries should identify, document and manage key service processes. Systems and processes must be in place to develop vision, values and objectives, and turn them into deliverable improvement plans.

Libraries should manage and optimise their processes and regularly review them for relevance, suitability and cost-effectiveness.

5.1 Implementation of policies and procedures

Why is this important?

Policies and procedures are important to ensure consistent and equitable service provision. Performance monitoring enables and encourages continuous service improvement.

Key questions to ask

- What procedures are used by library management to ensure quality services are delivered to users?
- Are they consistently applied?

Things to think about

- How are staff involved in developing policies and procedures?
- How are key procedures communicated to staff?
- Are there documented procedures for all key processes, particularly where the absence of such procedures may impact on service quality?
- Does the library service have a service plan linked to the corporate plan and community plan?
- What policies and procedures are in place to support effective customer service?
- What policies and procedures are in place to support staff training needs?
- How are library staff involved in designing effective policies and procedures?
- How are policies and procedures kept up-to-date?
- How does the staff induction process ensure staff awareness of policies and procedures?
- To what extent are staff aware of policies and procedures? Can they readily locate them and/or explain those that directly affect their job?
- How well does current practice reflect formal policies and procedures?
- How consistently are policies and procedures applied across library sites and across library staff?
- How do library staff keep their knowledge up-to-date?
- What policies and procedures are in place to ensure effective budget management?
- What policies and procedures are in place to manage external funding?

Core evidence	Other evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Performance reports – monthly, quarterly, annual, OHS and internal audit▪ Policies and procedures manual (or table of contents)	

Key result area 5: Designing, managing and improving systems and processes

5.1 Implementation of policies and procedures

Library service rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Reviewer's rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

To what extent is this theme a strategic imperative for this library service?

What we do	Evidence	Strengths	Areas for improvement

5.2 Obtaining and using resources

Why is this important?

Library services must be able to identify and secure funding which matches service priorities. Budgets must make the best use of resources and demonstrate Best Value. Library services should be able to provide evidence which justifies their budget bids and demonstrates the value of their services.

Key questions to ask

- How does the library service ensure best use is made of resources?
- How does the library service respond to changing priorities?

Things to think about

- To what extent is budget allocation and management linked to strategic priorities, service planning and performance monitoring?
- How is Best Value demonstrated by the library service?
- Are sufficient staff in place to meet public needs throughout the library network?
- How is investment in library resources, including all forms of media, measured and monitored?
- How are the interests of readers' assessed? How are these needs reflected in the stock selection process?
- How is information within the library management system used in the stock selection process?
- What are the current levels of investment in stock?
- Where does the library service rank in Victoria's annual survey on critical performance indicators against other comparable library services? How does the library compare to state and national averages of funding per capita?
- Is the library adequately funded?
- What are the usage rates for the various elements of the collection, including computer usage, by the public within the library and by users of electronic resources from outside the library?
- What process exists for development and evaluation of new service proposals? How are staff encouraged to introduce or pilot new services?
- Is there planned program for building refurbishment?
- What are the library's lobbying and advocacy efforts? How successful are they?

Core evidence	Other evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Annual budget ▪ Collection asset plan ▪ Partnership agreements ▪ Purchasing policy ▪ Roster plan ▪ Service plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Council financial plans and budgets ▪ Departmental action plans ▪ External funding applications

Key result area 5: Designing, managing and improving systems and processes

5.2 Obtaining and using resources

Library service rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Reviewer's rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

To what extent is this theme a strategic imperative for this library service?

What we do	Evidence	Strengths	Areas for improvement

5.3 Evaluation and continuous improvement

Why is this important?

Effective and consistent evaluation, whether internal or external, results in service improvement, thereby increasing users' engagement with libraries. Evaluation can also support internal and external audits.

Key questions to ask

- What evidence is there that evaluation has resulted in measurable and observable improvements in the quality of the service?
- What are the positive impacts on users' experiences?

Things to think about

- How does this self-evaluation fit with other evaluation and review processes?
- Through evaluations and reviews, what good practice has the library service been able to share with others?
- Would staff describe this library service as a learning organisation that encourages staff development? If so, how is that demonstrated?
- Can you give an example of how a new program or service has been developed? How are staff encouraged to introduce new programs or services?
- How focused on impacts and outcomes are the library service's evaluations and reviews?
- How does the library service plan to use the outcomes of evaluations and reviews to work towards continuous improvement?
- How does the service ensure it has sought feedback from a range of stakeholders and used the feedback effectively?
- How are staff involved in evaluations and reviews?
- How does the library ensure its evaluators' assessments are consistent with other evaluators?
- Through evaluations and reviews, what good practice has the library service been able to identify and share?
- Which programs or services are sector-leading?
- How is continuous improvement achieved? Is there a formal implementation process? How does it work?
- How does the library service discover and adopt best practices (international and local) to improve its programs and services?

Core evidence	Other evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Audit program and reports (internal and external) ▪ Benchmarking reports ▪ Best Value and service review reports (e.g. Business Excellence or other organisational assessment reports) ▪ Continuous improvement plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Annual reviews ▪ Conference and training presentations ▪ Evaluation reports of externally-funded programs ▪ External award applications ▪ Feedback from events

Core evidence	Other evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Risk management plan and assessment ▪ Staff and library customer survey results, analysis and actions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Report of innovative practice (e.g. <i>Showcasing the Best</i>)

Key result area 5: Designing, managing and improving systems and processes

5.3 Evaluation and continuous improvement

Library service rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Reviewer's rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

To what extent is this theme a strategic imperative for this library service?

