

## ECONOMY & CULTURE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

10 MAY 2018

Present: Councillor Howells(Chairperson)  
Councillors Gordon, Gavin Hill-John, Parkhill, Robson and Sattar

### 75 : APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Ebrahim.

### 76 : DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

A declaration of interest was received from Councillor Gordon in respect of item 4. Councillor Gordon declared a prejudicial interest as she is a Trustee of Grassroots, City Centre Youth Centre.

### 77 : MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 April 2018 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairperson.

### 78 : PEOPLE & COMMUNITIES DIRECTORATE DELIVERY PLAN

The Chairperson welcomed Councillor Lynda Thorne, Cabinet Member – Housing and Communities, Councillor Sarah Merry, Cabinet Member – Deputy Leader, Education, Employment & Skills, Sarah McGill, Corporate Director People and Communities, Jane Thomas, Assistant Director – Housing and Communities, and Nick Blake, Business Support Manager to the meeting.

The Chairperson invited Councillor Thorne to make a statement in which she said that it was her pleasure to introduce the Plan, part of the new People & Communities Directorate for the new year 2018-2019. Councillor Thorne was especially excited to see the planned development of the Community Hub and Wellbeing Programme, including the completion of St Mellon's Community Hub this Summer. Councillor Thorne was pleased to note the successful completion of the Llanedeyrn and Llanishen new community hubs during 2017/18.

The Chairperson invited Councillor Merry to make a statement in which she said that she was pleased to see that there were over 300 people on the Adult Community Learning for Work Scheme. Councillor Merry stated that whilst it was important to work with education with young people to meet the needs of the growing economy, it was also important to work with older residents to improve their work skills so that all people can benefit from this programme.

Members were provided with a presentation on the People & Communities Directorate Delivery Plan after which the Chairperson invited questions and comments from Members.

- Members considered this was a straightforward Directorate Delivery Plan, however Members had some issues with the layout/format at the start of the document.
- Members referred to targets and asked if they are reviewed when targets are met and whether target setting is robust enough. Officers explained that targets are reviewed, new targets are more difficult to assess initially. With high targets such as 95% satisfaction rate, just maintaining that level is challenging enough especially with a changing range of services being introduced.
- Members discussed hubs and the advice services provided particularly in central wards. Members considered that services should be tailored to, for example, financial and into work services as there are many people on low wages and who have multiple low paid jobs or are on zero hour contracts. Members also stated that the low-wage sector should be reflected in targets. The Cabinet Member considered that the changes that had been put in place do address this, previously people's postcode determined what services they could access, now everyone can access into work services. The Cabinet Member accepted that there were not hubs in all areas but that the Council are always looking for opportunities for partners to provide services. Officers added that there are now over 30 locations across the City that provide services, not just via Hubs.
- Members asked how the Council promotes Employment Support Services to businesses and how the volunteer portal is promoted. Officers explained that in relation to Employment Support Services, there are now dedicated staff for this service; the service area also has links with Economic Development who liaise with new businesses and help with recruitment etc. with reference to the Volunteer Portal, officers advised that there had been a soft launch a few months ago to ensure it was fit for purpose, a few tweaks were needed such as some work on specific activities and there were a few developmental matters that needed to be addressed but overall it had been very well received. People are now able to volunteer in their own wards. Next there would be a major marketing campaign and the Cabinet Member suggested that Members try out the portal and make suggestions.
- Members noted that Gateway to Employment had launched on 1 April 2018 and asked what the initial reaction had been to it. Members also asked about the timescale for review and reporting back to Committee. Officers explained that it had taken time due to Staff needing to be TUPE'd across which had taken a lot of work but most posts were now filled. It had been a slow start but now advice on benefits, support and into work services could be offered. Officers added that it should come back to Committee at the end of the calendar year to allow the service to embed and provide meaningful data.
- Members asked to what level are staff in the Directorate trained in debt advice. Officers explained that in the Money Advice section they are trained for low level debt advice, in the Cardiff Advice Service there are specialist debt advisors who provide in-depth advice such as bankruptcy advice.

RESOLVED: that the views of the Committee would be discussed during the way forward section of the meeting and a letter sent to the Cabinet Members in due course.

## 79 : BUILDING RESILIENT COMMUNITIES THROUGH THE FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNITY HUBS

The Chairperson welcomed Councillor Lynda Thorne, Cabinet Member – Housing and Communities, Sarah McGill, Corporate Director People and Communities, Jane Thomas, Assistant Director, Housing and Communities, and Nicola Pitman, Central Library Manager to the meeting.

The Chairperson invited the Cabinet Member to make a statement in which she said that she was very pleased to introduce the Community Wellbeing hub proposal and was excited by the proposal to develop Community Wellbeing Hubs in the North and West of the City, aiming to focus on wellbeing, community engagement and independent living. The Community Wellbeing Hubs will offer a wide range of independent living advice, play a role in social prescribing by GPs and involve partner organisations, community groups and volunteers to engage the community, particularly older people.

