



DINAS A SIR CAERDYDD
CITY AND COUNTY OF CARDIFF

COUNCIL SUMMONS

THURSDAY, 25 JANUARY 2024

GWYS Y CYNGOR

DYDD IAU, 25 IONAWR 2024,

You are summoned to attend a multi location meeting of the **COUNTY COUNCIL OF THE CITY AND COUNTY OF CARDIFF** which will be held at Council Chamber - County Hall, Atlantic Wharf, Cardiff, CF10 4UW on Thursday, 25 January 2024 at 4.30 pm to transact the business set out in the agenda attached.

D Marles
Interim Monitoring Officer

County Hall
Cardiff
CF10 4UW

Friday, 19 January 2024

Promotion of equality and respect for others | Objectivity and propriety | Selflessness and stewardship
Integrity | Duty to uphold the law | Accountability and openness

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<i>Item</i>		<i>Approx Time</i>	<i>Max Time Allotted</i>
1	Apologies for Absence <i>To receive apologies for absence.</i>	4.30 pm	
2	Declarations of Interest <i>To receive declarations of interest (such declarations to be made in accordance with the Members Code of Conduct)</i>		
3	Minutes (Pages 9 - 28) <i>To approve as a correct record the minutes of the previous meeting.</i>		
4	Public Questions <i>To receive previously notified questions from Members of the Public.</i>	4.30 pm	5 mins
5	Petitions <i>To receive petitions from Elected Members to Council.</i>	4.35 pm	5 mins
6	Lord Mayor's Announcements <i>To receive the Lord Mayor's announcements including Recognitions and Awards.</i>	4.40 pm	5 mins
7	Governance & Audit Committee Annual Report 2022/2023 (Pages 29 - 60)	4.45 pm	10 mins
8	Cabinet Statements (Pages 61 - 108) <i>To receive statements from the Leader and Cabinet Members</i>	4.55 pm	45 mins
Break - 17:40pm			
9	Notice of Motion - 1 Proposed by Councillor Lancaster Seconded by Councillor Melbourne <i>This Council notes:</i>	5.55 pm	30 mins

- *Local Government funding is devolved to the Welsh Government.*
- *Cardiff has had the second highest increase in settlement from the Welsh Government of 4.1%, above the Welsh average.*
- *The increase in settlement by Welsh Government is partially offset by their withdrawal of some grant support.*
- *A projected funding gap of £30.5M for the forthcoming financial year.*

This Council further notes:

- *Council Tax rises place financial pressure on all households, particularly lower income ones.*
- *Non-Domestic Rates collected in Cardiff are pooled centrally by the Welsh Government and redistributed around Wales. Cardiff receives back less than it contributes.*
- *Proposals in the budget consultation include reduction in frontline services.*

This Council resolves:

- *To listen to residents' needs & focus on protecting and improving core services, with the need to keep Council Tax as low as possible and deliver value for money.*
- *To oppose three-weekly black bin collections, charging a separate fee for the collection of garden waste, removal of litter bins and reduction of street cleaning.*
- *To eliminate our funding gap and improve core services by negotiating with Welsh Government to retain 100% of the Non-Domestic Rates collected by Cardiff Council.*

10	<p>Notice of Motion - 2</p> <p>Proposed by Councillor Rodney Berman Seconded by Councillor Robert Hopkins</p> <p><i>This Council notes that:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) <i>In financial year 2023-2024, one special school, 35 primary schools and two secondary schools set deficit budgets at the outset.</i> 2) <i>Many other schools were able to set a balanced budget only through the one-off use of their</i> 	6.25 pm	30 mins
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reserves.

- 3) *The proportion of schools having to set a deficit budget is unprecedented.*
- 4) *Given the concerns expressed about the significant budget gap for the council as a whole in 2024-2025 and warnings given to the council's school budget forum, there are widespread fears that the situation will only worsen with even more schools falling into deficit.*
- 5) *Employee costs account for between 80% and 90% of schools' budgets.*
- 6) *Schools are still continuing to work hard to recover from the Covid-19 pandemic and are dealing with multiple demands and pressures as a result. These demands include the need to: improve attendance which at the end of the 2023 academic year was 6% below pre-pandemic levels in secondary schools and 5% in primary schools; engage with families to increase support for vulnerable pupils; improve help for the mental health and well-being of children and young people.*
- 7) *Schools' leaders and teachers are heavily involved in the implementation of curriculum reform and reform to the provision for pupils with additional learning needs.*
- 8) *The current Medium Term Financial Plan places the council on a continuing trajectory of significantly increasing its level of borrowing together with associated revenue costs, whilst the Cabinet has also recently committed to fund around half of its agreed £27.3 million capital contribution towards the planned new Indoor Arena through undertaking additional borrowing, and this is having a significant knock-on effect on the availability of revenue funding for key council services including for schools' delegated budgets. £1.5 million of annual revenue funding is already contained within the council's base revenue budget to cover borrowing costs associated with the Indoor Arena project and the Cabinet has now agreed that the revenue provision for this borrowing in the budget should increase to £2.9 million a year during the construction phase and early years of the project.*

This Council believes that:

- 1) *All schools must have the resources necessary to maintain a high quality of education.*

	<p>2) <i>This requires a level of delegated funding that will avoid damaging job losses and safeguard the capacity of schools to meet the needs of all their pupils.</i></p> <p>3) <i>The Welsh Government should develop a longer-term Covid-19 recovery plan that recognises the impact that the pandemic has had, and continues to have, on each and every school.</i></p> <p>4) <i>Action is needed if Cardiff is to protect its status as the UK's first city to be awarded Child Friendly City Status.</i></p> <p>5) <i>A situation where schools increasingly need to rely on setting deficit budgets to operate is simply not sustainable.</i></p> <p><i>This Council calls on the Cabinet to bring forward a funding strategy as part of the Council's future budget consideration that ensures Cardiff's schools can be more adequately funded in order that the proportion of the city's schools that need to set deficit budgets can be substantially reduced</i></p>		
11	<p>Notice of Motion - 3</p> <p>Proposed by Councillor Moultrie Seconded by Councillor Green</p> <p><i>Local Authorities across the country such as Cardiff are currently preparing their annual budgets for 2024/25.</i></p> <p><i>After 13 years of public sector austerity by the Conservative-led UK Government, exacerbated in recent years by the continued impact of Brexit, the long tail of the Pandemic, rampant inflation, and stagnant growth, Councils now face unprecedented levels of demand but wholly insufficient funding. Such is the severity of the situation, that several councils in England have issued Section 114 notices to severely curtail day-to-day spending.</i></p> <p><i>Cardiff Council has faced a cumulative budget gap of over £300 million since 2010, and prudent, decisive action has been needed to protect the Council's financial resilience, whilst still delivering an ambitious Stronger, Fairer, Greener vision.</i></p> <p><i>In particular, the Council notes:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>The continued improvements delivered within our schools, which has seen a dramatic reduction in the number of schools in Estyn Monitoring, NEET figures held at near historically low levels, exam</i> 	6.55 pm	30 mins

results now comfortably above the Welsh average, and the sustained investment over 11 years into both our schools and the Education estate.

- *The progress made in support of children who are looked after, in particular the careful expansion of kinship care, and the delivery of the accommodation strategy. This work is improving the Council's ability to home and care for our most vulnerable young people closer to home.*
- *The rebuilding of our Youth Service capacity, with budget growth across multiple years, and proposed protection to the service in the forthcoming financial year, enabling the service to build on the success of initiatives like the Cardiff Commitment and the UNICEF Child-Friendly City award to ensure all our young people, regardless of background, can benefit from the opportunities our city offers.*
- *The pioneering partnership work between our Social Services teams and the NHS which enables timely discharges from hospital to mitigate against Winter Pressures. This partnership ensures our older people - particularly those with conditions such as dementia - get the specialised care they need, and which is supporting people to live independently at home, with a better quality of life, for longer.*
- *The success of our award winning Council House building programme, which is transforming lives and communities in every part of Cardiff, and which is also supporting the delivery – at scale – of innovative and rapid housing solutions to help address the latest homelessness crisis affecting all cities.*
- *All of this is and more is delivered with the Council setting amongst the lowest Council Tax levels in Wales.*

Nevertheless, despite the relative protection afforded by the Welsh Government to local authorities, the latest budget round leaves the Council facing significant challenges, and difficult decisions, the results of which residents will feel keenly.

Therefore this Council resolves to:

- *Condemn the continued attack on local government finances by the Conservative UK Government, and the detrimental impact this has on the provision of public services;*

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Call on the Chancellor of the Exchequer to announce additional resources targeted at local authorities in his March budget.</i> • <i>Endorse the proposed prioritisation of Education and Social Services, as set out within the 2024/25 Budget Update report to Cabinet, but notes any further cuts to local authority funding will leave many non-statutory areas of Council spending essentially “on life-support” until a change of direction is secured at UK Government level.</i> • <i>Welcome efforts by Welsh Government to protect Welsh local authorities as far as possible, and calls on the future First Minister to continue this approach, with a particular focus on supporting preventative services.</i> 		
12	Oral Questions <i>To receive oral questions to the Leader, Cabinet Members; Chairs of Committee and/or nominated Members of the Fire Authority.</i>	7.25 pm	80 mins
13	Urgent Business	8.45 pm	
Unopposed Council Business			
14	Committee Membership (Pages 109 - 112) <i>Report of the Interim Monitoring Officer</i>	8.45 pm	5 mins
15	Appointment of Local Authority Governors to School Governing Bodies Pages 113 - 116) <i>Report of the Interim Monitoring Officer</i>	8.50 pm	5 mins
16	Written Questions <i>In accordance with the Council Procedure Rules, Rule 17(f) Written Questions received for consideration and response will be included as a record in the minutes of the meeting.</i>		

THE COUNTY COUNCIL OF THE CITY & COUNTY OF CARDIFF

The County Council of the City & County of Cardiff met at County Hall, Cardiff on 30 November 2023 to transact the business set out in the Council summons dated Friday, 24 November 2023.

Present: County Councillor Molik (Lord Mayor)

County Councillors Ahmed, Dilwar Ali, Ash-Edwards, Berman, Boes, Bowen-Thomson, Bradbury, Bridgeman, Carr, Carter, Chowdhury, Cowan, Davies, De'Ath, Derbyshire, Driscoll, Ebrahim, Elsmore, Ferguson-Thorne, Gibson, Green, Gunter, Henshaw, Hinchey, Humphreys, Hunt, Jenkins, K Jones, Owen Jones, Joyce, Kaaba, Lancaster, Latif, Lent, Lewis, Lister, Littlechild, Livesy, Lloyd Jones, Mackie, McEvoy, McGarry, Melbourne, Merry, Michael, Naughton, Owen, Palmer, Proctor, Reid-Jones, Robinson, Robson, Sangani, Sattar, Shimmin, Simmons, Singh, Stubbs, Taylor, Huw Thomas, Thomson, Lynda Thorne, Waldron, Weaver, Wild, Williams, Wong and Wood

76 : APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Saleh Ahmed, Brown-Reckless, Burke, Cunnah, Goodway, Hopkins, Jackie Jones, Lay and Moultrie.

77 : DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following declarations of interest were received in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct.