What we do	Evidence	Strengths	Areas for improvement

Key result area 5: Designing, managing and improving systems and processes

Overall star rating

Library service rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Reviewer's rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Notes

Empty text area for notes.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Being The Best We Can Self-evaluation Framework and Australian Business Excellence Framework

Australian Business Excellence Framework ⁵	Being The Best We Can Self-evaluation Framework				
	KRA 1: Providing gateways to information, learning & leisure 1.1 Sufficiency, range & suitability of resources 1.2 Arrangements for access 1.3 Staff knowledge of information tools & user support	KRA 2: Building individual skills, capability & wellbeing 2.1 Lifelong learning in the library context 2.2 Providing & promoting 21st century literacies 2.3 Encouraging a reading culture	KRA 3: Developing social capital 3.1 Welcoming civic space & sense of belonging 3.2 Supporting social connections & reaching out to communities 3.3 Working in partnerships	KRA 4: Demonstrating leadership 4.1 Leadership & innovation at all levels 4.2 Planning & community engagement 4.3 Building organisational capability through people	KRA 5: Designing, managing & improving systems & processes 5.1 Implementation of policies & procedures 5.2 Obtaining & using resources 5.3 Evaluation & continuous improvement
Cat 1: Leadership 1. Leadership throughout the organisation. 2. Leading the organisational culture 3. Society, community & environmental responsibility			✓	✓	
Cat 2: Strategy & planning 1. Strategic direction 2. The planning process				✓	
Cat 3: Information & knowledge 1. Generating, collecting & analysing the right data to inform decision-making 2. Creating value through applying knowledge					✓
Cat 4: People 1. A great place to work 2. Building organisational capability through people				✓	
Cat 5: Customer & market focus 1. Gaining & using knowledge of customers & markets 2. Effective management of customer relationships 3. Customer perception of value	✓	✓	✓		
Cat 6: Process management, improvement & innovation 1. Identification & management of processes 2. Process improvement & innovation 3. Process outputs					✓
Cat 7: Success & sustainability 1. Measuring & communicating organisational performance 2. Achieving sustainability	✓	✓	✓		

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Appendix B: Framework and Schedule

Framework

KRA 1: Providing gateways to information, learning and leisure

- Sufficiency, range and suitability of resources
- Arrangements for access
- Staff knowledge of information tools and user support

KRA 2: Building individual skills, capability and wellbeing

- Lifelong learning in the library context
- Providing and promoting 21st century literacies
- Encouraging a reading culture

KRA 3: Developing social capital

- Welcoming civic space and sense of belonging
- Supporting social connections and reaching out to communities
- Working in partnerships

KRA 4: Demonstrating leadership

- Leadership and innovation at all levels
- Planning and community engagement
- Building organisational capability through people

KRA 5: Designing, managing and improving systems and processes

- Implementation of policies and procedures
- Obtaining and using resources
- Evaluation and continuous improvement

BEING THE BEST WE CAN

Schedule

Timeline	Activity
Week 1	Determine scope, consider evaluation team and workshop participants
DD Mmm YYYY	Orientation (1 hour): Presentation to management and staff to introduce the concept and benefits of conducting the <i>Being The Best We Can</i> self-evaluation process
Week 2	Select evaluation team and workshop participants Closing date for staff interested in participating in the <i>Being The Best We Can</i> self-evaluation is: DD Mmm YYYY Nominations to be sent to: [name here]
Week 3 DD Mmm YYYY	Training and preliminary evaluation workshop (1 day): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Self-evaluation Framework – the five key result areas ▪ Conduct a self-assessment ▪ Identify strengths and areas for improvement ▪ List the evidence base
From Week 4	Gather evidence against key result areas Assess evidence and assign performance ratings Draft report Develop an improvement plan
By Week 10 DD Mmm YYYY	Finalise draft report and provide to peer reviewers along with key evidence
By Week 11 DD Mmm YYYY	Peer reviewers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review the report ▪ Visit libraries, observe activities and view evidence ▪ Provide feedback to library management team, staff and stakeholder representatives
By Week 13	Complete written report on the self-evaluation with peer review feedback
By Week 14 DD Mmm YYYY	Peer reviewers present feedback to stakeholders Evaluation team presents final report to management and staff
By Week 16	Commence implementing the improvement plan Library service takes improvement action plan forward into business planning and service delivery cycle


Appendix C: Orientation presentation



Being The Best We Can

Key results for Victoria's public library services

A self-evaluation & improvement process for libraries



Why are we doing this?

- o [insert your library's motivation for completing the self-evaluation]



Background

- Developed by the Public Libraries Victoria Network & State Library of Victoria
- A tool to help meet service objectives
- Based on Scottish libraries' framework, adapted to the local environment



What is self-evaluation?

3 basic steps:

- How well are we doing?
- How do we know?
- What are we going to do now?



What are the benefits?

- Takes stock of current performance
- Measures services in terms of progress towards objectives
- Identifies key strengths
- Identifies areas for improvement
- Helps us set action priorities



Outputs of self-evaluation

- Improvement plan to help use resources effectively
- Report to stakeholders, improved understanding of services
- Benchmarks – for ourselves and others
- Training resources
- Case studies of good practice
- Foundations for a culture of quality



Effective self-evaluation

- Should be a process, rather than an event
- Needs to be owned, not imposed
- Must be inclusive
- Must not depend on measurability
- Is an art, not a science
- And... size does NOT matter



The self-evaluation process

- Determine scope, consider approach
- Orientation
- Select evaluation team & workshop participants
- Initial workshop & preliminary evaluation
- Refine the evaluation & gather evidence
- Draft report & improvement plan
- Visit by external peer reviewers incl. feedback
- Finalise report & present findings
- Implement improvement plan



The Being The Best We Can Framework

- The *Framework* comprises criteria that libraries should consider when evaluating their services
- They are organised into five key result areas considered most relevant to libraries
- These help libraries organise evidence for self-evaluation
- A number of themes clarify the scope of each KRA



Key result areas – users

1. Providing gateways to information, learning & leisure
 - Adults
 - Children
 - Youth
2. Building individual skills, capability & wellbeing
 - Special needs
 - Groups
3. Developing social capital
 - Businesses



Key result areas – enablers

- 4. Demonstrating leadership
 - Staff
 - Management
- 5. Designing, managing & improving systems & processes
 - Boards & committees
 - Council
 - Suppliers



KRA 1 Providing gateways to information, learning & leisure

Themes:

- Sufficiency, range & suitability of resources
- Arrangements for access
- Staff knowledge of information tools & user support



KRA 1 Providing gateways to information, learning & leisure

1.1 Sufficiency, range & suitability of resources

Why is this important?

Library services should offer consistent & equitable access to print & digital collections, the internet & other resources for their communities. Provision of a range of resources that are fit for purpose & specific need allows individuals to make informed choices. A successful library normally has a high level of use by its local community.

Key question to ask

To what extent are the information, learning & leisure needs of all met?

Things to think about

What range of print & digital collections does the library offer across a range of user groups?



