

ECONOMY & CULTURE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

14 JUNE 2018

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

1 : APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRPERSON & COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

The Committee noted that Council at its meeting held on 24 May 2018 appointed Councillor Nigel Howells as Chair and the following Members to this Committee:

Councillors Derbyshire, Gordon, Gavin Hill-John, Parkhill, Robson, Sattar, Simmons and Stubbs.

The Chairperson welcomed Councillors Derbyshire and Simmons as new Members to the committee.

2 : TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Committee noted the terms of reference.

3 : APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Derbyshire, Gordon. Parkhill and Simmons.

4 : DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None Received.

5 : MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 May 2018 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairperson.

6 : QUARTER 4 PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Chairperson welcomed Councillor Peter Bradbury, Cabinet Member – Culture & Leisure, Councillor Russell Goodway, Cabinet Member –Investment & Development, Councillor Sarah Merry, Deputy Leader, Education, Employment & Skills, Councillor Lynda Thorne, Cabinet Member – Housing and Communities, Neil Hanratty, Director of Economic Development, and Sarah McGill, Corporate Director People and Communities to the meeting.

The Chairperson invited the Cabinet Member Housing and Communities to make a statement in which she said that Cardiff is a growing city, however inequality remains a major challenge. To enable our citizens to reach their potential, then it is these services that need to perform well and meet the needs of our citizens. This challenge is magnified by the changes that Welfare Reform and in particular Universal Credit are bringing. The Cabinet Member said she was proud to report that we have helped

over 42,000 receive into work advice; Supported nearly 1,4000 completing an accredited training; Engaged with 297 clients impacted by the benefit cap, of which 115 have secured employment. The quarter 4 report shows that libraries and hubs have received over 3.3 million visitors, with customer satisfaction of 98%. The Cabinet Member expressed her delight at this adding that it only tells part of the picture and only by visiting and seeing the whole community, using, enjoying and benefiting from the fantastic services can you truly understand the huge success that they have become.

The Chairperson invited the Cabinet Member Education, Employment & Skills to make statement in which she said that she was pleased that enrolment of Learning for Work had increased by 27%, there was 92% success rate which was above the set target and was targeting the more vulnerable learners. She added that there was one issue of concern in that the grant for Adult Community Learning would be dramatically reduced in the forthcoming year by more than 50%; this was currently out to consultation.

The Director for Economic Development stated that in relation to his area, most objectives had been reached, only 1 had not been and that was the unemployment target. He added that numbers had risen due to more people being in the work place with the introduction of Universal Credit.

The Chairperson invited questions and comments from Members:

People and Communities

Members discussed the Council Staff Violence against Women target, noting it was a new target but hoped to see a dramatic improvement in the next year.

Members welcomed the increase in visitors to libraries and Hubs.

Officers made reference to the E-Learning routes for Domestic Violence training, where there had been some technical issues, they had been routed through Health colleagues and had been difficult to capture previously. Officers intend to keep an eye on this to ensure issues have been resolved.

Members made reference to the reduction in grant funding for ACL and asked if there was a contingency plan. Officers stated that the level of reduction would be extremely challenging and with current excellent results, it was a real concern. Officers would take the approach of maximising grant opportunities and integrated working to reduce the burden on the Council.

A cut of 50% could not be mitigated fully. Committee offered its support to officers regarding this, including help during the consultation phase in terms of offering their feedback re the good performance currently and the value of this.

Economic Development

Members referred to the unemployment target and noted that this was largely out of the Council's hands. Members discussed large stores leaving the City such as Toys R Us and Howells and asked what the Council could do to alleviate the impact on a local level and to encourage people to use the High Street. The Cabinet Member

stated that there were more people in work in Cardiff yet the number of people in the job market and seeking employment has grown due to Universal Credit. Officers added that they have created 20,000 new jobs yet the rate of unemployment has still grown. Members considered whether the target was accurate and whether we are measuring the correct indicators. Officers stated that they felt the indicators and targets were appropriate but were happy to listen to the views of the Committee if Members felt additional indicators would be helpful. Members discussed the issues with the High Street such as banks and Post Offices closing, people shopping online etc. Footfall in the City had been maintained but people were using the City for different things. It was important to be creative and draw people in to the City with such events as Car Free Day and build on the day-time economy as well as the night time economy. The Council was in discussion with the landlord of Howells and House of Fraser and was also considering revisiting the design of St Mary Street. In relation to the targets being appropriate, Officers explained that they have previously beaten the target due to one-off large projects but these are not guaranteed. Officers explained that the BID should help, with businesses working together to attract more visitors to the high street. Members queried whether Cardiff was experiencing the same patterns of footfall as elsewhere; were there lessons to learn from other cities?

With reference to paid attendance at the New Theatre and St David's Hall, Members noted that the figure was slightly lower than last year. Members were advised that paid attendance was still up; and were better in some parts of the year such as Christmas at St David's Hall. It was added that the subsidy had had to be pulled from St David's Hall and this had been a challenge, with a restructure underway.

Members stated that they would like Scrutiny to look at new tourism such as the Castle and Dr Who. Officers explained that the Council was close to agreement with Dr Who and Blacktower Tales and more information would be available in due course.

Members noted the numbers of visitors staying in the City and were surprised that it was slightly off target especially with the Champions League. Officers stated that the visitors staying overnight was 1.8% and the target was 2% but added that day visits went up substantially over target.

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.

7 : ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIRECTORATE DELIVERY PLAN

The Chairperson welcomed Councillor Peter Bradbury, Cabinet Member – Culture & Leisure, Councillor Russell Goodway, Cabinet Member – Investment & Development and Neil Hanratty, Director of Economic Development to the meeting.