NAME	AGENDA ITEM NO	NATURE OF INTEREST	REASON FOR INTEREST
Cllr Jane Henshaw	8	Personal	Family member works for Social Services
Cllr Marc Palmer	8	Personal	Family member works for Social services

78 : MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting on 26 October 2023 were approved and signed by the Chair.

79 : PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were no public questions.

80 : PETITIONS

The following petitions were received:

Presented by	Number of relevant signatures	Nature of petition
Cllr Garry Hunt	30	Requesting measures to improve parking in Llanishen
Cllr Rodney Berman	1270	Calling for a referendum on any plans to introduce a congestion charge

81 : LORD MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

November had seen a number of remembrance services, which is a reminder of those who gave up their lives for peace and to give us the life we enjoy today in this part of the world:

November was also a festive season for Cardiff's Sikh and Hindu communities, and she had attended many events and functions joining in with their celebrations of the triumph of good over evil and hope over dismay.

The Lord Mayor Mary thanked Cllr Williams and his family for arranging a coffee morning at their home to help raise funds for UCAN Productions, and those Councillors who also attended.

She highlighted the efforts of a number of leading ladies from Cardiff's diverse communities, including Thamina Khan, Mutalie Merrill, Sakina Jamal, Professor Meena Upadhyaya, Vimla Patel, Vilas Kerrai, Christina Roy, Maria Messa and Sudha Bhatt, as well as Cllrs Chowdhury and Sangani, for arranging a fantastic diner at Juboraj which raised more than £4000 for UCAN. She also thanked those Councillors who attended.

The Lord Mayor thanks Members for their support of her Charity and highlighted the upcoming fundraising events which includes:

- A charity football match by Bangladeshi Cardiff Team vs. London Team at 3pm on Sunday 3rd December at House of Sports, Clos Parc Morgannwg, to which all were welcome.
- The UCAN Concert on 19th December 7.30pm at Royal College of Music and Arts. There were 300 seats priced at £8 and £12, and it would be a great boost to all UCAN young people to fill the hall.
- A showcase of Indian and Bangladeshi vocalists, violinists and poetry at the Royal Welsh College Of Music & Drama at 6pm on 13th January. Anyone wishing to book a place for that event could contact Cllr Chowdhury.

82 : TREASURY MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REPORT MID YEAR REPORT

The report provided Council with information about the Council's Treasury Management activities since 1st April 2023 and the position as of 30th September 2023.

The report was proposed by Cllr Weaver and seconded by Cllr Thomas.

The Lord Mayor invited debate on the report.

The Lord Mayor called for a vote on the recommendation.

FOR (63)

Councillors Ali Ahmed, Ali, Ash-Edwards, Berman, Boes, Bowen-Thomson, Bradbury, Bridgeman, Carr, Carter, Chowdhury, Cowan, Davies, De'Ath, Derbyshire, Driscoll, Ebrahim, Elsmore, Ferguson-Thorne, Gibson, Green, Gunter, Henshaw, Humphreys, Hunt, Helen Lloyd Jones, Keith Jones, Owen Jones, Joyce, Kaaba, Lancaster, Latif, Lent, Lewis, Lister, Littlechild, Livesy, Mackie, McGarry, Merry, Michael, Naughton, Owen, Palmer, Proctor, Reid-Jones, Robinson, Robson, Sangani, Shimmin, Simmons, Singh, Stubbs, Taylor, Thomas, Thomson, Thorne, Waldron, Weaver, Wild, Williams, Wong, Wood

AGAINST (1)

Councillor Sattar

There were no abstentions.

RESOLVED: Council AGREED to:

Note the Treasury Management Mid-Year Report 2023-24.

83 : LOCAL AUTHORITY SOCIAL SERVICES ANNUAL REPORT 2022/2023

Council was asked to consider the 14th Local Authority Social Services Annual Report, as required in accordance with Part 8 of the Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Act 2014 (SSWB Act).

The report was proposed by Cllr Mackie and seconded by Cllr Lister.

The Lord Mayor invited debate on the report.

The Lord Mayor called for a vote on the recommendation.

FOR (66)

Councillors Ali Ahmed, Ali, Ash-Edwards, Berman, Boes, Bowen-Thomson, Bradbury, Bridgeman, Carr, Carter, Chowdhury, Cowan, Davies, De'Ath, Derbyshire, Driscoll, Ebrahim, Elsmore, Ferguson-Thorne, Gibson, Green, Gunter, Henshaw, Humphreys, Hunt, Jenkins, Helen Lloyd Jones, Keith Jones, Owen Jones, Joyce, Kaaba, Lancaster, Latif, Lent, Lewis, Lister, Littlechild, Livesy, Mackie, McGarry, Melbourne, Merry, Michael, Naughton, Owen, Palmer, Proctor, Reid-Jones, Robinson, Robson, Sangani, Sattar, Shimmin, Simmons, Singh, Stubbs, Taylor, Thomas, Thomson, Thorne, Waldron, Weaver, Wild, Williams, Wong, Wood

AGAINST (0)

There were no abstentions.

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RESOLVED: Council AGREED to:

Approve the Local Authority's Social Services Annual Report for 2022/23.

84 : REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS, PLACES AND STATIONS

Council was asked to approve changes to polling district and polling places in line with the Representation of the People Act 1983, which required local authorities to conduct a review every five years to ensure practicality and accessibility.

The report was proposed by Cllr Thomas and seconded by Cllr Merry.

The Lord Mayor invited debate on the report.

The Lord Mayor called for a vote on the recommendations.

FOR (55)

Councillors Ali Ahmed, Ali, Ash-Edwards, Berman, Boes, Bowen-Thomson, Bradbury, Bridgeman, Carr, Carter, Chowdhury, De'Ath, Derbyshire, Ebrahim, Ferguson-Thorne, Gibson, Green, Gunter, Henshaw, Humphreys, Hunt, Helen Lloyd Jones, Keith Jones, Owen Jones, Joyce, Kaaba, Latif, Lent, Lewis, Lister, Livesy, Mackie, McGarry, Merry, Michael, Naughton, Palmer, Proctor, Robinson, Sangani, Sattar, Shimmin, Simmons, Singh, Stubbs, Taylor, Thomas, Thomson, Waldron, Weaver, Wild, Wong, Wood

AGAINST (0)

ABSTAIN (10)

Councillors Cowan, Davies, Driscoll, Elsmore, Lancaster, Littlechild, Owen, Reid-Jones, Robson, Williams

RESOLVED: Council AGREED to:

- a. Approve the 2 polling district and 13 polling place changes as noted in paragraph 12;
- b. Note that the Electoral Registration Officer would implement any consequential changes to the register of electors;
- c. Designate each polling place as within the general vicinity of each location utilised for polling station purposes; and delegate authority to the Returning Officer to make changes where necessary, for example, where a building became unavailable at short notice due to unforeseen circumstances, or where a more suitable building was identified;
- d. Make no other changes to the polling districts;
- e. Note that the Returning Officer shall confirm the polling stations within each polling district and place prior to elections, having regard to the proposals set out in paragraph 12 above and any other relevant factors pertaining at that time.

85 : REVISION OF ELECTED MEMBER LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (MANDATORY TRAINING)

Council was asked to give approval for amendments to be made to the Elected Member Learning and Development Strategy relating to mandatory training, to reflect the views of Council at its meeting on 29th June 2023 and recommendations made by the Democratic Services Committee at its meeting on 13th November 2023.

The report was proposed by Cllr Lancaster and seconded by Cllr Ferguson-Thorne.

The Lord Mayor invited debate on the report.

The Lord Mayor called for a vote on the recommendations.

FOR (64)

Councillors Ali Ahmed, Ali, Ash-Edwards, Berman, Boes, Bowen-Thomson, Bradbury, Bridgeman, Carr, Carter, Chowdhury, Cowan, Davies, De'Ath, Derbyshire, Driscoll, Ebrahim, Elsmore, Ferguson-Thorne, Gibson, Green, Gunter, Henshaw, Humphreys, Hunt, Jenkins, Helen Lloyd Jones, Keith Jones, Owen Jones, Joyce, Kaaba, Lancaster, Latif, Lent, Lewis, Lister, Littlechild, Livesy, Mackie, McGarry, Merry, Michael, Naughton, Owen, Palmer, Proctor, Robinson, Robson, Sangani, Sattar, Shimmin, Simmons, Singh, Stubbs, Taylor, Thomas, Thomson, Thorne, Waldron, Weaver, Wild, Williams, Wong, Wood

AGAINST (0)

ABSTAIN (1)

Councillor Melbourne

RESOLVED: Council AGREED to:

- a. Approve the recommendation of the Democratic Services Committee for the immediate revision of the Elected Member Learning and Development Strategy as shown at Appendix A, to include confirmation of the mandatory training courses as set out in paragraph 7b of this report;
- b. Note:
 - 1) that a review of the Elected Member Learning and Development Strategy will be undertaken in 2024 and the revised strategy will be submitted to Council for approval;
 - 2) the deadline of 29th December 2023 for Members to complete all mandatory training following the Local Government Elections in 2022.

86 : STANDARDS & ETHICS COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2022/2023

Council was provided with the Annual Report of the Standards & Ethics Committee, in line with the requirements of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, although it was noted that the Committee had presented an annual report to Council for more than 20 years prior to that Act.

The report was proposed by Jason Bartlett, Chair of the Standards & Ethics Committee.

The Lord Mayor invited debate on the report.

RESOLVED: Council AGREED to:

Note the Standards & Ethics Committee Annual Report 2022/2023.

87 : GOVERNANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2022/2023

This report was deferred to the next meeting of Council on 25th January 2024.

88 : CABINET STATEMENTS

Leader's Statement

Cllr Thomas responded to questions in relation to:

- the Real Living Wage;
- the South Wales Metro;
- Ysgol Y Berllan Degin's receipt of a School of Sanctuary award; and
- traffic mitigation following the opening of the new Fitzalan High School

Tackling Poverty, Equality & Public Health Statement

Cllrs Bradbury and Sangani responded to questions in relation to:

- the Youth Action Group for Whitchurch;
- combatting Islamophobia in Wales;
- protecting youth services from cuts; and
- bowel and prostate cancer awareness

Transport & Strategic Planning Statement

Cllr De'Ath responded to questions in relation to:

- the newly opened Canal Quarter;
- Cardiff Dogs Home; and
- the Registration Service's move to Insole Court

Education Statement

Cllr Merry responded to questions in relation to:

- the Children's Rights framework;
- the building of new schools across Cardiff; and
- a recent UNICEF Child-Friendly City event

Social Services Statement

Cllrs Mackie and Lister responded to questions in relation to:

- criminal child exploitation;

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- the Age Friendly Forum and digital inclusion; and
- meeting statutory performance targets in children's services

Climate Change Statement

Cllr Wild responded to questions in relation to:

- flood defences on Radyr Court Road;
- the Greener Whitchurch project;
- measures to alleviate flooding following issues on Merthyr Road;
- Christmas tree, green bin and garden waste collections; and
- relations with Unite and the prevention of further industrial action

There were no questions in respect of Culture, Parks and Events Statement.