KRA 2 Building individual skills, capability & wellbeing

Themes:

- Lifelong learning in the library context
- Providing & promoting 21st century literacies
- Encouraging a reading culture



KRA 3 Developing social capital

Themes:

- **Welcoming civic space & sense of belonging**
- **Supporting social connections & reaching out to communities**
- **Working in partnerships**



KRA 4 Demonstrating leadership

Themes:

- **Leadership & innovation at all levels**
- **Planning & community engagement**
- **Building organisational capability through people**



KRA 5 Designing, managing & improving systems & processes

Themes:

- Implementation of policies & procedures**
- Obtaining & using resources**
- Evaluation & continuous improvement**



5 star ratings

- ★★★★★ Outstanding delivery of core & a range of enhanced services**
Excellent
World-class
Sector leading & worthy of wider dissemination
- ★★★★ Major strengths**
High standard of provision
Any weaknesses do not impact on users' experience



5 star ratings *continued*



Important strengths that have a positive impact

Weaknesses do not have substantial adverse effect

Weaknesses are recognised & action is being taken to improve



Satisfactory provision of core services

A few strengths & examples of good practice

Weaknesses have some adverse effects on some users



5 star ratings *continued*



Limited range of services or weaknesses in a core service

Weaknesses have a significant impact on the quality of the users' experiences



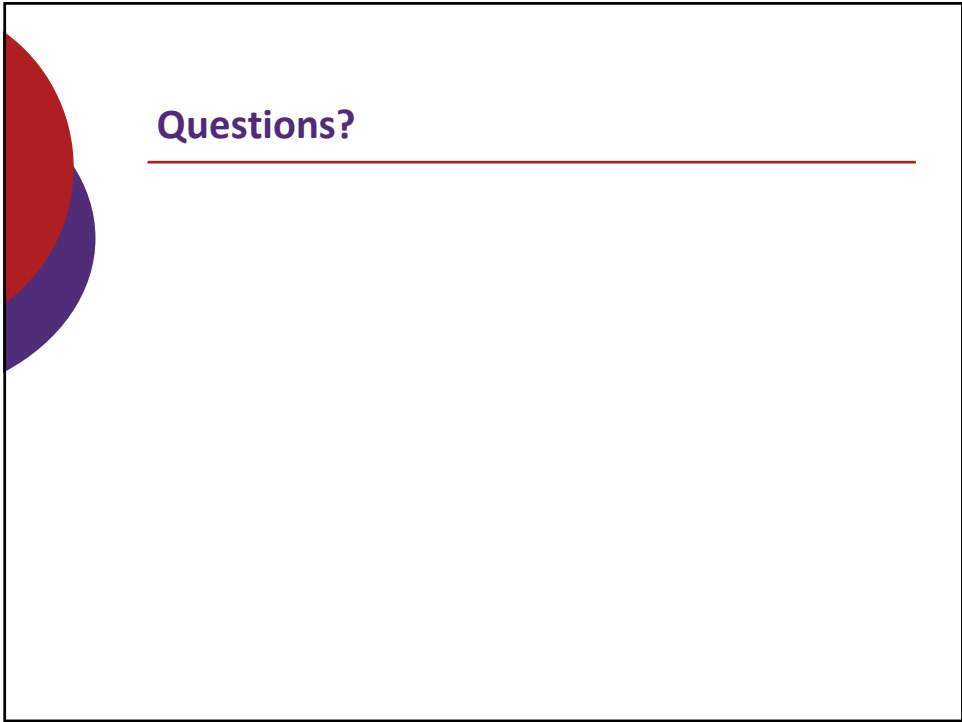
External review

- It is always useful to have a comparative view. Peers will act as external reviewers of the self-evaluation process & outcomes



Timelines for [library service]

- Orientation DD Mmm YYYY
- Select team DD Mmm YYYY
- Workshop & prelim evaluation DD Mmm YYYY
- Refine evaluation & gather evidence Mmm YYYY-
Mmm YYYY
- Peer review visit Mmm YYYY
- Follow-up presentation Mmm YYYY



Questions?

Appendix D: Workshop agendas

BEING THE **BEST** WE CAN: SELF EVALUATION WORKSHOP

Purpose

The purpose of this Workshop is to lead participants through an assessment of current practices, processes, systems and performance against the requirements of the *Being The Best We Can Framework*.

Objectives

- Train participants in the necessary skills to conduct a self-evaluation.
- Do a first-pass evaluation.
- Agree further actions and timetable.

Learning outcomes

By the end of this workshop, participants will:

- Understand the self-assessment process for learning, development and service improvement.
- Be able to conduct a self-evaluation.
- Have agreed a baseline evaluation.
- Have agreed follow-up actions and timetable for refining the self-evaluation and forming an improvement action plan.

BEING THE **BEST** WE CAN: SELF EVALUATION WORKSHOP

Agenda: Day, NN Mmm YYYY

[location]

9am	Introduction and context				
9.45am	Self-evaluation				
	KRA 1: Providing gateways to information, learning & leisure	KRA 2: Building individual skills, capability & wellbeing	KRA 3: Developing social capital	KRA 4: Demonstrating leadership	KRA 5: Designing, managing & improving systems & processes
11.45am	Review assessments				
12.30pm	Next steps				
12.45pm	Close				

BEING THE **BEST** WE CAN: SELF EVALUATION WORKSHOP

Workshop teams

KRA 1: Providing gateways to information, learning and leisure

- **[KRA leader]**
- [team member]
- [team member]
- [team member]

KRA 2: Building individual skills, capability and wellbeing

- **[KRA leader]**
- [team member]
- [team member]
- [team member]

KRA 3: Developing social capital

- **[KRA leader]**
- [team member]
- [team member]
- [team member]

KRA 4: Demonstrating leadership

- **[KRA leader]**
- [team member]
- [team member]
- [team member]

KRA 5: Designing, managing and improving systems and processes

- **[KRA leader]**
- [team member]
- [team member]
- [team member]

BEING THE **BEST** WE CAN: SELF EVALUATION WORKSHOP

Purpose

The purpose of this Workshop is to lead participants through an assessment of current practices, processes, systems and performance against the requirements of the *Being The Best We Can Framework*.

Objectives

- Train participants in the necessary skills to conduct a self-evaluation.
- Do a first-pass evaluation.
- Agree further actions and timetable.