Members were provided with a presentation on Building Resilient Communities through the further development of Community Hubs, including proposed changes to branch libraries and Central Library, after which the Chairperson invited questions and comments from Members:

- Members considered these to be interesting proposal with the Council choosing a developmental route instead of closing branch libraries. Members added that people were more aware of hubs now but there were still communities who would wonder what the hubs would mean in terms of library provision.
- Members noted that in the North and West of the City there were already community groups that provide a range of services and considered it was important that these groups are brought on board with any hub developments to avoid duplication and to ensure community buy-in. The Cabinet Member advised that she had met with Friends Groups in Whitchurch and Rhiwbina and the meetings had helped to shape her thoughts to go forward. The Cabinet Member added that she hoped to protect and develop services through working with partners. Officers added that they would always consult with the local communities about their view on provision of services as there was no 'one size fits all'. It was hoped that consultation would help to get the community on board.
- Members noted the four new hub areas and the new Inclusion Officer roles and asked where the funding came from for these. Officers advised that the posts would be funded from the Communities First legacy grant.
- Members were pleased to see that the need for groups such as Pilates/craft etc. was recognised and noted that facilitators of such groups would need to be paid. Members asked about the costs of such groups/classes. Officers

advised that not all groups /classes would be free, for paying groups/classes there would be small fee. There was also a fund for room hire.

- Members referred to area reviews and asked what the timescales for these were. Officers explained that the review would be undertaken by an officer and the review would be inclusive but there was no timescale in place.
- Members noted that in outlying areas issues such as bus links etc. need to be considered and the example of Pentyrch and Creigiau was given stating that buses from there go to Whitchurch not Radyr. Officers agreed and considered that wider links and knowledge was needed and in some cases outreach should be provided.
- Members noted that not all areas have a suitable venue for a hub but all areas do have schools and asked if schools were being considered. Officers explained that they would take a broad view of community facilities in schools; there was a move towards Community Focussed Schools whereby the facilities would be available for the wider community out of school hours. Therefore schools would be considered but it was important to look at each area and see what services would be needed.
- Members asked if there was likely to be any Capital Funding available in the future and were advised that there was very limited access to Capital Funding but there were lots of potential grant opportunities to explore.
- Members made reference to the potential housing and development services and sought more information on this. Officers advised that the Council could only release housing revenue account funding if there was a definable service for Council tenants, this would be for instance, a housing solution built on top of a community facility. It was added that some buildings are listed and need investment, some need improvement so this option was worth exploring.
- Members asked if there had been an assessment undertaken on the impact on Library Standards and were advised that there was no full assessment but with the changes there could only be an improvement in performance of standards due to the full integration of the teams. Also in relation to the events programme, this would be targeted and there would be more of them so anticipated improved performance there too.
- Members asked about the size of the new library teams and were advised that officers have not finally developed what the new teams will look like as yet. Members then asked about the size of reduction in staff numbers and were advised that all staff have been briefed and consultation with the unions had been undertaken. There had been positive responses, great suggestions and some uncertainty. Officers did not have exact staff numbers to hand but they anticipated to deliver around £200k in savings.
- Members asked about the size of the Legacy Grant and officers advised that they would have to obtain the figures and relay the information to Members after the meeting.

- Members noted the reference to social activities and asked if this would cover older people and enable day centres to bid for funding. Officers explained that Inclusion Officers would work with the community, there would be no barriers to who could apply.
- Members referred to transport links to hubs and considered that staff should be aware and provide advice on how to get to hubs, noting that events needed to be accessible. Officers agreed and stated that there had been issues regarding this and they had been flagged up. Officers added that if services were provided in more local areas people should be able to access them. The contribution to the Active Travel approach was important and services within walkable distances was important.

RESOLVED: that the views of the Committee would be discussed during the way forward section of the meeting and a letter sent to the Cabinet Member in due course.

#### 80 : COMMITTEE BUSINESS

Members were provided with a correspondence update report.

Members were advised that Transport for Wales would come to address Committee and updates such as floorplans etc. would form part of the planning application that would be submitted in the summer.

Members were advised that during this Committee cycle there had been a pilot to trial no cover reports in the agenda pack. This pilot had been discussed at Chairs Liaison Forum as part of a savings exercise. The Chairperson sought comments on the pilot.

Members were conscious of Corporate Memory and considered that the cover reports provided a useful reference back to any previous scrutiny of issues. However, Members considered that for the topics considered during this committee cycle, the pilot had worked well. Members requested that, in future, cover reports advised Committee of previous scrutiny and key points.

RESOLVED: To note the report.

#### 81 : DATE OF NEXT MEETING

14<sup>th</sup> June 2018 at 4.30pm