Finance, Modernisation & Performance Statement

Cllr Weaver responded to questions in relation to:

- the UK government's Autumn Statement;
- the accessibility of information regarding waste services; and
- the Welsh Government's budgetary plans

Housing & Communities Statement

Cllr Thorne responded to questions in relation to:

- the council's housing position;
- provision of warm and welcome spaces;
- applying intentionality when managing high demand for housing; and
- homelessness and temporary accommodation

Investment & Development

In Councillor Goodway's absence Cllr Thomas responded to questions in relation to:

- scrutiny arrangements for the Cardiff Capital Region Investment Zone; and
- how the new arena could take neurodiversity into account

89 : ORAL QUESTIONS

Councillor Robson to Cabinet Member for Transport and Strategic Planning

What action will the Council take to improve safety for pedestrians and reduce the large number of HGV's in Beulah Road?

Reply – Cllr De'Ath

Regarding Pantbach Road and Beulah Road, the Council have contacted companies whose fleets are still using those two roads, asking them if they can go down Caerphilly Road which has now had its temporary weight restriction removed rather than driving through Rhiwbina village. We've also bid to Welsh Government for funding for a crossing at the Pantbach/Beulah Road junction which is obviously very

heavily used by parents and schoolchildren daily on their way to school, so hopefully that will improve things for the community.

Supplementary question – Cllr Robson

I was very pleased to hear your answer that efforts are underway. I understand that the Council will need to undertake some survey work to ascertain the extent of the issue. This follows of course two accidents this year where HGV's have taken out the pedestrian safety barriers, and last week also took out a traffic light.

It is a very dangerous situation in my view, so I welcome the work that is being done. But in terms of the survey, could I implore, you as far as possible, that those surveys are conducted before Christmas so that we can get the ball rolling as quickly as possible on this, and then follow up once we know the outcomes of those surveys?

Reply – Cllr De'Ath

Absolutely Councillor, we will try to get those done as soon as we physically can.

Councillor Berman to Leader of Council

Can you please fully update Members as to what action the Council has been taking to settle its dispute with Unite, and what hope can you offer to residents of the city that you have taken steps to ensure that there won't be further strike action by Unite in the new year, including further disruption to waste collection services?

Reply – Cllr Thomas

The dispute with Unite related to the national pay award 2023-24, which was settled between the national employers and GMB and Unison via collective bargaining on 1st November this year.

Despite this national agreement Unite continued their strike action in Cardiff until 26th November, but as there is an agreed pay award the Council has actioned this and employees will receive this together with back pay in their December payslips.

Unite are balloting their members in the Council's waste collection, cleansing and highway teams now regarding a number of local issues, about which myself and Cabinet Members and officers have met with them to discuss on a number of occasions. We have put forward a number of proposals to Unite as well as asking Unite for more information on a number of points that they have raised, and my sense is that the implementation of the proposals that we have put forward would make a substantial impact in addressing the genuine concerns held by Unite members within the Council, so we will need to see whether that is taken on board and reflected in the outcome of their ballot.

Supplementary - Cllr Berman

Can you assure you us that the Council is actually doing everything possible to try to discuss these concerns with Unite? I appreciate that you're saying that some things are decided nationally, but there are lots of other points of contention they have been raising, and I see from the answer to my written question that you've only formally met them to discuss the dispute on just a few occasions, which does seem a little bit staggering considering that they were on strike for 11 weeks. When I see the flyer

they've been putting out today, they've been talking about employers failing to engage constructively with them in relation to matters in dispute, they're talking about a breakdown in industrial relations. So we do seem to be getting different sides to this story, but what I'm not seeing is clear evidence that you are meaningfully trying to stop the disruption that has been caused to services in this city. So can you please assure us that the Council is doing everything to try to put an end to this strike?

Reply – Cllr Thomas

When it comes to the breakdown in industrial relations, I would point to the very excellent relationships that we've got with both Unison and GMB who are by far and away the biggest unions represented on this council, and I do want to echo the words of Cllr Wild earlier in thanking the members of those unions and the wider workforce who've continued to work during what has been a period of disruption. The apology has been made to residents and I will make it again, that we are sorry for the disruption. We respect people's right to go on strike; we don't want them to go on strike, but we understand there are genuinely held concerns, and we have met as the written answer points out on a number of occasions to try and resolve those issues. There are points of difference that continue but we will continue to try and resolve them and seek mediation if necessary as a way of resolving disputes.

Councillor Stubbs to Cabinet Member for Transport and Strategic Planning

How can women who wish to remain anonymous because of abuse or harassment engage with the planning system and object to applications without their details being published?

Reply – Cllr De'Ath

You've raised a really important point. I know it's something you feel very strongly about, you've been pushing us to make changes in this regard for some time. The issue is that when someone makes a representation, a member of the public in the planning context, that's put online. So firstly, that puts off people more generally being uncomfortable with their personal details being accessible by other people, but particularly if you're someone experiencing harassment or stalking or domestic violence. There are considerable dangers and safeguarding issues around that. We're working with officers on that and we're looking to change our system so we no longer put public representations on our website. There'll be certain circumstances when they have to become available because of the law, but hopefully, it's a much better system which means people are far less vulnerable and much more able to engage with our systems.

Supplementary – Cllr Stubbs

I welcome the work being done. I think we're all aware, and it's well documented, the sort of lengths abusers will go in order to continue harassment, so I do welcome the work being done, I would just ask if there is anything, while this is taking place, if there is anything more we can do that's a bit more immediate?

Reply – Cllr De'Ath

There is from this point onwards, if a particular individual requests that their information is kept away from the public arena, we will manually remove it from our systems so it can't be accessed. It's just one tiny action in a much broader piece of

work we're undertaking in making planning and transport far more gender aware and gender sensitive.

Councillor Lancaster to Cabinet Member for Investment and Development
What is the Council doing to support Cardiff's night-time economy?

Reply – Cllr Huw Thomas on behalf of Cllr Goodway

There's a wide range of support provided to the city's night-time economy by the Council, and this includes direct funding and support, marketing and promotional work, as well as wider support through our partnerships to manage the issues that can often impact on the night-time economy sector. We've also continued to provide support within the city centre to help our hospitality sector to thrive.

In terms of direct support our Cardiff Growth Fund can provide up to £10,000 for businesses to invest in ways to make their businesses more productive and sustainable. You'll know about our work as a music city, and we've recently launched a Grassroots Venue Fund that provides funding for the city's grassroots cultural venues. Officials have also promoted current rates relief schemes that are on offer to the sector to ensure that as many of our eligible businesses as possible are claiming the 75% rates relief offered. You've then got the Transforming Towns scheme through which we have also supported investment in a number of night-time economy sector businesses in the city, supporting the regeneration or refurbishment of empty or underutilised spaces, with a number being refurbished for hospitality purposes as a result. Our Visit Cardiff website also promotes our night-time economy, showcasing some of our best attractions, entertainment and hospitality our city has to offer, and of course we work with our partners such as For Cardiff, to ensure that Cardiff is a welcoming place for night-time economy patrons, and of course the Council is a key stakeholder and contributor to the Purple Flag evening and night-time economy group, which has gained and maintained Purple Flag status annually since 2019.

Supplementary – Cllr Lancaster

A key part of what we offer as a night-time economy is our music offering which you alluded to, as well as the ability to put on large-scale gigs and sporting events, and a key part of the success of those is the ability to get to and from those events in a sustainable manner offering sustainable transport. I must admit I smiled earlier when Cllr Green mentioned the Welsh Government's commitment to rail infrastructure. I think his irony filter must be broken, because only a couple of weeks ago we had the announcement that the Welsh Government was pulling out of plans to support railway depots near Newport, which would have been specifically used to provide sustainable railway transport to and from Cardiff for the events that we wish to put on. Will you join in me condemning the Welsh Government's decision to damage our economy yet again, and what else are you going to do about it?

Reply – Cllr Thomas

Thank you for mentioning music in your supplementary because I didn't have a chance in my main answer to mention the indoor arena, you may have heard of it, that this Council is bringing forward with Live Nation, which will be a 15,000 capacity arena, which will have 100 events per year of live music; £100 million being brought

into the Cardiff economy, clearly most of that being spent within the night-time economy.

On your point about public transport, connectivity and especially at night, that is a well-made point, and I was also disappointed that Welsh Government did not proceed with that plan at Llanwern as a means of getting mass numbers away from stadium events. Obviously, musical events in the arena will be of a smaller scale, but it is identified and actually we had a very good discussion in a Music Board event for the public we held in Clwb Ifor Bach a few months ago around the need for later running trains and later running bus services as well. I think we all understand in this room the pressures on both those modes of public transport at the moment, but certainly in the long term we want to see the extension of those types of route at those times to give people other options than just driving to access the night-time economy.

Councillor Wood to Cabinet Member for Climate Change

Will the Council commit to making a Christmas tree waste collection at the end of this festive season?

Reply – Cllr Wild

Christmas tree collections are planned for the weeks commencing 8th and 15th of January with the collection scheduled for the alternate week to when black bin or bag collections will take place. Residents can also take their Christmas trees to the recycling centres and there'll be a Christmas tree drop-off zone in Heath Park car park on 6th and 7th of January.

Councillor Michael to Chair of Planning Committee

Planning is a rule-based system and all planning decisions are undertaken under planning law and guidance as they are at present. In your view, should passing retrospective regulations and advice, be used to delay or refuse decisions taken lawfully by this Council's Planning Committee?

Reply – Cllr Stubbs

As you know, all the decisions we make are based around planning law, planning rules, from our Local Plan as well. But where policies, for example we've got a new LDP coming, we will review decisions that are ongoing based on those changes. We do sometimes delay decisions because we put conditions in place, but I think what's important is that there is full transparency of the system, and that decisions are taken in a timely manner. What no-one in this Chamber would want to see are investment decisions delayed because we were unable to make decisions in a timely manner.

Supplementary – Cllr Michael

Does he agree with me that one of the biggest issues that we have at present, not only in this locality but the whole country, is the actual time it takes for major projects to be given the go-ahead? Because projects, especially in my ward, that are transformative, not only to transport but 6,000 well-paid jobs, with huge investment into this region, are being delayed, and I think it's about time certainly in this country that we actually got to the stage where we're actually working and helping applications rather than delaying them.

Reply – Cllr Stubbs

I can just reiterate what I said at the end, I don't think it's in anyone's interest, wherever you are in Wales, whatever level of governance, that decisions go on too long. If you want to encourage investment, you must be willing, whether it's a positive or negative decision, to take that decision, so those who are often funding quite large sums of investment in difficult times, because inflation is high, costs are becoming high, can have confidence that people are willing to take those decisions.

Councillor Davies to Chair of Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

Is it not an appropriate question for a Scrutiny Committee to ask the Cabinet Member before it about the suitability of an organisation to receive public funds to deliver youth services when the report being discussed is about the delivery of youth services and mentions said organisation and its receipt of taxpayers' money?

Reply – Cllr Bridgeman

I would reaffirm the position that I conveyed to you at the meeting of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee on the 14th of November. As Chair I felt the question you asked was not appropriate as we were there to discuss the report before the Committee about the Council's youth services, not the views of another organisation.

