



County Hall  
Cardiff  
CF10 4UW  
Tel: (029) 2087 2000

Neuadd y Sir  
Caerdydd  
CF10 4UW  
Ffôn: (029) 2087 2000

## CORRESPONDENCE FOLLOWING THE COMMITTEE MEETING

**Committee** POLICY REVIEW AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

**Date and Time of Meeting** TUESDAY, 7 JUNE 2016, 4.30 PM

Please find below correspondence send by the Committee Chair following the meeting, together with any responses received.

For any further details, please contact [scrutinyviewpoints@cardiff.gov.uk](mailto:scrutinyviewpoints@cardiff.gov.uk)

**Correspondence after the Meeting** *(Pages 1 - 4)*

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My Ref: T: Scrutiny/PRAP/Comm Papers/Correspondence

Date: 9 June 2016



County Hall  
Cardiff,  
CF10 4UW  
Tel: (029) 2087 2087

Neuadd y Sir  
Caerdydd,  
CF10 4UW  
Ffôn: (029) 2087 2088

Councillor Graham Hinchey,  
Cabinet Member, Corporate Services & Performance,  
Cardiff Council,  
County Hall,  
Cardiff  
CF10 4UW

Dear Councillor Hinchey,

## **Policy Review & Performance Scrutiny Committee: 7 June 2016**

Please accept my sincere thanks on behalf of the Committee for attending the Policy Review and Performance Scrutiny Committee to facilitate consideration of the Employee Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2016-19. Please also pass our thanks to Lynne David and Sian Coleman who supported the pre-decision scrutiny.

The Committee welcomes the Employee Health & Wellbeing Strategy, and the many staff support mechanisms the Council has put in place. We therefore commend the Strategy as a good way forward for the Council in supporting staff further, and we particularly commend the Council's heralding of Time for Change in recognising mental health. Members feel it is important that we retain a serious perspective on the benefits of such a strategy, therefore there are some constructive comments and observations we wish to pass on as you take the Strategy forward to Cabinet for their consideration.

Members take on board your confirmation that the Strategy aims to support and maintain a safe and healthy working environment, and therefore should encompass Health & Safety policy. The approach appears to be based on a medical model of Health & Wellbeing; however the Committee feels that simply looking at health may miss problems in other areas of employees' lives too, such as housing. We are therefore pleased you acknowledge the need for measures to monitor this.

Focussing more closely on monitoring, Members are keen to establish how the Committee will be able to monitor the success of the Strategy over time. We

acknowledge the performance indicators, as listed in section 7 of the Strategy, which include sickness absence, turnover, resolution outcomes, response to new initiatives, and Employee Survey results, and wish to suggest using data generated by the Employee Assistance Programme would also be useful. The Committee would like to consider a monitoring report in 6 months' time and will be considering whether managers are improving in their ability to identify stress, particularly their ability to identify mental health issues in their staff. Members strongly endorse your statement as to the importance of managers understanding mental health and wish to re-inforce the importance of maintaining and monitoring Council wide staff morale. The Committee is minded to request a report to Committee specifically on this matter.

Members wish to point out that, as the Council moves forward making changes to the way it delivers frontline services, it may be appropriate to needs assess individual employees to ensure they are equipped to meet changing methods of service delivery. We feel there is a need for quiet meeting rooms, where managers are able to have one to one conversations.

The Committee feels it is important to establish how the strategy will be resourced. We acknowledge the Council is serious about dealing with stress, and is looking for creative training solutions, taking the opportunity of using partners' expertise and the services of organisations such as MIND, who currently run a programme on stress awareness for managers.

Finally, Members feel the Strategy is directly relevant to schools and as such would commend it to them.

*To recap, the Committee:*

- feels that simply looking at health may miss problems in other areas of employees' lives, for which measures to monitor are required;
- would like to consider a monitoring report in 6 months time to establish whether managers are improving in their ability to identify stress, particularly their ability to identify mental health issues in their staff;

- wishes to re-inforce the importance of maintaining and monitoring Council wide staff morale, and is minded to request a report to Committee specifically on this matter;
- feels it is important that the Cabinet establish how the strategy will be resourced;
- suggests the Strategy is directly relevant to schools and as such would commend it to them.

Once again on behalf of the Committee, please pass my sincere thanks to all who attended PRAP Scrutiny Committee to brief Members.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nigel Howells', with a stylized flourish at the end.

**COUNCILLOR NIGEL HOWELLS  
CHAIR, POLICY REVIEW AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

cc Members of the Policy Review & Performance Scrutiny Committee.  
Christine Salter, Corporate Director Resources.  
Lynne David, Centre of Expertise.  
Sian Coleman, OD Specialist.  
Claire Deguara, Cabinet Office.  
Matt Swindell, Cabinet Office.

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