Learning outcomes

By the end of this workshop, participants will:

- Understand the self-assessment process for learning, development and service improvement.
- Be able to conduct a self-evaluation.
- Have agreed a baseline evaluation.
- Have agreed follow-up actions and timetable for refining the self-evaluation and forming an improvement action plan.

BEING THE **BEST** WE CAN: SELF EVALUATION WORKSHOP

Agenda: Day, NN Mmm YYYY

[location]

9am	Introduction and context	
9.45am	Morning tea	
10am	Self-evaluation	
	KRA 1: Providing gateways to information, learning and leisure	
11.30am	Self-evaluation – <i>continued</i>	
	KRA 2: Building individual skills, capability and wellbeing	KRA 3: Developing social capital
1pm	Lunch	
1.30pm	Self-evaluation – <i>continued</i>	
	KRA 4: Demonstrating leadership	KRA 5: Designing, managing and improving systems and processes
3pm	Review assessments	
3.45pm	Next steps	
4pm	Close	

BEING THE **BEST** WE CAN: SELF EVALUATION WORKSHOP

Workshop teams

KRA 1: Providing gateways to information, learning and leisure

- **[KRA leader]**
- [team member]
- [team member]
- [team member]

KRA 2: Building individual skills, capability and wellbeing

- **[KRA leader]**
- [team member]
- [team member]
- [team member]

KRA 3: Developing social capital

- **[KRA leader]**
- [team member]
- [team member]
- [team member]

KRA 4: Demonstrating leadership

- **[KRA leader]**
- [team member]
- [team member]
- [team member]

KRA 5: Designing, managing and improving systems and processes

- **[KRA leader]**
- [team member]
- [team member]
- [team member]

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Workshop team

- [team member]
- [team member]
- [team member]
- [team member]

KRA 1: Providing gateways to information, learning and leisure

- [KRA leader]

KRA 2: Building individual skills, capability and wellbeing

- [KRA leader]

KRA 3: Developing social capital

- [KRA leader]

KRA 4: Demonstrating leadership

- [KRA leader]

KRA 5: Designing, managing and improving systems and processes

- [KRA leader]

BEING THE **BEST** WE CAN: SELF EVALUATION WORKSHOP

Agenda: Day, NN Mmm YYYY

[location]

9am	Introduction and context
9.45am	Morning tea
10am	Self-evaluation – KRA 1: Providing gateways to information, learning and leisure
11.15am	Self-evaluation – KRA 2: Building individual skills, capability and wellbeing
12.30pm	Lunch
1pm	Self-evaluation – KRA 3: Developing social capital
2.15pm	Self-evaluation – KRA 4: Demonstrating leadership
3.30pm	Afternoon tea
3.40pm	Self-evaluation – KRA 5: Designing, managing and improving systems and processes
4.55pm	Next steps
5pm	Close

Appendix E: Workshop presentation



Being The Best We Can

Key results for Victoria's public library services

Self-evaluation workshop



Outputs of self-evaluation

- Improvement plan to help use resources effectively
- Report to stakeholders, improved understanding of services
- Benchmarks – for ourselves and others
- Training resources
- Case studies of good practice
- Foundations for a culture of quality



Today's workshop

- Work in teams
- Read information on KRAs
- Discuss what our library service does in each KRA/theme
- Determine sources of evidence for the information
- Discuss service provision strengths
- Brainstorm areas for improvement
- Make overall assessments, by theme & KRA
- Agree next steps



Key result areas

- Each key result area has information to guide the self-evaluation, grouped under themes
- Each theme is introduced by a statement explaining its importance
- To focus enquiry, a key question relating to the theme is outlined
- Further questions are posed as 'Things to think about' to prompt the evaluation team



Key result areas – users

1. Providing gateways to information, learning & leisure
 - Adults
 - Children
 - Youth
2. Building individual skills, capability & wellbeing
 - Special needs
 - Groups
3. Developing social capital
 - Businesses



Key result areas – enablers

4. Demonstrating leadership
 - Staff
 - Management
5. Designing, managing & improving systems & processes
 - Boards & committees
 - Council
 - Suppliers



'What we do'

- **List services & programs relevant to the theme**
- **List any relevant recent initiatives or projects**



Evidence

- **List sources of evidence according to the themes in each key result area**
- **Brainstorm likely sources of evidence that can be used to provide corroboration of 'strengths' and 'areas for improvement', and support your star rating assessment**
- **Use the key question and things to think about to examine aspects of the theme**



Gathering supporting evidence

Can be done by:

- Examining documentation & resources
- Consulting users, non-users & staff
- Observing activities
- Considering measurable outcomes



Examples of evidence

- Council and community plans
- Library service strategic plan
- Best Value reports
- Program documentation
- Customer feedback
- Surveys
- Materials used in service & program delivery
- Observations of the library environment, incl. usage patterns
- Observations of specific program delivery
- Statistics
- Marketing & publicity strategies & documentation
- Local media coverage
- Reports of innovative practice
- Evaluation reports of externally-funded programs
- Photographs of activities & environments

More in the Framework and Toolkit...



Strengths

- Identify the key strengths for each of the themes in the KRAs
- 'Strengths' are simply the things we do well
- Consider though, is 'every-day' a strength?



Areas for improvement

- Identify areas for improvement for each theme
- Consider the questions:
 - What can we do better?
 - What do we need to do better?
- Try to frame the statement in terms of what needs to be improved, rather than a specific solution



5-star rating system

- The 5-star rating system should be used to allocate a performance rating for each theme under a KRA
- An overall rating for the KRA is then derived from the combined ratings for its themes
- This provides a broad rating for performance which can be used in reporting



5 star ratings

- ★★★★★ Outstanding delivery of core & a range of enhanced services
Excellent
World-class
Sector leading & worthy of wider dissemination
- ★★★★ Major strengths
High standard of provision
Any weaknesses do not impact on users' experience



5 star ratings *continued*

★★★

Important strengths that have a positive impact

Weaknesses do not have substantial adverse effect

Weaknesses are recognised & action is being taken to improve

★★

Satisfactory provision of core services

A few strengths & examples of good practice

Weaknesses have some adverse effects on some users



5 star ratings *continued*

★

Limited range of services or weaknesses in a core service

Weaknesses have a significant impact on the quality of the users' experiences



Initial self-evaluation

- Read the KRA information in the *Framework*
- Examine the information on the KRA's first theme
- Discuss, then list on the wall-chart 'what we do now' using the sticky notes
- In the same way, list sources of evidence
- Brainstorm 'strengths' & 'areas for improvement'
- Discuss & agree a consensus on a star rating for the theme
- Repeat for the other themes for the KRA
- Combine the themes' ratings for an overall star rating for the KRA



Self-evaluation *continued*

- Review other groups' sheets at the end:
 - Read each theme
 - Write your comments on sticky notes and place on the sheet (initial your note so it can be followed up later)



Next steps

- **Agree action plan to:**
 - Review initial self-evaluation
 - Engage with staff
 - Collect & review evidence
 - Draft self-evaluation report & improvement action plan
 - Host peer reviewers' visit
 - Finalise report



Thank you!