Supplementary – Cllr Davies

That's quite an odd answer, because one of the organisations mentioned in the report is getting public money, so why should I be unable to ask about that? I provided the context of the issue for the benefit of the Cabinet Member so they would know what I was talking about, but yes you prevented me from asking this completely appropriate question so got no answer. The political view expressed is not even what is relevant here. Cardiff taxpayers will want to know why the Council, if it does, thinks it's appropriate to fund politically active organisations to deliver youth services. So my supplementary to you would be, as a Committee chair, how would you alter the way you chair meetings so Committee members can do their job and provide the scrutiny residents demand of us?

Reply – Cllr Bridgeman

So as we are aware there, Cllr Davies, this is not the first time I've had to interrupt your questioning due to it not being appropriate. I would urge to attend pre-meetings of the Scrutiny so that situations like this can be prevented in the future.

Councillor Berman to Cabinet Member for Transport and Strategic Planning

Would you agree that prior to significant roadworks being undertaken to a prominent road junction, including on situated on key routes, that a) ward councillors and b) local communities, should be both notified and consulted in advance of these works taking place, and that the Council should explain the rationale for such works, as well as for any modifications to the junction that may be being introduced?

Reply – Cllr De'Ath

Cllr Berman, I would agree with you; like you, I'm a consultation guy.

Supplementary – Cllr Berman

I'm glad that Cllr De'Ath finds it somewhat amusing because it's taken myself and Cllr Hopkins tabling written questions to actually find out what's been going on at the junction of Cyncoed Road and Llanedeyrn Road where some weeks ago extensive roadworks were begun, but because none of us had been notified about it as local councillors we initially assumed it must be utilities carrying out those works. And then residents started getting in touch with us to talk about modifications being made to the junction, that the works were developing. Cllr Shimmin, my ward colleague, put in a member enquiry but didn't get a satisfactory response, so it's taken us till this meeting to discover that actually this is a Council scheme but the Council, due to an administrative error, had forgotten to consult or notify us as local councillors. This is a complete shambles. In fact, what the works are doing is bringing in something that I've been lobbying for for the last 2-3 years, which is to get crossings on the different arms of the junction. So could you please undertake to investigate what on Earth has happened here, and can you please give us an assurance that this sort of thing will not happen again?

Reply – Cllr De'Ath

We've looked into this, the consultation packs for members in Penylan and Cyncoed were prepared and ready to go out, and just through pure human error that hasn't happened. I'm happy to apologise to you and your colleagues in Cyncoed ward. We'll take measures to ensure this doesn't happen again. I understand the public dimension of the consultation did happen, it's just ward members weren't notified. I agree with you that's not acceptable; it was completely unintentional, it wasn't something we've done deliberately. We do consult on dozens and dozens of these projects every year and ward members' feedback actually change what we do.

Councillor Proctor to Cabinet Member for Climate Change

What is the Council doing to tackle idling cars?

Reply – Cllr Wild

It's pretty complicated because the Road Traffic Regulations of 2003 does allow enforcement of vehicle idling, but it only carries a fine of £20 and a fixed penalty notice can only be issued if the driver refuses to turn off the engine when asked to do so by an authorised officer. There are also some fairly obscure leniencies around that as well, such as if they can give various reasons for why their engine might be on. It essentially makes it an almost impossible task for officers to do it, and it's a very hands-on approach as well, having to get people to wind down their windows, and then the process that has to follow, and even at the end of that it's only £20. So instead what we do is messaging, media information for the public and businesses. But actually it's something we believe we could do better in terms of getting the message out to people around idling, especially on air quality.

Supplementary – Cllr Proctor

Idling cars are harmful to all of us, but especially to children because their lungs are small and they're still developing. Added to that, idling cars are especially bad outside schools. As you say, it's difficult to enforce, and giving fines as you say is a reactive measure which is only enforced if a driver refuses to turn an engine off. Is there anything we can do to be proactive about it, something that will stop drivers

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doing it in the first place like an education piece or a campaign to inform people of the harmful effects of leaving their engines on?

Reply – Cllr Wild

In terms of outside schools, there is some good work we do in the School Street scheme where we've taken cars out completely. I know that's not possible at all schools and there's limitations on some of those programmes. I think your ideas are really good, we should speak to officers and I'm happy to get them to get in contact with you about some of those, so maybe we can do some additional behaviour change through schools and other places where we've got vulnerable people.

Councillor McEvoy to Leader of Council

Could the Council Leader give an update on the situation with cleansing workers in Cardiff?

Reply – Cllr Huw Thomas

I infer from your question you are referring to the industrial dispute, so I would refer to the answer I provided earlier to the question from Cllr Berman on this matter. I would add, acknowledging that there has been disruption in terms of level of cleanliness on some of our streets, but also the fact that a significant number of our cleansing workers, a majority I believe, have continued to work over the last three months and the streets continue to be cleansed in challenging circumstances; I want to acknowledge their contribution as well and look forward now to the service recommencing at full capacity following the recent dispute.

Supplementary – Cllr McEvoy

As you know Leader, if you are on a temporary contract, there are some really basic things you cannot do, such as apply for a mortgage. Now, cleansing workers in Cardiff can be on temporary contracts for up to 4 years. As Leader of this Council, please justify that.

Reply – Cllr Huw Thomas

This point has been raised with me by Unite, and I think in general terms it is an issue I have considerable sympathy with. It's worth pointing out, of course, that in terms of agency and temporary contract positions, those very much reflect national practices and certainly what were in place when you were Deputy Leader. But on a moral point, this is an area where I am keen to make progress. Certainly part of the offer that has been made to Unite and discussed with all the unions through the trade union partnership is about reducing the time before a member of staff on an agency contract gets offered a temporary contract, and we have committed that we will look at whether that 3-year figure for a temporary contract can also be brought down, but that needs to be done on a collective basis and agreed with the other unions as well, but also needs to have due regard to practicalities and affordability considerations as well. But I certainly acknowledge the sentiment about reforming that area of work.

Councillor Williams to Cabinet Member for Climate Change

Recent criminal convictions following a corruption scandal at Cardiff Council have engulfed the administration. The Council have committed to undertaking a review of the systems and processes in place at the waste department. Huw Thomas, the Leader of the Council, said in a recent letter that waste managers, and I quote, 'have

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his full confidence'. Now that surely rules him out from being involved in the appointment on who investigates and undertakes this internal review, because any Council employee would know what the Leader's view was before any investigation and review had even begun. For this reason, along with the scale of corruption at the Council, any review should be an external one. Therefore, to restore public trust and confidence in the waste department, would the Cabinet Member agree with me an external review is necessary, with a sufficiently broad terms of reference to empower the individual undertaking the review to follow the evidence and report on their findings in an independent and impartial manner?

Reply – Cllr Wild

The review will be led by the Council's Section 151 officer, who has a statutory responsibility in these matters. It is absolutely appropriate that he leads this review. The review will also be reported, as stated, through the Governance and Audit Committee. The Committee will itself have a say on how the review will be scoped and undertaken. It is also important to note that the Governance and Audit Committee itself will play a key independent role in this work, and it is noted that it includes a mix of councillors and independent members.

Supplementary – Cllr Williams

Firstly, I should draw Members' attention to my register of interests, I'm not advertising my services to undertake this external review. But what I would say, Cllr Wild, is you have said in your response you feel it is entirely appropriate for the Section 151 officer to undertake the review, and I note that the report will go back to the Governance and Audit Committee, but crucially, why is it that an internal review is more appropriate than an external one? We've got a lot of issues going on in the waste department, there's a lot of background noise, there's a lot of irrelevant stuff going on, and I want to get to the bottom of this corruption scandal, a serious trial which has ended in criminal convictions, jail time for former Council officers. So I think the public need some reassurance that what we're going to do is we're going to be completely independent and impartial. We want to know what went on as elected Members, so I would ask you to clarify, why is it an internal review is being favoured rather than an external one?

Reply – Cllr Wild

It was appalling the acts that took place and I commend the work of the Police in dealing with it. The interesting thing here is, we absolutely want to take it seriously, I think it is the right place, as I've mentioned there may well be external support needed for this, but that's for the professional view of the Section 151 officer, one of the best in the business, we've got some of the best professionals in Cardiff Council, we trust them to do it, and then we've got a brilliant Audit Committee that gives us all the oversight we need. Let's see what they come back, go through a really good process.

Councillor Wood to Cabinet Member for Transport and Strategic Planning

Can the Cabinet Member confirm how many existing bus routes are expected to be directed to call at the new bus station when it eventually opens and how much spare capacity there will be to accommodate additional services in the future?

Reply – Cllr De'Ath

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I'm sure you appreciate the bus station is being run by Transport for Wales rather than Cardiff Council. They are finalising some of those arrangements, I'm sure they'll be announcing them in due course. In terms of capacity, the new station will have a throughput of 60 buses an hour, so that's significant amounts of capacity so we don't see that being a particular issue.

Supplementary – Cllr Wood

Given the central role of increasing bus services in the Council's agenda for the One Planet and the LDP modal shift away from the car, are you at all concerned that, given that this station has much less capacity with only 14 bays than the previous one, or concerns that have been circulating that bus companies won't use the interchange, that this could impact on the Council's agenda of increasing bus patronage in the city?

Reply – Cllr De'Ath

I'm not really concerned in terms of capacity. This is obviously a very difficult time for bus services generally, with the end of BES and the transition fund, it is really finances rather than infrastructure that concern me.

Councillor Ash-Edwards to Cabinet Member for Culture, Parks and Events

Heath Park plays an important part in the wellbeing of residents of Heath and surrounding neighbourhoods of the city, and councillors for the Heath ward are eager to further enhance amenities in the park for visitors, including the provision of permanent toilet facilities and a café. Unfortunately, in pursuing this ambition, it has come to light that parts of the park are held in a Council-managed trust, and progress has stalled. While appreciating the need for the Council to deal with matters in the right way, the delay is causing considerable frustration. Could you please provide an update on how the Council is progressing with resolving these matters, and how long the process might take?

Reply – Cllr Huw Thomas on behalf of Cllr Burke

I certainly understand the value of the park to stakeholders that you refer to in your question. This administration has worked hard to maintain the Green Flag status that Heath Park acquired in 2018. I myself have spent several happy hours in the park with my eldest child while awaiting the arrival of my youngest child in the nearby hospital.

I certainly share your desire to secure further improvements as well, and I can understand your frustration in the delay in progressing proposals for improvement. Now, as you aware, and you referenced the trust issues, the Council is undertaking a review of the management of land held in trust, not in particular to learn the lessons of what happened in the case of Maindy. A report is due to be presented to Cabinet in the new year that will deal with the governance and decision-making arrangements required for trusts, including the future management of trust land. This is to ensure that any new proposals can be considered properly by the Council as trustee and in the best interests of the trust. In the intervening period, officers from Cllr Burke's portfolio and the Council's strategic estates, legal services and procurement teams, are working together to develop a concession opportunity for a café, to enable the occupation of the former pitch and putt building which will see the toilet facilities opened and managed through an operator.

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Councillor Davies to Cabinet Member for Tackling Poverty, Equality and Public Health

Should an organisation in receipt of public funds to deliver youth services in Cardiff be publicly expressing overt political opinions?

Reply – Cllr Bradbury

You seem to be referring to a particular organisation, tell us what the actual organisation is and what you are accusing them of and then I will answer the question in the supplementary.