Members were provided with a presentation after which the Chairperson invited questions and comments from Members:

Members asked for more information on Incubator Space and were advised that Innovator/Incubator space was not really performing, officers are looking to work with

the University, seek planning permission, work with a contractor and look to change the landscape in Cardiff, establishing a proper research facility related to the University and Industry. The policy will be reviewed over the next few months to see if this alternative approach was needed.

Members noted the list of ambitions and asked if the Directorate had the resources needed to deliver on these. The Cabinet Member said it did not, but they would have to do what they had always done which was to persuade other people to use their resources to deliver the agenda. There would be a need to become more adept in years to come. All major projects in recent years delivered in Cardiff had been public/private partnerships.

Members asked how well staffed the directorate was and were advised that there were not enough people, the scale of savings made year on year had provided a very difficult challenge; there was a need to be innovative and find ways of doing things differently. The Cabinet Member added that decisions in the past had impacted on some relations which had made things harder to achieve this time around.

Members asked if there was capacity to look out Grants. Officers advised that they had never felt there was a capacity constraint, where the opportunity arose then they were applied for, adding that they don't apply for grants themselves as such but help other such as the Cardiff Story. He added there were lots of examples where they get things delivered by other people getting grants such as the Tramshed. It was noted that they always worked with other such as Friends Groups and Trusts who have access to funds.

The Cabinet Member Culture & Leisure added that sometimes the Council is precluded from applying for grants but they have been creative and he gave the example of Insole Court which he considered had worked exceptionally well. With reference to Capacity he gave the example of the Live Music Strategy and there being one Council Officer working to deliver this, stating that this is the reality of a discretionary service area when the Council is being squeezed.

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.

8 : CARDIFF CAPITAL REGION CITY DEAL: JOINT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE PROPOSALS

The Chairperson welcomed Councillor Huw Thomas, Leader to the meeting.

The Chairperson invited the Leader to make a statement in which he said that the Committee needed to satisfy itself that the scrutiny arrangements in place for the City Deal are robust, adding that there is one Member per Authority, which reflects arrangements for other Joint Committees. He stated that Members would be aware that the City Deal agreed the joint business plan which reflects the competing expectations of the authorities i.e. thematic/project focussed; a compromise was evidenced in that business plan. Now that the business plan is agreed, it is important that Cardiff applies the same level of scrutiny it applies in Cardiff to the City Deal.

The Chairperson noted that Bridgend had been nominated as Lead Scrutiny and asked what rationale was behind that decision. The Leader stated that the decision was made at Chief Executive level, then accepted by Members, adding that Bridgend had the capacity to undertake the role. The Governance Lead is the Chief Executive of Merthyr and it makes sense to have different authorities as different Leads.

The Chairperson advised Committee that they have been asked specifically to provide views on certain areas and asked the Scrutiny Officer to provide an overview of these. The Scrutiny Officer explained that in relation to Statutory Guidance, this Committee should provide a view on whether there should be joint scrutiny, as it has the remit for scrutiny of City Deal; the Committee considered it should be.

Members were asked if they considered the Terms of Reference appropriate, they currently state that the Chair/Vice is selected alphabetically and rotate annually; the Statutory Guidance makes no reference to alpha order. The Chairperson considered that the nomination of the Chair and Vice should be a committee decision. The Scrutiny Officer advised that she would feed this into the comments to Council.

Members were advised that there needed to be a nominated representative (non-executive member), Scrutiny Chairs had been consulted on this and they considered the Chair of Economy & Culture Scrutiny Committee should be the representative. Members discussed the length of appointment and noted that Cardiff appoints annually. Members also discussed the skill sets required for nominees, Members considered there should be Chairmanship experience, experience of City Deal and scrutiny experience.

A discussion took place about what mechanism exists for feeding back to Cardiff, the Scrutiny Officer explained that the Joint Overview/Scrutiny does not preclude authorities doing their own scrutiny; there are mechanisms in place to allow feedback, the feedback would be verbal and written feedback and would be from our representatives at the JOSC and supporting Officers.

Members were asked to consider the Independent Remuneration Panel recommendation that it is up to the respective local authority whether the Chair of the JOSC gets paid. Members considered that there may be a considerable amount of work involved. However, Members did not believe that there should be an additional payment on top of the payment already made to Scrutiny Chairs. The Scrutiny officers agreed to feedback those views.

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

9 : COMMITTEE BUSINESS

Members were provided with a correspondence update report, noting that there were no outstanding responses.

Members were provided with the Annual Report, it was explained that it followed the same format as previously, listing what has been scrutinised over the year and highlighting some of the work. Members were advised that this was an opportunity to make any changes prior to it being presented to full Council next week.

The Chairperson advised that as he would not be attending full Council, a member of the Committee would need to present the report in his absence. Councillor Gavin Hill-John was nominated to present the Annual Report to Council.

Members were asked to consider how they wished to proceed with work programming. The Scrutiny Officer advised Members of the ways in which this had been done in previous years, with a list of areas they wish to scrutinise, which is then prioritised. Councillor Stubbs stated he was keen to look at GLL and the impact on non-profit groups and public service groups who use the buildings. The Scrutiny Officer advised that there would likely be a long list of areas and that Committee would need to focus its time, bearing in mind the WAO recommendation of there being a balance of work at and outside committee, with committee meetings taking no longer than 3 hours.

Members considered that there should be an informal session after the July Committee meeting for a maximum of one hour.

RESOLVED: To note the report.

10 : DATE OF NEXT MEETING

5th July 2018 at 4.30pm in Committee Room 4, County Hall, Cardiff.

The meeting terminated at 5.55 pm