Appendix F: Final report template

BEING THE **BEST** WE CAN

Key results for public library services

[library name here]

Self-evaluation and Peer Review Report

**★ ★ ★ ★ ★ [DELETE STARS AS
REQUIRED]**

month 20YY

Contents

Executive summary	3
Introduction	4
Key dates	4
Team involved in the self-evaluation.....	5
Summary results	6
Overall ratings	6
Key strengths	6
Key opportunities for improvement	6
Five-star ratings.....	7
Improvement plan	8
Detailed findings	10

Executive summary

[insert text here – include: overall rating and brief explanation of process, key dates, 3 highlights and challenges, high priority improvement actions, intentions and next steps]

Introduction

[insert text here – include: overview of and information about your library service, number and name of municipalities if regional corporation, key services delivered, what is unique about the library service, any demographic quirks (e.g. transient population, high % of CALD, high % of older residents, etc.), organisation structure of council and where the library sits, how found the BTBWC process, what were the challenges, etc.]

Key performance indicator	Result
Coverage:	X Sq km
Number of branches and locations:	
Opening hours (total per week):	
Population served:	
Membership:	
Visitation:	
Circulation:	
Collection size:	
Average age of collection:	
Staffing:	
Budget:	
Funding per capita:	

Key dates

Date	Activity
DD Mmm YYYY	Preliminary evaluation workshop
DD Mmm YYYY	Peer review visit
DD Mmm YYYY	Present feedback to stakeholders and staff

Team involved in the self-evaluation

Working group

- [insert names here]

Workshop attendees

- [insert names here]

Peer reviewers

- [insert name, library service here]
- [insert name, library service here]

Summary results

Overall ratings

The overall results of the self-evaluation for the five key result areas are:

Key result areas	Self rating	Peer rating
1. Providing gateways to information, learning and leisure	★★★★★	★★★★★
2. Building individual skills, capability and wellbeing	★★★★★	★★★★★
3. Developing social capital	★★★★★	★★★★★
4. Demonstrating leadership	★★★★★	★★★★★
5. Designing, managing and improving systems and processes	★★★★★	★★★★★
Total	★★★★★	★★★★★

Key strengths

- [insert text]

Key opportunities for improvement

- [insert text]

Five-star ratings

The *Framework* applies a five-star rating system to indicate the quality of library service performance.

Star rating	Description
★★★★★	Outstanding delivery of core and a range of enhanced services. Excellent. World-class. Sector-leading and worthy of wider dissemination.
★★★★	Major strengths. High standard of provision. Any weaknesses do not impact on users' experience.
★★★	Important strengths that have a positive impact. Weaknesses do not have substantial adverse effect. Weaknesses are recognised and action is being taken to improve.
★★	Satisfactory provision of core services. A few strengths and examples of good practice. Weaknesses have some adverse effects on some users.
★	Limited range of services or weaknesses in a core service. Weaknesses have a significant impact on the quality of the users' experiences. Planned action required for improvement.

Improvement plan

The improvement recommendations from the evaluation were reviewed and prioritised, resulting in the following improvement plan.

Action	Responsibility	Target completion date	Progress
KRA 1: Providing gateways to information, learning and leisure			
KRA 2: Building individual skills, capability and wellbeing			
KRA 3: Developing social capital			

Action	Responsibility	Target completion date	Progress
KRA 4: Demonstrating leadership			
KRA 5: Designing, managing and improving systems and processes			

Detailed findings

Key result area 1: Providing gateways to information, learning and leisure			
1.1 Sufficiency, range and suitability of resources		Library service rating ★★★★★	Reviewer's rating ★★★★★
To what extent is this theme a strategic imperative for this library service?			
What we do	Evidence	Strengths	Areas for improvement
▪	▪	▪	▪
Peer review notes on: What we do, Strengths, Areas for improvement, Evidence and Star rating			
▪			

Key result area 1: Providing gateways to information, learning and leisure

1.2 Arrangements for access

Library service rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Reviewer's rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

To what extent is this theme a strategic imperative for this library service?

What we do

Evidence

Strengths

Areas for improvement

■

■

■

■

Peer review notes on: What we do, Strengths, Areas for improvement, Evidence and Star rating

■

Key result area 1: Providing gateways to information, learning and leisure

1.3 Staff knowledge of information tools and user support

Library service rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Reviewer's rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

To what extent is this theme a strategic imperative for this library service?

What we do

Evidence

Strengths

Areas for improvement

■

■

■

■

Peer review notes on: What we do, Strengths, Areas for improvement, Evidence and Star rating

■

Key result area 1: Providing gateways to information, learning and leisure

Overall star rating

Library service rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Reviewer's rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Peer review notes

■

Key result area 2: Building individual skills, capability and wellbeing

2.1 Lifelong learning in the library context

Library service rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Reviewer's rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

To what extent is this theme a strategic imperative for this library service?

What we do

Evidence

Strengths

Areas for improvement

■

■

■

■

Peer review notes on: What we do, Strengths, Areas for improvement, Evidence and Star rating

■

Key result area 2: Building individual skills, capability and wellbeing

2.2 Providing and promoting 21st century literacies

Library service rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Reviewer's rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

To what extent is this theme a strategic imperative for this library service?

What we do

Evidence

Strengths

Areas for improvement

■

■

■

■

Peer review notes on: What we do, Strengths, Areas for improvement, Evidence and Star rating

■

Key result area 2: Building individual skills, capability and wellbeing

2.3 Encouraging a reading culture

Library service rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Reviewer's rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

To what extent is this theme a strategic imperative for this library service?