Supplementary – Cllr Davies

The organisation in question was the Urdd, it was one listed in the reports as receiving public funds, it's expressed an overt political opinion demanding a ceasefire in Gaza. Like I was going to try and say during the Committee, the view itself is not what's in question here, it's about the fact that in receipt of public money, working with young people, should it be making those overt political decisions, expressing those opinions? I'm so sorry I'm asking such an inappropriate, inflammatory question.

Reply – Cllr Bradbury

Lord Mayor, I'm quite happy to answer this question, I was just respecting the Chair in the Scrutiny Committee who had ruled the question out of order, and I advise any Member, including whether it's in full Council or Scrutiny, to always respect the Chair's judgement on matters that come forward.

But our main concern with any new grant including the Urdd's grant is that they deliver the service that they're paid to deliver, and they do, fantastically well, and if you are concerned, if you really are concerned about people's opinion influencing public policy decisions, particularly in the realms of foreign policy, you need to look closer to home, because the Good Law Project has found in an investigation that the Conservative Party has accepted at least £243,000 from Russian-associated donors, including £61,000 flowing into the Tory coffers in 2023 alone. This is not me saying this, it's the Good Law Project. I don't see the same concern of Conservative Members about that then they have about an independent organisation making a point about the crisis in the Middle East.

Councillor Carter to Cabinet Member for Transport and Strategic Planning

The Council wants to see more people switch from cars to buses, but the removal of the 51,53 bus has taken away a vital service for the residents of Llanedeyrn, Pentwyn, Penylan and Cyncoed to travel to the city centre. In light of the petitions submitted, will the Cabinet review the decision to not support the service?

Reply – Cllr De'Ath

As I touched on with your colleague, there's a huge amount of uncertainty around bus funding going forward. We're reviewing our services, we still don't know what the picture will look like going forward. It's something you appreciate, you're one of our most knowledgeable Members in terms of transport, I'm really preaching to the converted in many ways at this time. It's just not possible to get a picture of what we're going to be able to support or not support, other than to say that we would like to support everything and add more buses, but it's not in our gift.

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Supplementary – Cllr Carter

In light of what you've just said, how much of a priority is bus transport for this Council? We've seen a lot of positive investment on the capital side, obviously in rail and active travel; when it comes to the revenue investment of buses, we see very mixed messages from Welsh Government and it not being a priority for this Council, despite it being in your manifesto to be rolling out £1 bus fares. So is this still a priority for your Council?

Reply – Cllr De'Ath

Bus services are absolutely a priority for this administration. In the next few months we'll be bringing forward a report on new bus priority measures that will greatly help services in the city. We already through the FRM money in supporting a number of services, and we are committed to £1 bus fares, new routes and other measures that are really needed, I think we can all agree on that, paid for by a fair and moderate road user charge.

Councillor Lewis to Cabinet Member for Tackling Poverty, Equality and Public Health
Cardiff Council has once again played a key part in Wales HIV Testing Week just last week, playing its part in working towards the 2030 goal of zero new diagnoses by improving testing rates and tackling stigma. Can the Cabinet Member update Members on this year's campaign activities and advise on how Members can continue to play their part?

Reply – Cllr Sangani

Cardiff Council was pleased to support Fast Track Cardiff and Vale and work with the partners in support of the campaign to raise awareness of HIV during HIV Testing Week this month. This was promoted throughout the city centre and on digital screens in our community hubs and GP's surgeries. HIV 101 booklets were prominently displayed in all our hubs. In addition, Council staff supported an information stand at the University Hospital of Wales, where they were on hand to talk to hospital visitors about HIV and the importance of testing. This year's campaign has been the most successful to date in terms of promotion and reach online.

Data from Wales HIV Testing Week is still being gathered and analysed and it is still too early to provide any accurate findings. However, we have seen more than 2 million impressions on social media, and early data from Sexual Health Wales suggests that thousands of HIV test kits have been ordered online. I will of course provide further information when there will be more data available with me. Members can continue to support the campaign by reinforcing the importance of regular testing and how important it is to diagnose HIV as early as possible. The sooner that treatment starts the less likely that people will become seriously ill. Here in Wales anyone can order a free, confidential home test kit by visiting the Sexual Health Wales website. Cardiff became the first Fast Track city in 2020, and is proud to be leading the way in Wales in promoting the benefit of free regular HIV testing.

Councillor Wood to Cabinet Member for Climate Change

What has the Council since March 2023 to tackle the persistent and ongoing waste issues on Flint Street in Gabalfa ward?

Reply – Cllr Wild

Street cleansing is scheduled to be undertaken on a bi-weekly basis, however, some of that has been affected by the recent strike action. The police team also visited Flint Street in August. Officers have been monitoring the position in Flint Street frequently since July following a series of incidents of incorrect waste presentation. It was identified that the storage of bins on the highway was contributing to waste being deposited in the surrounding area, so letters and instructional waste education presentation was provided to residents to confirm the change of service beforehand, and what was expected.

Supplementary – Cllr Wood

It's positive to hear that action is being taken, although I appreciate these challenges are inherently difficult to tackle in these circumstances. Unfortunately, this is one of several similar waste-related issues in our area that is impacting residents' quality of life, almost of whom are not responsible for causing the problems themselves but have to live with waste on the street, the rats and everything else that comes with loose waste. Bearing that in mind, would the Cabinet Member be willing to visit our ward to see these issues for himself and discuss how we may be able to resolve those issues?

Reply – Cllr Wild

I should add, I know the properties that have been issued with formal Section 46 notices, so I think officers, these issues crop up across the city every now and then, so when they squeeze in and get those notices, when they get them presented, it often does have a positive impact, because you can then follow up with fixed penalty notices and things like that. I would be happy to visit as well, I haven't been up there for a while so it would be a pleasure to do that.

Councillor Dilwar Ali to Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities

Can the Cabinet Member provide an update as to whether the winter payments will continue this year for Lydstep Flats residents?

Reply – Cllr Thorne

I'm very pleased to say that the redevelopment work at Lydstep Flats is nearing completion. All blocks have had the window upgrades and external wall insulation fitted. Balconies have also been upgraded, and additional fire safety measures are being put in place. One block will have the scaffolding totally removed before Christmas, two other blocks will follow early in the new year. As the new insulation is in place, there is no requirement for the continuation of any winter compensation payments as all the flats will have benefited from these improvement works. However, if any resident of Lydstep Flats is struggling with cost of living, including worrying about their heating bills, they can of course contact the Council's Money Advice Team for advice and support. This can be obtained by visiting one of our hubs, or by calling the advice line 029 2087 1071, or by visiting the Money Advice Team website at www.cardiffmoneyadvice.co.uk

90 : URGENT BUSINESS

There was no urgent business.

91 : COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Council was asked to receive nominations and make appointments to current committee vacancies as set out in the report and in accordance with the approved allocation of seats and political group wishes.

RESOLVED: Council AGREED to:

Receive a nomination and appoint to the vacancy on the Committee, in accordance with the Party Group wishes, as set out in Table A and on the Amendment Sheet.

92 : APPOINTMENT OF LOCAL AUTHORITY GOVERNORS TO SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES

Council was asked to appoint Local Authority School Governors to fill vacancies in accordance with the recommendations of the Local Authority Governor Panel

RESOLVED: Council AGREED to:

Approve the new appointments of Local Authority Governors to the school Governing Bodies as set out in Appendix 1, each for a term of 4 years from the date of the appointment, in accordance with the recommendations of the Local Authority Governor Panel.

93 : WRITTEN QUESTIONS

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 17(f), Written Questions received for consideration together with the responses will be attached to the minutes.



Cardiff Council

Governance and Audit Committee Annual Report 2022/23

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1. Foreword by Gavin McArthur (Chairperson of the Governance and Audit Committee)

At the financial year end, I became Chairperson of the Governance and Audit Committee following the retirement of David 'Hugh' Thomas as Chairperson and Independent Member of the Committee at the end of March 2023. I have served as Deputy Committee Chairperson for three years, and as an Independent Committee Member for nearly six and a half years overall. I am looking forward to my new role. Details of my background and experience are included within the Member Profiles in Annex 4.

I wish to start our Committee's Annual Report by paying tribute to the outstanding commitment and contribution to public services, and in particular to this committee, of our outgoing Chair, David 'Hugh' Thomas. Hugh stood down after completing 62 years of unbroken public service. Our Committee had the privilege of being led so effectively by Hugh since his appointment as Chair three years ago, and of his experience and input during the eight and a half years that he served as an Independent Member overall. Hugh has vast experience as a retired solicitor who served as Chief Executive of Mid Glamorgan Council for fifteen years, and within a number of public bodies and national voluntary organisations. On behalf of our Committee, and the wider Members and public service officers who you worked with, very best wishes for your well-deserved retirement.

Consequently, an open recruitment exercise was successfully undertaken to fill the Independent Member vacancy. I would therefore like to welcome our new Independent Member, Chris Burns. I look forward to working with Chris who is highly experienced in local government, and I am sure will be an asset to our Committee.

I also wish to thank Councillor Daniel Waldron for his valued service to the Committee; he stood down as a Committee Member following the municipal year-end, We therefore ended the year with one Elected Member vacancy, and we look forward to working with the next Elected Member who is to join us. I must also record my thanks to all Elected Members of the Committee and the Independent Lay Members (whose detailed profiles are set out in Annex 4 of this Report) for serving on the Committee. I believe that a strong sense of teamwork has been engendered, and the meetings have generally been well attended.

The pandemic and subsequent inflationary pressures have presented substantial financial challenges for the Council, at a time when systems needed to be established at pace to support the arrival and settlement of refugees from Ukraine. The Governance and Audit Committee has been mindful of the wide range of financial, economic, and social risks associated with the current environment, and the importance of seeking assurance on the items that come before us. As we seek assurances on good governance, risk management and internal control across the Council, I must recognise the value of the effective professional working relationships we have benefitted from.

The Committee received reports from the Chief Executive on the Council's Control Environment, and members of the Senior Management Team (SMT) on their Directorate Control Environments throughout the year. This has given our Committee a good opportunity to engage with members of SMT individually, and seek relevant assurances in their respective areas of responsibility.

Over the course of the year, the Corporate Director Resources (Section 151 Officer) has kept us fully informed on financial resilience and management challenges, and the Audit Manager has

briefed the Committee on the risk-based work and focus of internal audit, and counter-fraud systems and outcomes. Internal Audit reports have provided assurance that overall adequate arrangements were in place to deliver good governance, risk management and control. With their respective responsibilities for the prudent management of the Council's financial affairs and independent assurance, our engagement with these officers is of particular importance and value.

Throughout the year, our Committee has benefited from the professional support of Senior Officers in Accountancy, Internal Audit, External Audit (Audit Wales), Treasury Management, Risk and Performance Management. Arrangements have been put in place with our Committee and the Council's Scrutiny Committees to share our respective work programmes, enquiries and outcomes. The awareness and insight we receive is valuable as we consider our own work programme and enquiries.

