

ECONOMY & CULTURE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

14 FEBRUARY 2017

Present: County Councillor McKerlich(Chairperson)
County Councillors Howells, Hyde, Keith Jones and Simmons

44 : APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Ed Stubbs.

45 : DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct.

46 : MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Economy and Culture Committee held on 8 December were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairperson.

47 : ARTS ADM

It was noted that appendices B2, B3, B4 and B5 of Appendix B to the report are not for publication under Schedule 12A Part 4, Paragraph 14 and Schedule 12A Part 5, Paragraph 21 of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

The Chairperson welcomed Councillor Peter Bradbury, Cabinet Member for Community Development, Co-operatives and Social Enterprise, Neil Hanratty, Director – Economic Development and Roger Hopwood, Arts and Theatres Manger to the meeting.

The Chairperson invited Councillor Bradbury to make a statement in which he stated that whilst reaching the decision to terminate the Arts & Culture ADM in favour of an Enhanced In-house Model had taken some time, it is in the best interests of all involved for the Council to retain control of the venues.

The Chairperson invited Neil Hanratty, Director – Economic Development to provide Members with the presentation.

The Chairperson invited questions and comments from Members:

- Members welcomed the decision made but queried the cost involved in the process and were advised the team who dealt with both the ADM and the Enhanced In-House Model were the same.
- Officers explained that the challenge is in ensuring there is capacity to deal with the complex issues.
- Members were advised that it is necessary for new relationships to be developed, examples given were the BBC and WNO. However, it was important that there were both operational and revenue savings.

- Members were informed that savings of £417k need to be achieved this year across the two venues, together with the previous year's savings of £130k. Officers are confident that these savings will be achieved using a combination of increased sales and improved working practices.
- Members were advised that there is to be detailed consideration of 'not for profit' organisations, such as a trust. These organisations are able to claim mandatory National Non Domestic Rates which also help in achieving the savings.

AGREED: That the Chairperson on behalf of the Committee writes to the relevant Cabinet Member and officers thanking them for attending the meeting and conveying the observations of the Committee.

48 : DRAFT BUDGET PROPOSALS 2017/18 & CORPORATE PLAN 2017 - 2019

Corporate Overview

The Chairperson welcomed Councillor Graham Hinchey, Cabinet Member for Corporate Services & Performance, Christine Salter, Corporate Director Resources and Ian Allwood Head of Finance to the meeting.

The Chairperson invited Councillor Hinchey to make a statement. Thereafter Members were provided with a presentation on the Draft Budget Proposals 2017/18, after which the Chairperson invited questions and comments from Members:

- Members were advised that notification of the settlement from Welsh Local Government was late, but that it was better than anticipated. As a result of this the Financial Resilience Mechanism (FRM) now stands at £4m. Further, the level of contingency has been reduced to £3m. Members discussed the use of the FRM for the next year.
- Members raised concern at the current level of debt, approximately £666m and how long the borrowing of substantial sums will continue. Members were advised that robust reviews were undertaken and robust advice provided.
- Members were advised that there will be a continuation of funding for Operation Mistletoe from earmarked reserves.

Economic Development Directorate

The Chairperson welcomed Councillor Phil Bale - Leader, Economic Development and Partnerships, Councillor Peter Bradbury, Cabinet Member for Community Development, Co-operatives and Social Enterprise, Neil Hanratty, Director, Economic Development, Christine Salter, Corporate Director Resources and Ian Allwood Head of Finance to the meeting.

The Chairman invited Councillor Bale to make a statement in which he made reference to the City Deal, the Business Improvement District, Central Square, the Indoor Arena, and the International Sports Village.

Members were provided with a presentation by Neil Hanratty, Director after which the Chairperson invited questions and comments from Members.

- Members were advised that there was confidence in the achievability of the savings outlined even in light of the Brexit process.
- Members wanted to know whether financial support could be offered to businesses by the Council in light of the Brexit process but were advised that whilst financial support can no longer be provided, advice as to where support and information can be obtained via Welsh Government would be.

City Operations Directorate

The Chairperson welcomed Councillor Peter Bradbury, Cabinet Member for Community Development, Co-operatives and Social Enterprise, Councillor Bob Derbyshire, Cabinet Member for Environment, Andrew Gregory, Director City Operations, Christine Salter, Corporate Director Resources and Ian Allwood Head of Finance to the meeting.

The Chairman invited both Councillor Bradbury and Councillor Derbyshire to make a statement. Members were provided with a presentation by Andrew Gregory, Director City Operations, after which the Chairperson invited questions and comments from Members.

- Members asked for more information about which sports facilities are to be refurbished enabled through the allocation of Financial Resilience Mechanism funding. They were advised that and a review is currently being undertaken and information will be provided for the Committee's consideration in due course.
- Members were advised that officers are actively engaged in seeking alternative sponsorship for the RHS, further it was noted that ticket sales are up on last year.

Communities, Housing and Customer Services Directorate

The Chairperson welcomed Councillor Peter Bradbury, Cabinet Member for Community Development, Co-operatives and Social Enterprise, Councillor Dan De'Ath, Cabinet Member for Skills, Safety, Engagement and Democracy, Sarah McGill, Director Communities, Housing and Customer Services, Christine Salter, Corporate Director Resources and Ian Allwood Head of Finance to the meeting.

The Chairman invited both Councillor Bradbury and Councillor De'Ath to make a statement. Members were provided with a presentation by Sarah McGill, Director Communities, Housing and Customer Services after which the Chairperson invited questions and comments from Members.

- Members were advised that library provision would be present at Llanrumney Hub whether or not the bid for finance was successful.
- Officers advised that whilst finance has not been allocated within the budget for improvements at existing Hubs across the city, work is ongoing with other

public sector partners to drive service improvements and improved customer experience. Updates will be provided to the Committee in due course.

AGREED: That the Chairperson on behalf of the Committee writes to the relevant Cabinet Member and officers thanking them for attending the meeting and conveying the observations of the Committee.

49 : DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be in Committee Room 4, County Hall on Thursday 9 March 2017 at 4.30 pm.

The meeting terminated at 7.30 pm

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Chairperson