What we do

Evidence

Strengths

Areas for improvement

■

■

■

■

Peer review notes on: What we do, Strengths, Areas for improvement, Evidence and Star rating

■

Key result area 2: Building individual skills, capability and wellbeing

Overall star rating

Library service rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Reviewer's rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Peer review notes

■

Key result area 3: Developing social capital

3.1 Welcoming civic space and sense of belonging

Library service rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Reviewer's rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

To what extent is this theme a strategic imperative for this library service?

What we do

Evidence

Strengths

Areas for improvement

■

■

■

■

Peer review notes on: What we do, Strengths, Areas for improvement, Evidence and Star rating

■

Key result area 3: Developing social capital

3.2 Supporting social connections and reaching out to communities

Library service rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Reviewer's rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

To what extent is this theme a strategic imperative for this library service?

What we do

Evidence

Strengths

Areas for improvement

■

■

■

■

Peer review notes on: What we do, Strengths, Areas for improvement, Evidence and Star rating

■

Key result area 3: Developing social capital

3.3 Working in partnerships

Library service rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Reviewer's rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

To what extent is this theme a strategic imperative for this library service?

What we do

Evidence

Strengths

Areas for improvement

■

■

■

■

Peer review notes on: What we do, Strengths, Areas for improvement, Evidence and Star rating

■

Key result area 3: Developing social capital

Overall star rating

Library service rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Reviewer's rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Peer review notes

■

Key result area 4: Demonstrating leadership

4.1 Leadership and innovation at all levels

Library service rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Reviewer's rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

To what extent is this theme a strategic imperative for this library service?

What we do

Evidence

Strengths

Areas for improvement

■

■

■

■

Peer review notes on: What we do, Strengths, Areas for improvement, Evidence and Star rating

■

Key result area 4: Demonstrating leadership

4.2 Planning and community engagement

Library service rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Reviewer's rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

To what extent is this theme a strategic imperative for this library service?

What we do

Evidence

Strengths

Areas for improvement

■

■

■

■

Peer review notes on: What we do, Strengths, Areas for improvement, Evidence and Star rating

■

Key result area 4: Demonstrating leadership

4.3 Building organisational capability through people

Library service rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Reviewer's rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

To what extent is this theme a strategic imperative for this library service?

What we do

Evidence

Strengths

Areas for improvement

■

■

■

■

Peer review notes on: What we do, Strengths, Areas for improvement, Evidence and Star rating

■

Key result area 4: Demonstrating leadership

Overall star rating

Library service rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Reviewer's rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Peer review notes

■

Key result area 5: Designing, managing and improving systems and processes

5.1 Implementation of policies and procedures

Library service rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Reviewer's rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

To what extent is this theme a strategic imperative for this library service?

What we do

Evidence

Strengths

Areas for improvement

■

■

■

■

Peer review notes on: What we do, Strengths, Areas for improvement, Evidence and Star rating

■

Key result area 5: Designing, managing and improving systems and processes

5.2 Obtaining and using resources

Library service rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Reviewer's rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

To what extent is this theme a strategic imperative for this library service?

What we do

Evidence

Strengths

Areas for improvement

■

■

■

■

Peer review notes on: What we do, Strengths, Areas for improvement, Evidence and Star rating

■

Key result area 5: Designing, managing and improving systems and processes

5.3 Evaluation and continuous improvement

Library service rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Reviewer's rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

To what extent is this theme a strategic imperative for this library service?

What we do

Evidence

Strengths

Areas for improvement

■

■

■

■

Peer review notes on: What we do, Strengths, Areas for improvement, Evidence and Star rating

■

Key result area 5: Designing, managing and improving systems and processes

Overall star rating

Library service rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Reviewer's rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Peer review notes

■

Appendix G: Improvement planning worksheet

Appendix H: Peer review visit schedule

BEING THE **BEST** WE CAN

[Library name] Peer Review Visit Schedule

Venue:

Time	Event	Responsibility
9.00am	Open meeting Discuss process, timetable and roles	Library service manager/CEO (or facilitator)
9.05am	Overview of library service	Library service manager/CEO
9.15am	KRA 1: Providing gateways to information, learning & leisure	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Present key strengths and areas for improvement for each theme <i>[15 mins]</i> ▪ Discussion and questions 	KRA Leader Peer reviewers – [name and library service] and [name and library service] – and library team
9.45am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review evidence and confer 	Peer reviewers
10.00am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide feedback on KRA 1 	Peer reviewers to library team
10.15am	Morning tea	
10.20am	KRA 2 Building individual skills, capability & wellbeing	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Present key strengths and areas for improvement for each theme <i>[15 mins]</i> ▪ Discussion and questions 	KRA Leader Peer reviewers and library team
10.50am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review evidence and confer 	Peer reviewers
11.05am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide feedback on KRA 2 	Peer reviewers to library team
11.20am	KRA 3 Developing social capital	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Present key strengths and areas for improvement for each theme <i>[15 mins]</i> ▪ Discussion and questions 	KRA Leader Peer reviewers and library team
11.50am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review evidence and confer 	Peer reviewers
12.05pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide feedback on KRA 3 	Peer reviewers to library team
12.20pm	Lunch	

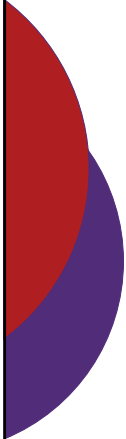
Time	Event	Responsibility
12.50pm	KRA 4 Demonstrating leadership	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Present key strengths and areas for improvement for each theme <i>[15 mins]</i> Discussion and questions 	KRA Leader Peer reviewers and library team
1.20pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review evidence and confer 	Peer reviewers
1.35pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide feedback on KRA 4 	Peer reviewers to library team
1.50pm	KRA 5 Designing, managing & improving systems & processes	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Present key strengths and areas for improvement for each theme <i>[15 mins]</i> Discussion and questions 	KRA Leader Peer reviewers and library team
2.20pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review evidence and confer 	Peer reviewers
2.35pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide feedback on KRA 5 	Peer reviewers to library team
3.00pm	Tour of Branch 1: [] Library <i>[20 mins]</i>	Branch manager or library service manager
3.20pm	Travel to Branch 2: Library Address <i>[XX mins]</i>	<i>Map attached</i>
X.XXpm	Tour of Branch 2: [] Library <i>[20 mins]</i>	Branch manager or library service manager
X.XXpm	Peer reviewers consolidate feedback during afternoon tea break <i>[15 mins]</i>	Peer reviewers
X.XXpm	Consolidated feedback	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peer reviewers' present consolidated feedback and overall star rating <i>[10 mins]</i> 	Peer reviewers
X.XXpm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss and agree overall star rating Next steps 	Peer reviewers and library team
X.XXpm	Close	