We engage with the Chairpersons and Chief Auditors across Welsh Local Authorities through an All-Wales Governance and Audit Committee Chairs' Network, with formal meetings held at least annually. Meetings have been attended by representatives from Audit Wales, the Chartered Institute of Finance and Accountancy, and the Welsh Local Government Association and we continue to benefit from this important forum of peers and expert advisors. During October, we held a multi-location meeting with sessions delivered by Diana Melville, Governance Advisor of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA). We received an outline of core guidance for Audit Committees from CIPFA (Practical Guidance for Local Authorities and Police), which is widely recognised as leading best practice. It was very timely to discuss the 2022 publication with her which was released during the month of our meeting.

The Governance and Audit Committee Work Programme is received at each Committee meeting. Changing risks and priorities are given due consideration, whether they are put forward by Elected Members, Officers, External Stakeholders, or other Committees of the Council. The importance of our role to a range of stakeholders is recognised. We have reflected on the effectiveness of governance, risk management and control in providing overall assurance opinion and informing the Council's Annual Governance Statement 2022/23.

We continue to promote awareness of our work through the publication of a Committee Newsletter, twice a year, and have done so since October 2018, supporting the Council's culture of accountability and assurance.

We have also taken the time to review our performance, so as to give confidence to those relying on our work. In January 2023, we held a self-assessment workshop against the best practice CIPFA Framework. This involved reflection on the feedback we receive from those attending Committee meetings.

Looking forward to 2023/24, I consider that the financial, economic and social challenges facing the Council, public services, and the community will still be significant. In our role as Governance and Audit Committee in the year ahead, the importance of assurance and oversight will remain critical as we discharge our responsibilities with close attention and care.

Gavin McArthur, Chairperson.

2. The Role of the Governance and Audit Committee

The Governance and Audit Committee has delivered an important role to increase public confidence in the objectivity and fairness of financial and other reporting and provide independent assurance over governance, risk management and control processes.

The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 has required the Council to have a Committee to:

- review and scrutinise the authority's financial affairs.
- make reports and recommendations in relation to the authority's financial affairs.
- review and assess the risk management, internal control and corporate governance arrangements of the authority.
- make reports and recommendations to the authority on the adequacy and effectiveness of those arrangements.
- oversee the authority's internal and external audit arrangements, and
- review the financial statements prepared by the authority.

The Council determined that the membership of its Governance and Audit Committee would be twelve Members (eight Elected Members and four Independent Lay Members), which meets the requirement of the Measure and the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.

The Terms of Reference of the Governance and Audit Committee for 2022/23 is included within Annex 1 from which an overview of its role is summarised in the following statement of purpose:

Statement of Purpose

- Our Governance and Audit Committee is a key component of Cardiff Council's corporate governance. It provides an independent and high-level focus on the audit, assurance, and reporting arrangements that underpin good governance and financial standards.
- The purpose of our Governance and Audit Committee is to provide independent assurance to the members of Cardiff Council, and its wider citizens and stakeholders, on the adequacy of the risk management framework, then internal control environment, and the performance assessment of the Council. It provides an independent review of the Council's governance, performance assessment, risk management and control frameworks and oversees the financial reporting and annual governance processes. It oversees internal audit and external audit, helping to ensure efficient and effective assurance arrangements are in place.

3. Our Work in 2022/23

The Governance and Audit Committee received regular reports in relation to standard agenda themes and received reports of interest based on risk, governance and internal control matters during 2022/23. Details are provided below.

Standard Items

3.1 Finance

Chris Lee (Corporate Director Resources (Section 151 Officer)) has provided financial updates at every meeting to provide Committee Members with an overview of the financial standing of the Council during a period of ongoing unprecedented financial pressure.

The Committee has noted the challenges facing the Council in respect to its budget strategy for both the year hence and the medium term.

The Committee has received, reviewed and had the opportunity to comment on key finance reports in 2022/23, including:

- Draft Statement of Accounts 2021/22 and ISA 260 Audit Report
- Draft Annual Governance Statement 2021/22
- Cardiff & Vale of Glamorgan Pension Fund Statement of Accounts 2021/22 and ISA 260 Audit Report
- Treasury Management reports, independent review, and updates
- Financial Resilience updates

Each year our Committee plays an important role in reviewing the Draft Statement of Accounts of the Council, Harbour Authority and Pension Fund, and the Council's Annual Governance Statement. Following our review and external audit, approval was received for the 2021/22 accounts by Full Council during November 2022 and March 2023.

The corresponding International Standard on Auditing (ISA) 260 Reports from Audit Wales provided unqualified audit opinions on the accounts and reported no uncorrected misstatements.

There was a delay in the completion of the audit and approval of the accounts as a result of national issues regarding the valuation of assets and presentation within the accounts, in particular infrastructure assets. This included a requirement to introduce regulations at a national level to ensure the audit of accounts of all local authorities could be completed.

The pandemic and subsequent inflationary pressures have presented substantial financial challenges, and the Committee has taken particular interest in the information and updates provided by the (Corporate Director Resources (Section 151 Officer)) in each Committee meeting. Through these updates, we have been kept informed about matters of budget strategy and performance, funding streams and overall financial resilience.

3.2 Governance and Risk Management

The Committee plays a key role in contributing to and challenging the contents to be included in the Annual Governance Statement (AGS). The AGS is an important governance disclosure document and accompanies the Statement of Accounts, and measures and reports assurance of the Council's governance arrangements. Core components of the AGS are:

1. A Senior Management Assurance Statement (SMAS) and assessment of good governance.

2. The Audit Managers opinion on the Council’s control environment based on the programme of Internal Audit work.
3. The Governance and Audit Committee’s opinion of good governance, risk management and internal control.

The Governance and Audit Committee reviewed the AGS 2021/22 in July 2022. The Committee will review the AGS 2022/23 following the financial year-end, in which the ‘Opinion of the Committee for 2022/23’ (section 8) will be disclosed.

The Committee has received and had the opportunity to comment on the following governance and risk management disclosures:

Committee Meeting Date	Item Reviewed
July 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Draft Annual Governance Statement 2021/22 ▪ Corporate Risk Management (Q4 Update) 2021/22
September 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Corporate Risk Management (Q1 Update) 2022/23
November 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Corporate Risk Management (Q2 Update) 2022/23
March 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Corporate Risk Management (Q3 Update) 2022/23

Within the Council’s Code of Corporate Governance, the Senior Management Assurance Statement (SMAS) process is a core mechanism for senior management self-review and provides an open disclosure of the application of good governance. We have probed the senior officers we met during the year on their senior management assurance statements that were presented as part of their directorate control environment reports.

Our committee has continued to receive quarterly corporate risk management updates, through which we have considered and discussed the Council’s Corporate Risk Register. The latest update we received is available [here](#). When we invite senior officers to attend committee meetings, we take an interest in understanding the controls in place to manage directorate risks, as part of wider assurance updates. Further information is provided in sections ‘3.7 - Control environment Reviews’, and ‘3.8 - Areas of Particular Focus’ of this report.

3.3 Performance

Our Committee has a responsibility from the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 to review the Council’s draft annual Self-Assessment Report and make any appropriate recommendations for changes. This role involves reviewing overall performance systems and arrangements in place, whereas scrutiny Committees are responsible for scrutinising specific performance issues relative to their terms of reference and executive decision making. We discharged this new role for the first time in September 2022.

We reviewed the Council’s draft Annual Self-Assessment report (represented by the [Annual Well-being report](#)) during our meeting in our September meeting, with the report presented by the

Chief Executive, Paul Orders. Alongside this report, we also received a Council control environment update for which details are provided in '3.7 – Control Environment Reviews'.

The meeting was informative, in which we were provided with a clear outline of the different performance and assurance components which make up the overall assessment. We raised questions from our initial consideration of the report and received useful explanations.

Following the meeting, the report's introductory pages were circulated, and we consolidated the views of our committee views and prepared a joint letter for the Leader and Chief Executive. Our Committee considered that the annual report was comprehensive and professionally written, and we recognised the well-structured self-assessment process. The recommendations and observations that we raised with the Leader and Chief Executive from our review related to areas where we considered that the representation of the Council's performance could be enhanced.

We undertake our review formally after the end of each financial year, and in our July Committee meeting we will consider the 2022/23 draft report. At the mid-year stage we are provided with a report and the mid-year assessment of performance, as reported to Cabinet to note progress reported and any updates on the approach ahead of our formal year-end review.

Our Committee has a further performance responsibility arising from the Act, to review and assess the authority's ability to handle complaints effectively, and to make any associated reports and recommendations. Details of this work are included in section '3.8 – Particular Areas of Focus' of this report.

3.4 Treasury Management

Through its Treasury Management role, the Council needs to govern and manage its borrowing and investments effectively, with prudence and in accordance with professional codes, standards, and guidance. The Governance and Audit Committee seeks assurance that the Council has complied with the Treasury Management Strategy and Practices, and has demonstrated effective risk and performance management.

Over the past twelve months, the Committee has received reports on the [Treasury Management Annual Report 2021/22](#), [Treasury Management Mid-Year Report 2022/23](#) and the [Treasury Management Strategy 2023/24](#).

Through the treasury management reports and updates in Committee meetings, Members have taken the opportunity to scrutinise and challenge the approach adopted and decisions taken. This is a complex area, through which the Committee has delivered its role through probing and scrutinising strategies, reports and data provided within difficult economic conditions.

Members have continued to focus attention on the use of reserves, the levels of borrowing and investment, and the management of risk. To support the Governance and Audit Committee in its role, Members of the Committee were provided with treasury management training in January 2023 from the Council's external treasury advisors.

Treasury Management is subject to regular Internal Audit, and during 2019, it was subject to a review commissioned with the Council's treasury management advisors. This review considered the corporate team's skills, compliance with best practice, required regulations and professional

guidance. The report was complimentary, and we received a management response with target dates for the small number of actions raised.

3.5 External Audit (Audit Wales)

The Committee places reliance on the work of Audit Wales as the Council’s external auditors. The Committee has received key documents throughout the year:

- Audit Activity / Progress Updates
- External Review Bodies Recommendation Tracker
- Council Review Reports
- Summary of Risk and Assurance Work 2021/22
- Audit of Accounts Reports 2021/22

The Committee has received regular updates from Audit Wales, led by Derwyn Owen (Engagement / Financial Audit Director, with Richard Harries taking over responsibility from 2023/24), Phil Pugh (Financial Audit Manager) and Sara-Jane Byrne (Performance Audit Manager)).

We received a range of reports from the Council’s external Auditor (Audit Wales) over the year and details of these reviews and the management response are provided below.

Waste Management Review

In March 2022, Audit Wales undertook a follow up review of the Council’s plans to reduce waste and improve its recycling performance to achieve the national recycling targets. Five proposals were raised and agreed covering recycling strategy implementation planning and resources, the mitigation of associated risks, developing an integrated and longer-term waste management approach, and exploring how other organisations have achieved better recycling outcomes to improve performance and longer-term strategy.

