Queensland Public Library Standards and Guidelines

Shared Facilities Standard
December 2008

3. Shared Facilities Standard

Revised December 2008

3.1 Objective

The shared facilities standard provides the minimum requirements for operating a public library service within a shared environment. The guidelines provide additional information to assist library managers in planning and operating their service based on best practice examples which have been provided in a linked document.

3.2 Shared Facilities Standard

3.2.1 Standard for written agreements

When planning a shared facility, which may include co-located or joint-use services, and shared or integrated service models, a set of written governance documents must be developed in participation with all stakeholders. The documents need to define the rationale behind the decision to operate a shared facility, the structure of the entity being created and outline how it will operate and how it will be funded. The agreement should ensure the delivery of a consolidated and efficient level of service, both collectively and individually for each participating service, ensuring the clientele of all services involved are not disadvantaged. The governance documents must consider the most economic use of the resources where possible and must be reviewed at regular intervals.

3.2.1.1. Examples of written agreements

The following list of overarching governance tools are nominated as examples to select from when developing the formal written agreement/s with each entity.

- MOU – Memorandum of Understanding
- SLA - Service Level Agreement
- Construction Agreement including initial allocation of construction costs for each partner
- Legal understanding
- Operating and Maintenance Agreement
- Heads of Agreement

3.2.2 Standard for minimum operational requirements

The planning and development of a library within a shared facility should be undertaken with reference to the *Queensland Public Library Standards and Guidelines*. Major factors influencing the adequacy and quality of library services to community members include: the size of the community, site location, library size, opening hours and resources, technology, specific community programs, staffing levels, qualifications and staff skill mix. To assist in the planning of a public library within a shared facility, the following standards should be considered as a priority in the initial development stage/s: Library Buildings Standard, Operational Services Standard, Library Collections Standard, Staffing Standard, and Technology Standard. See http://www.slq.qld.gov.au/info/publib/policy/guidelines.

3.3 Guidelines for Shared Facilities

3.3.1 Guidelines for agreement inclusion

Within the agreed governance document/s, the following topics should be included:

3.3.1.1 Management
- Board of Management/Advisory Committee including membership and agreed meeting times per year
- goals, mission and vision statements
  – what is its purpose and rationale
  - all participants to the agreement must have compatible mission statements
- library strategic plan
- customer service standards
- evaluation requirements
- instructions for termination of the agreement
- marketing plan
- performance indicators and statistics - the outcome/s should not be based on potential financial benefits only
- processes for dispute resolution
- support agreements – administration

3.3.1.2. Financial commitment
- budget priorities
- agreed areas of equity and financial obligation
  e.g. resources, maintenance, both capital and recurrent
  - agreement that each participant in the facility meets important needs in the community and requires allocation of resources to meet those needs

3.3.1.3 Facilities
- profile of locality
  - all services to agree to the location, design and image of the shared facility including usage of shared common spaces (e.g. entries, foyers, and toilets)
  - provision of appropriate entry access for after hours use
  - provision of dedicated areas for library customer services and other council services
- facility management - including building maintenance, disabled access, car parking, cleaning and security, and processes for initiating action
- workplace health and safety routines

3.3.1.4 Collection resources
- collection development and management policies
- access to collections including shelving sequences for joint-use libraries

3.3.1.5 Human resources
- management structure which clearly indicates who is in charge of facility
- staffing requirements for operational roles and responsibilities, and lines of reporting including:
  - communication channels
  - duties and responsibilities
  - pay structures – appropriate award rates
  - professional development and training of staff
  - skills set of staff – qualification requirements
  - agreed staffing levels at peak times where demands of one function divert staff from other functions (eg rate payment times)
  - rostering

3.3.1.6 Service development and provision
- - who will establish the service?
- stakeholder consultation and professional advice
  - who will provide the professional advice?
  - who will provide the appropriate legal service?
  - who will provide the human resources?
- customer compatibility
  - input must be considered
- levels of service provided – including hours of operation, role and function of the facility
- information technology minimum requirements, including pcs for library use only

- fees and charges
- circulation services
- operational policies – including rostering, fees and charges and programming

3.3.2 Guidelines for best practice

Guidelines and tool kit for shared facilities best practice. December 2008
http://www.slq.qld.gov.au/info/publib/policy/guidelines.

3.4 Performance Indicators
- written agreements in place
- staffing mix that meets the staffing standards
- opening hours reflective of community needs and meeting the opening hours standards
- level of customer satisfaction and usage
- level of service provision, including range of services
- comparative benchmarking with similar services or stand alone services

3.5 Definitions

Co-located libraries are shared services on a single site where the library service is funded by the local government, other government agencies or community groups. Co-located libraries typically bring together disparate local government services such as customer service centre, Councillor Office, community centres and/or one-stop shop services.

Joint-use libraries are libraries where two or more distinct library service authorities serve their client group in the same building under a co-operative arrangement. The service is funded jointly and may involve shared staffing and collections. Joint-use libraries are typically developed between local governments and educational institutions.

Service models for joint use and co-located libraries vary considerably but generally can be categorised as either **shared** or **integrated** service models.

In **shared service models** the staffing arrangements remain quite discrete – specific staff provide specific services. Examples include:
- Multi-purpose venues where the library shares a site with one or several facilities such as a gallery, IT/training centre, museum, tourist information or customer service centre. The venue may be managed by an overarching body, the library, or separately by the service providers.

- Multiple local government service points located within the library where non-library services are provided by non-library staff. Examples may include the incorporation of a Council customer service counter or Councillor's office within the library.

Under **integrated service models** library staff provide all services. Examples include:
- Integrated council service where library services and other council services such as dog registrations, rate payments and other customer services are provided by library staff.

- Government service delivery centres, typically in small communities where withdrawn individual or stand-alone services are replaced with single service points, usually operated by a single group of staff and often providing facilities for visiting professionals. Such an arrangement may involve partnerships with agencies such as Australia Post, QGap, Rural Transaction Centres, insurance companies or community banks.

- Joint use libraries are usually integrated services although the degree of integration may vary. For example, circulation functions may be integrated but literacy or information technology training services may be limited to staff of the educational partner.

A **Shared facility** is where two or more services come together to provide a combined service point. These may include co-located or joint use libraries, shared or integrated service models.