[Library name] Peer Review

Branch 2 Library, address [XX mins]

[Insert Google map with directions here]


Appendix I: Peer review presentation



Being The Best We Can

Key results for Victoria's public library services

[Library name here]
Peer Review



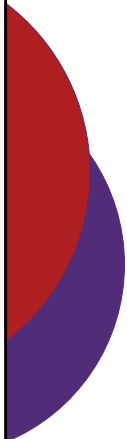
Our Library Service

- Key facts and figures, map of library service area, branches, etc.



Our Community

- **Demographics, CALD, employment levels, specific community needs, literacy levels, etc.**



KRA 1: Providing gateways to information, learning & leisure



1.1 Sufficiency, range & suitability of resources

- Strengths

-
-
-

- Areas for improvement

-
-
-

- Library rating ★★★★★



1.2 Arrangements for access

- Strengths

-
-
-

- Areas for improvement

-
-
-

- Library rating ★★★★★



1.3 Staff knowledge of information tools & user support

- Strengths

-
-
-

- Areas for improvement

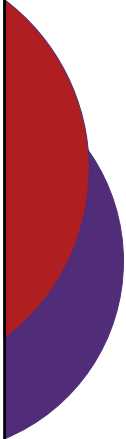
-
-
-

- Library rating ★★★★★



KRA 1: Providing gateways to information, learning & leisure

Library ★★★★★



KRA 2:
Building individual skills, capability & wellbeing



2.1 Lifelong learning in the library context

- **Strengths**
 -
 -
 -
- **Areas for improvement**
 -
 -
 -
- **Library rating ★★★★★**



2.2 Providing & promoting 21st century literacies

- Strengths

-
-
-

- Areas for improvement

-
-
-

- Library rating ★★★★★



2.3 Encouraging a reading culture

- Strengths

-
-
-

- Areas for improvement

-
-
-

- Library rating ★★★★★



KRA 2:
Building individual skills, capability & wellbeing

Library ★ ★ ★ ★ ★



KRA 3:
Developing social capital



3.1 Welcoming civic space & sense of belonging

- Strengths
 -
 -
 -
- Areas for improvement
 -
 -
 -
- Library rating ★★★★★



3.2 Supporting social connections & reaching out to communities

- Strengths
 -
 -
 -
- Areas for improvement
 -
 -
 -
- Library rating ★★★★★



3.3 Working in partnerships

- Strengths

-
-
-

- Areas for improvement

-
-
-

- Library rating ★★★★★



KRA 3: Developing social capital

Library ★★★★★





4.2 Planning & community engagement

- Strengths
 -
 -
 -
- Areas for improvement
 -
 -
 -
- Library rating ★★★★★



4.3 Building organisational capability through people

- Strengths
 -
 -
 -
- Areas for improvement
 -
 -
 -
- Library rating ★★★★★




KRA 4:
Demonstrating leadership

Library ★ ★ ★ ★ ★




KRA 5:
**Designing, managing & improving
systems & processes**



5.1 Implementation of policies & procedures

- Strengths
 -
 -
 -
- Areas for improvement
 -
 -
 -
- Library rating ★★★★★



5.2 Obtaining & using resources

- Strengths
 -
 -
 -
- Areas for improvement
 -
 -
 -
- Library rating ★★★★★



5.3 Evaluation & continuous improvement

- Strengths

-
-
-

- Areas for improvement

-
-
-

- Library rating ★★★★★




KRA 5: Designing, managing & improving systems & processes

Library ★★★★★



Overall rating

Library ★ ★ ★ ★ ★



Actions & next steps

Appendix J: Peer review guide

Being The Best We Can: Peer Review Guide

Peer review is an important and integral part of the Being The Best We Can self-evaluation process. By inviting knowledgeable outsiders to review their self-evaluation, library services benefit from hearing an informed and impartial assessment from an external perspective.

Over a series of Being The Best We Can self-evaluations, peer reviews will act to moderate and standardise the assessment ratings and build a common understanding of what constitutes best practice for library services.

Role

The peer reviewer may best be described as acting as a 'critical friend' – one who examines the library service's self-evaluation thoroughly, reviews the evidence impartially and comes to an independent assessment which they share in a frank and friendly manner with the library service.

Skills and competencies

Desirable competencies for peer reviewers include the following:

- A good understanding of total library service delivery and/or a deep understanding of one or more key result areas.
- Good communication skills.

A peer reviewer should:

- Act as a 'critical friend', be at ease with asking candid questions and receptive to what they hear in response.
- Phrase comments in positive and supportive ways.
- Be comfortable with making challenging observations in the spirit of encouraging improvement.
- Work with all staff levels.
- Understand and articulate relationships between wider service issues and the library service.

Process

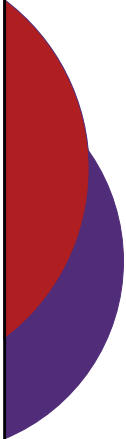
Prior to the peer review visit, the library service sends a copy of its draft self-evaluation report, the agenda and key pieces of evidence (strategic plan, annual report and any planning reports) to each member of the peer review team. Each member of the peer review team considers the self-evaluation report and prepares for the visit by making notes on significant items in the report they feel are worthy of follow-up on the day of the visit.

The visit opens with a short presentation by the hosts on their library service. The peer reviewers and their host team then work through each of the key result areas (KRAs), discussing in detail the self-evaluation results, viewing assembled evidence and commenting on the star ratings given by the library service. The peer reviewers make brief notes in the area provided in the self-evaluation report – these notes will be incorporated into the final report. The peer reviewers then do a walk-through of several branches, focusing on areas of interest they have identified during the earlier discussions.