We considered the report and were been advised that the Council has continued to work closely with the Welsh Government and the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) to demonstrate its commitment to meeting the statutory targets. We were also informed that a segregated recycling pilot and a compositional analysis of household and Trade waste in Cardiff informed the development of a new Recycling Strategy 2022-25: ‘Cleaner and Greener’, which aims to achieve a recycling rate of 70% by 2025

Follow-up Leisure Review

We received a follow-up report on the Council’s progress in meeting the proposals for improvement made in the Audit Wales Review of Leisure Services report in 2020. The findings from the review in 2020, based on fieldwork undertaken prior to the pandemic, concluded that the Council had achieved its key aim of keeping its leisure centres open but there was scope for the Council to better apply the sustainable development principle and strengthen arrangements to assure itself that its contract with Greenwich Leisure Limited (GLL) was delivering value for money. Audit Wales undertook a follow-up review during spring 2022 to assess the Council’s progress in addressing six proposals for improvement made in the 2020 report. Two were recognised as met and progress was noted in the remaining four areas.

Audit Wales concluded that the Council has made swift and good progress in addressing the proposals raised but needs to do more to ensure the sustainable development principle fully

drives future leisure provision. The proposals for improvement have been agreed in the management response. In response to the report, we were advised that in October 2022 Economy and Culture Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet reviewed the Leisure Services Contract and opportunities to improve the revenue position post-pandemic as identified in a Local Partnerships contract review report.

Summary Report of Assurance and Risk Assessment Work

We received a report in November 2022, summarising the assurance and risk assessment work undertaken by Audit Wales during 2021/22. One recommendation has been raised associated with determining the resource and cost implications of delivering the Council's 'One Planet Cardiff' Net Zero Carbon 2030 strategy.

We were advised that a management response to the report was being drafted, and we have asked that in future we consider all reports once a management response has been formalised, however, we were assured by management in attendance that there were no issues of concern identified through the Senior Management Team consideration of the report to date.

Combined Springing Forward Report

We received a report focused on how the Council strategically plans to use its assets and workforce, how it monitors their use and how it reviews and evaluates the effectiveness of its arrangements.

The report raised four recommendations arising from the report for which a management response was being prepared, and concluded that the Council:

- Has made valuable progress in developing its hybrid working plans. It hasn't developed its longer-term workforce plans nor the resources and governance arrangements to support their delivery, fully shaped by the sustainable development principle.
- Has made good progress in delivering its property strategy and has the necessary governance arrangements underpinned by improved performance data, but its approach lacks a focus on service user and longer-term needs.

External Review Body Recommendations

Our Committee receives a consolidated report twice a year of the recommendations which have been received from external review bodies (Audit Wales, Estyn, Care Inspectorate Wales, and Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Probation).

The report contains a management update of how each recommendation is being addressed and details of the relevant oversight board or committee, for our information and assurance. Our latest update was in March and is available here.

Statement of Accounts

The Committee's review of the Audit of Accounts Reports and Audit Certificates 2021/22 is outlined in 'Section 3.1 – Finance'.

3.6 Internal Audit & Investigation Teams

The Committee continues to place reliance on the work of the Council's in-house Internal Audit Team. It receives a progress report from the Audit Manager on a quarterly basis, which includes audit opinions, critical findings and progress against the audit plan, together with wider performance measures and audit recommendation tracking information.

The Audit Manager has had a functional reporting role to the Governance and Audit Committee and reports managerially to the Head of Finance (Deputy Section 151 Officer). The Committee has been assured that throughout the year that there have been no impairments to Internal Audit independence or objectivity in accordance with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS).

The Internal Audit Charter and the Internal Audit Plan 2022/23 were accepted by the Governance and Audit Committee in March 2022. At this time, the Committee also considered the Audit Strategy. The priorities and approach of the audit team were to deliver a combination of management support through consultation and engagement in high-risk areas, and to progress targeted assurance engagements from the Audit Plan. The Internal audit Team achieved 52% of Audit Plan this year against a target of 70%. A prioritised approach was taken, in the context of reduced staff resources due to vacant audit posts, to ensure all fundamental areas of the plan were delivered, that core areas of corporate governance were reviewed, and that there was sufficient coverage at the directorate level in order to provide a full audit opinion on the Council's control environment. In the context of reduced staff resource, it is considered that an effective outcome was achieved in terms of audit delivery, coverage and focus.

The Committee received the following key documents during the year:

- [Internal Audit Strategy, Charter, and Plan 2023/24](#)
- [External Quality Assurance Report on conformance with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards](#)
- Internal Audit and Investigation Team Progress Reports
- Internal Audit Recommendation Tracker
- [Internal Audit](#) and [Counter-Fraud](#) Annual Reports

We received an update on the work, initiatives and outcomes of Council's Internal Audit and Counter-Fraud services on a quarterly basis from the Audit Manager. An overview of all issued audit reports has been provided to the Governance and Audit Committee, with emphasis given to recommendations allocated a priority rating of Red or Red / Amber. The Committee has received and had an opportunity to review all audit recommendations and the associated management responses and updates until the point of implementation. We received an overview of the activities and outcomes of the work of the corporate Investigation Team including details of counter fraud initiatives, training and awareness campaigns.

The number of audit recommendations implemented within agreed timescales is improving, but requires further management attention, with performance at 67% against a target of 80%. It is essential that audit clients prioritise delivering audit recommendations within the timescales they agree to, and to support this sentiment, we have written to a small number of directors who have had particularly overdue recommendations in their portfolio.

In March 2023, we received an external quality assessment report, undertaken via a peer assessment process from the Chief Internal Auditor in Newport and Monmouthshire on Cardiff Council's conformance with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS). The PSIAS requires an external assessment at least once every five years by a qualified, independent assessor or assessment team from outside the organisation. The assessment reported no partial or non-conformance with the requirements of the PSIAS, and conformance with all 304 of the requirements (includes those not applicable).

Prior to the financial year-end we approved the Internal Audit Charter and Plan 2023/24. The Audit Charter defines the internal audit purpose, authority and responsibility. The Audit Charter provides a mandate for the necessary unfettered access of internal audit to records, personnel and properties in order to carry out its importance assurance and advisory work, whilst the Audit Plan sets out the detailed planned audit engagements for the year ahead.

The Committee will receive a full year overview of audit work completed, and key messages, when the Internal Audit Annual Report 2022/23 is presented in our first Committee Meeting of 2023/24. This report will provide the Audit Manager's opinion on the Council's overall position in relation to risk, governance and control and an annual review and assurance statement on conformance with the PSIAS.

Wider Reviews

The Governance and Audit Committee has engaged with senior officers through its programme of work this year for assurance on the control environment for their respective areas of oversight. We have also considered our new performance responsibilities areas, and areas of good governance, risk management and control this year with particular focus and details are provided below.

3.7 Control Environment Reviews

a. Council Control Environment

The Committee receives an annual overview of the Council's control environment from Paul Orders, Chief Executive. The Council's control environment update comprises an outline of, and assurance on, the Council's overall arrangements for governance, risk management and internal control. Our Committee recognises the challenging financial environment facing the authority, and the Chief Executive continues to emphasise the important role of the Section 151 Officer, and SMT in making the interventions necessary to effectively to manage Council finances.

The timing of the Council control environment update has been aligned with the timing of reporting on the annual performance self-assessment, and in September 2022, we received our latest update.

Our Committee received an [outline](#) of the council's performance and assurance frameworks, the arrangements in place to oversee and manage their effective application, and the reporting and improvement arrangements in place. This comprised the Council's planning and performance framework, senior management assurance processes and review arrangements, independent assurance arrangements, and risk management arrangements. The overview consolidated the positions and views that we have received from individual Directors.

b. Directorate Control Environment Reviews

Three Directors attended Governance and Audit Committee meetings in 2022/23 to provide an overview of their directorate control environments. We were provided with details of directorate governance, risk management and internal control, and the prominent matters discussed and actions agreed were as follows:

Childrens Services

During our November 2022 meeting, Deborah Driffield, Director of Childrens Services, provided an overview of her service, its statutory obligations and the governance, risk management and control arrangements in place.

We received details of the risk management controls applied within the Directorate and a summary of the key corporate and directorate risks. We were provided with an outline of the senior management assurance and external assurance arrangements in place, together with the position in response to internal audit reports and recommendations. The presentation concluded with information on directorate value for money and complaints handling.

In response to our enquiries on financial management, we were advised that significant work is being undertaken to develop in-house services in Cardiff to mitigate the risk of the high-cost external residential child care provision. Every decision to place a child into care is taken by the Senior Management Team and every decision has oversight. High-cost placements are reviewed weekly, and very high cost or unregistered placements are reviewed twice-weekly. We were advised that there was a need to work on preventative measures to mitigate increases in demand and identify early warning signs, primarily in schools. In respect of workforce planning and resilience, we were advised that Social Work Support Assistants provide administration support and are receiving support to become qualified within three years.

Education and Lifelong Learning

In January 2023, the Melanie Godfrey, Director of Education and Lifelong Learning, provided an overview of the Education Management Team structure, the governance arrangements in respect for the school improvement framework and schools causing concern, and details of risk management, internal audit and senior management assurances. A summary of budget management and value for money was also included. We also received updates that we had requested on the management of school balances, systems to review the affordability of the 21st Century Schools Programme, and complaints handling arrangements.

In response to our enquiries on matters relating to governance, risk management and control, we were advised that in addition to delegated school budgets, due to the pandemic, some schools secured grant support from the Government, and some schools are very good at generating income. The position is monitored with the support of colleagues in Finance. We were informed that Welsh Government sets the priorities for the 21st Century schools Programme, and the Council takes decisions on the specific projects to address need, for which improvements in the understanding of real-time data are needed to ensure school provision addresses the challenge of learner needs. Conditions surveys across the estate were used to inform where best to make such investments over and above any reactive emergency repairs required. We were advised that there are a range of governance arrangements in place for the Central South Consortium, including boards and management arrangements. Support measures are advised to be in place for schools identified as a cause for concern for which assurance is received through the new accountability, improvement and evaluation arrangements from Welsh Government.

We were advised that Internal Audit recommendations are regularly monitored and that addressing them is a priority in January 2023. We wrote a Committee letter for the Director to provide further information and assurances on the response to internal audit recommendations after we reflected on performance in our March meeting.

Adults, Housing and Communities

In March 2023, we received an overview of the control environment within the Adults, Housing and Communities Directorate. We received details of the directorate's services and functions, and the key management and board meetings in place for governance. We received information on performance and risk management arrangements and the details of corporate and directorate risks. An overview was provided of the internal audit engagement and response position, which included a commitment to review and address longstanding recommendations. Senior management, partnership and major project assurances were presented, together with details of external assurance arrangements and areas of oversight. Finally, we received information on complaints handling arrangements and value for money assurances.

In response to our enquiries, we were advised that corporate safeguarding arrangements are in place that can include partnership and multi-agency responses. In social housing for instance, risks are identified, and referral systems are in place. Risks are monitored and domestic abuse services have been subject to review accordingly. We heard that backlogs of deprivation of liberty safeguards are being prioritised and a project has been put in place to act upon new legislation and to prioritise cases. In response to our comments on the presentation, description of controls in place and action dates within risk registers, we were advised that this would be reviewed for consistent and appropriate recording. We concluded the meeting by registering that we will be requesting an update in due course on the response to internal audit recommendations.

3.8 Areas of Particular Focus

In addition to our standard areas of work, the Governance and Audit Committee considered our new performance responsibilities areas, and areas of good governance, risk management and control this year with particular focus. A brief account of our reviews of these areas is included below.