Towards the end of the day, the peer reviewers hold a short meeting on their own to consolidate their joint impressions and prepare for the closing meeting with the host library service team. At the closing meeting, the peer reviewers give their overall impressions of the self-evaluation and invite final comments from their hosts with an opportunity for discussion.

After the peer review visit, the peer reviewers should transcribe their detailed notes and send to the host library manager who will incorporate them into the final report. Notes should be in context and provide enough detail for all stakeholders to comprehend their meaning.


Appendix K: Feedback presentation



Being The Best We Can

Key results for Victoria's public library services

[Library name here]



Being The Best We Can – process

- Orientation DD Mmm YYYY
- Select team DD Mmm YYYY
- Workshop & prelim evaluation DD Mmm YYYY
- Refine evaluation & gather evidence Mmm YYYY-
Mmm YYYY
- Peer review visit Mmm YYYY
- Follow-up presentation Mmm YYYY




Peer review

- Important part of self-evaluation process
- An informed & impartial assessment from an external perspective
- 'Critical friend'
- Over time:
 - will moderate & standardise assessment ratings
 - build a common understanding of what constitutes 'best practice' for library services



Peer review – process

- Read self-evaluation report
- [Library name] presents:
 - Overview
 - Improvement plan
 - Each KRA & theme
- Review evidence
- Tour branch libraries (Branch1, Branch2)
- Present findings



Peer reviewers

- Name
Title
Library Service name
- Name
Title
Library Service name



5 star ratings

- ★★★★★ Outstanding delivery of core & a range of enhanced services
Excellent
World-class
Sector leading & worthy of wider dissemination
- ★★★★ Major strengths
High standard of provision
Any weaknesses do not impact on users' experience



5 star ratings *continued*



Important strengths that have a positive impact

Weaknesses do not have substantial adverse effect

Weaknesses are recognised & action is being taken to improve



Satisfactory provision of core services

A few strengths & examples of good practice

Weaknesses have some adverse effects on some users

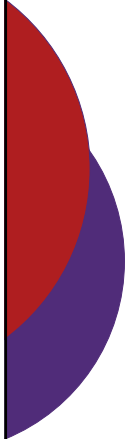


5 star ratings *continued*

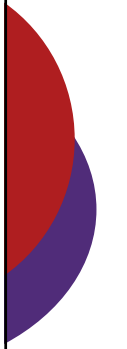


Limited range of services or weaknesses in a core service

Weaknesses have a significant impact on the quality of the users' experiences



KRA 1:
**Providing gateways to information,
learning & leisure**



**1.1 Sufficiency, range & suitability of
resources**

- **Library ★★★★★**
- **Peer reviewers ★★★★★**
 - **Feedback here:**



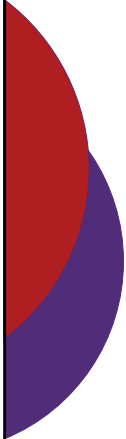
1.2 Arrangements for access

- Library ★★★★★
- Peer reviewers ★★★★★
 - Feedback here:



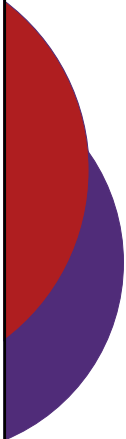
1.3 Staff knowledge of information tools & user support

- Library ★★★★★
- Peer reviewers ★★★★★
 - Feedback here:




KRA 1:
**Providing gateways to information,
learning & leisure**

Library name ★ ★ ★ ★ ★
Peer reviewers ★ ★ ★ ★ ★




KRA 2:
**Building individual skills, capability &
wellbeing**



2.1 Lifelong learning in the library context

- Library ★★★★★
- Peer reviewers ★★★★★
 - Feedback here:



2.2 Providing & promoting 21st century literacies

- Library ★★★★★
- Peer reviewers ★★★★★
 - Feedback here:



2.3 Encouraging a reading culture

- Library ★★★★★
- Peer reviewers ★★★★★
 - Feedback here:



KRA 2: Building individual skills, capability & wellbeing

Library name ★★★★★

Peer reviewers ★★★★★



KRA 3:
Developing social capital



3.1 Welcoming civic space & sense of belonging

- Library ★★★★★
- Peer reviewers ★★★★★
 - Feedback here:



3.2 Supporting social connections & reaching out to communities

- Library ★★★★★
- Peer reviewers ★★★★★
 - Feedback here:



3.3 Working in partnerships

- Library ★★★★★
- Peer reviewers ★★★★★
 - Feedback here:




KRA 3:
Developing social capital

Library name ★ ★ ★ ★ ★
Peer reviewers ★ ★ ★ ★ ★




KRA 4:
Demonstrating leadership



4.1 Leadership & innovation at all levels

- Library ★★★★★
- Peer reviewers ★★★★★
 - Feedback here:



4.2 Planning & community engagement

- Library ★★★★★
- Peer reviewers ★★★★★
 - Feedback here:



4.3 Building organisational capability through people

- Library ★★★★★
- Peer reviewers ★★★★★
 - Feedback here:



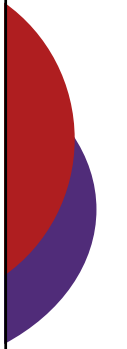
KRA 4: Demonstrating leadership

Library name ★★★★★

Peer reviewers ★★★★★




KRA 5:
**Designing, managing & improving
systems & processes**




**5.1 Implementation of policies &
procedures**

- Library ★★★★★
- Peer reviewers ★★★★★
 - Feedback here:



5.2 Obtaining & using resources

- Library ★★★★★
- Peer reviewers ★★★★★
 - Feedback here:



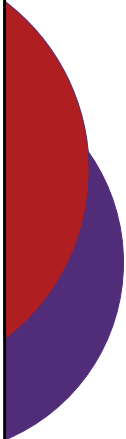
5.3 Evaluation & continuous improvement

- Library ★★★★★
- Peer reviewers ★★★★★
 - Feedback here:




KRA 5:
**Designing, managing & improving
systems & processes**

Library name ★★★★★
Peer reviewers ★★★★★



Overall rating

Library ★★★★★
Peer reviewers ★★★★★



Actions & next steps

Appendix L: Certificate

BEING THE **BEST** WE CAN

Key results for public library services

Following self-evaluation and peer review

[Insert name of Library Service]

is recognised as a



Library Service
using the Being The Best
We Can Framework

[Insert date (month & year)]