1. Performance Self-Assessment

As outlined within section 3.3 – performance of this report, the Governance and Audit Committee has a responsibility arising from the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act, to review the Council's draft annual Self-Assessment Report for the financial year each year, and to make any appropriate recommendations for changes.

Prior to undertaking this role for the first time in September 2022, we have engaged with peers the WLGA and CIPFA through the All-Wales Governance and Audit Committee Chairs' Network, to assist in our understanding and effectively delivery of these requirements. We also received useful briefings from Gareth Newell, Head of Performance and Partnerships on our new responsibilities and the Council's assurance and performance governance arrangements.

We have arranged a briefing session to take place in June 2023 on the planning and performance framework prior to completing our review of the 2022/23 report, to provide a good base-level of knowledge across the Committee before we make our enquiries with management on the annual report.

2. Complaints Handling Arrangements

Our committee has a role to review the arrangements for complaints handling within the Council.

During July 2022, we received an update on the implementation of a new corporate complaints system from Isabelle Bignall, Chief Digital Officer, which followed a briefing that we received on the system specification, and the project-based review and decision-making which was used to inform the procurement process.

The report we received ([LINK](#)) provided:

- details of the current level of assurance from internal sources as well as commentary from the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales,
- details of the development and planned deployment of the new corporate complaints system.
- the draft Complaints and Compliments Annual Report 2021/22 for wider context

As there are separate arrangements and responsibilities for officer complaints handling corporately, in schools and within social services, and as referred to within '3.7 – Control Environment Reviews', we have been considering the separate assurance arrangements with the respective Directors.

In our November 2022 [report](#) we were advised that the Project Manager for rolling out the corporate system had since left the Council, that a request for a full-time Project Manager had since been made, but the resource had not yet been identified presenting a challenge for the project. We were advised that there has been no impact upon the ability to respond to complaints on a day-to-day basis. However, the timeline for rolling out the new system would need to be revisited. We will continue to review corporate arrangement and the roll out of the corporate system and receiving overviews of the arrangements in place within directorates when we engage with senior officers to discuss the internal control environment for their areas of responsibility.

3. Waste Management Control Environment

Our Committee has maintained a close interest on the internal control environment in Waste Management for which lower levels of assurance have typically been received from Internal Audit reports than for other areas of the Council. During recent years, the Service Area has also been subject to investigations into financial / control matters for which our Committee has received confidential briefings.

We note that management and Internal Audit have reported a tightening of internal controls, the implementation of a significant number of Internal Audit recommendations and no recent audits have provided an 'unsatisfactory' audit opinion. The focus remains on the journey of improvement.

4. Education and Lifelong Learning Assurance

As referred to in section 3.7 – Control Environment Reviews, for a number of years, we have sought regular Education and Lifelong Learning assurance. This year, we have focussed our attention on:

- i. The arrangements in place to manage school balances.

Our Committee received a briefing on school balances in January 2023, which provided a breakdown of individual school balances at the 2021/22 financial year end with comparative prior year details. We observed significant surplus balances, although projections reported that 35 schools would end the 2022/23 financial year in a deficit position. The Committee has been advised of the control arrangements in place to address both surplus and deficit school balances and we are keen to observe appropriate and effective application and local authority governance.

- ii. The implementation of audit recommendations.

The implementation of internal audit recommendations is important across all areas in order to deliver good governance, risk management and control. The timely response to audit recommendations has been an area for improvement in the Education and Lifelong Learning directorate, and notable within schools for a number of years. Accordingly, we have written a letter to the Director for further information and assurances on the response to internal audit recommendations going forward.

4. Governance and Audit Committee Self-Assessment

Context and approach

In January 2023, the Governance and Audit Committee held a Self-Assessment Workshop, to review its performance against a best practice CIPFA framework. Following the process introduced in previous years' assessments, Governance and Audit Committee Members were asked to undertake an Individual Assessment against the CIPFA core knowledge and skills areas in advance of the collective workshop. This assessment incorporated the best practices of the CIPFA 2022 guidance for Audit Committees, including the requirements of the CIPFA Position Statement. This enabled the results to be reflected upon when considering the overall assessment.

Self-Assessment

Individual Assessments were completed by eight of the twelve Governance and Audit Committee Members.

From the Individual Assessments completed, whilst there was strong self-assessed performance in each core area, Internal Audit and Risk Management represented the lowest self-assessed areas overall. A proportion of individual Committee Members have self-assessed as at least strong for knowledge and application in each of the ten core areas.

In respect of the collective Self-Assessment Workshop held in January 2023, the results were as follows.

Through our review of good practice, Governance and Audit Committee self-assessed:

- Twenty-four areas were assessed as 'full complies – no further improvement'.
- Five areas were assessed as 'partially complies – minor improvement needed'.

For the areas reported as ‘partially complies – minor improvement needed’, the Committee considered:

- We will review seek further partnership and HR assurance going forward.
- We will benefit from establishing private meetings with our external auditors.
- There is sufficient knowledge across the Committee, but Members would benefit from further training on the role and work of Internal Audit and on Risk Management.
- Committee meetings are effective, but we do not have regular discussion and engagement from all Members.
- We have generally maintained non-political in discussions, which is something for us to continue to focus on.

For our review of Governance and Audit Committee effectiveness, we considered our strengths and areas for improvement against 10 areas of effectiveness. We considered a strong overall assessment, in which we have been effective in meeting our purpose and complying with the CIPFA Position Statement. Where we identified areas for improvement, these were included in an Action Plan for us to progress in the year ahead.

The Action Plan and feedback information from those attending Governance and Audit Committee are included in Annex 2 and Annex 3 of this report respectively.

5. Key Observations 2022/23

The Governance and Audit Committee Work Programme has been developed and discharged with the support of Audit Wales, Internal Audit and other Council Officers, to deliver the Governance and Audit Committee terms of reference with a focus on the significant risks and challenges facing the Council.

The Committee has achieved an overview of the Council’s priorities, risks and controls through the many items received through its Work Programme. The Committee has focussed on achieving assurance on the effective arrangement across directorates to respond to the challenges of maintaining controls, displaying good governance and managing risks. Through engagement with senior officers, and receiving a range of management and independent assurances, the Committee has gained a good understanding of the services provided and the challenges faced. We have responded proportionately with assurance and challenge, as appropriate, and documented within section 3 of this report, ‘Our Work’.

In addition, the Committee has had the opportunity to challenge and discuss actions taken in response to External and Internal Audit Reports, and we have undertaken reviews of particular matters of good governance, risk management and control, through inviting senior officers to Committee meetings to provide information and assurance. Through this information and engagement, we have identified the assurance and coverage required to deliver our role, from which our Annual Opinion for 2022/23 and areas of particular interest going forward are documented in the following section.

6. Opinion of the Committee for 2022/23

Based on the evidence presented to the Governance and Audit Committee during 2022/23, it is the considered view of the Governance and Audit Committee that the Council does have, for the most part, sound internal controls and governance arrangements in place. Strategic risks representing the true challenges facing the Council are captured and reviewed on a regular basis. Examples of where the Committee continues to have concerns, which will be incorporated into the Committee's Work Programme for 2022/23, include:

6.1 Budget Management

The Committee recognises the sustained financial pressure that the Council is under and notes that whilst the overall financial position was balanced, some particular directorates had significant overspends for which control improvements are needed, and management attention and actions are required in directorates to achieve budget savings proposals put forward. Sound budget management is essential in the context of a challenging economic environment, continued constrained finances and an ever-increasing demand for services.

The financial challenge continues to be significant, with a budget gap of £113.4 million reported based on current financial modelling over the next four years. The Committee is keen to observe effective arrangements for budget management and control during 2023/24. The Committee will carefully consider budget management arrangements over the year to come, through observing the use of appropriate management controls and interventions and continuing to reinforce expectations for delivery.

6.2 Internal Control

Assurance on compliance and control is essential. For a number of years there have been continued constraints on resources, together with a growing population and greater demand for public services. As the Council faces significant challenges in how it delivers services, it remains essential that internal controls are not neglected or impaired, and that strong controls operate throughout reformed processes and systems. Additionally, the pandemic has necessitated the adaptation of systems, and in some cases the design of new systems, in order to respond to new priorities. We have been advised of the consultation, advice and guidance provided by the Internal Audit and Investigation Teams to support management to design and uphold robust controls as they have navigated new priorities and responsibilities.

The Committee has invited senior officers to attend its meetings this year, to account for their delivery of good governance, risk management and control. In addition, the Committee has continued to receive the details of all Internal Audits completed, and the respective assurance ratings. This year we have observed isolated internal control gaps through reports of insufficient assurance, and one unsatisfactory audit opinion. Whilst the number of unsatisfactory Internal Audit opinions remain low, management must maintain sound systems of internal control and promptly address identified weaknesses.

We have maintained close interest on the robustness of controls in relation to the Waste Management function. In recent years, alongside a police referral and investigation, a wide-scale

internal investigation into allegations of fraud was completed and disciplinary proceedings have concluded. Through discussions with the Director and the Audit Manager we are advised that there has been steady and sustained progress in recent years in the internal control environment, led by the senior management in place. Our Committee has been advised that there are mechanisms for delivering and acting on improvement actions, and that there is a constructive two-way relationship with Internal Audit, in the planning of, and response to, assurance work. We recognise the progress made for which continued management attention and assurance are required.

The Committee has access to all Internal Audit recommendations raised and agreed, and visibility of updated management comments until the point of implementation. Whilst the Committee has an overall assurance of internal control, we continue to require officers to account for services or functions where internal control weaknesses have been identified. We continue to challenge any impairment in stewardship and control of public funds and assets, seeking prompt and proportionate management actions. The Committee has considered and approved the Internal Audit Plan for 2023/24, and will closely monitor its progress and findings over the year ahead.

6.3 Financial Resilience (including Treasury Management)

In a position of constrained finances, the Committee will continue its consideration of the framework for financial decisions. The Committee has received regular updates on financial resilience and, in recent years has welcomed the independent assurance of the Council Treasury Management activities, by the Council's Treasury Management advisors, further to the regular assurance provided by Internal Audit.

The Governance and Audit Committee will continue to look to gain assurance of sound treasury management practices and strategy. This is vital work, which will both safeguard and deliver best value from the Council's borrowing and investments. The Committee has and will continue to seek assurance that the levels and profiles of investments and borrowing are appropriate and in line with the Treasury Management Practices, Strategy and Reports presented.

6.4 Schools Governance

The Committee has sought regular reports from senior management in the Education and Lifelong Learning directorate seeking ongoing assurance on the arrangements to manage school balances, and to address audit recommendations. Our Committee has raised concerns over delays in implementing school audit recommendations, and the Director of Education and Lifelong Learning has committed to providing a full analysis of outstanding audit recommendations by the end of this academic year.

Our Committee has noted positive improvements made, as recognised by Estyn, and we will continue to keep a keen interest in the governance arrangements and assurance we receive in respect of schools. This is with the understanding that the Governance and Audit Committee can request the attendance of those directly responsible for governance at an individual school level, to a Committee meeting, in the event that assurances are not considered as sufficient.

The Committee acknowledges that the Council is not able to set rules for schools to adhere to regarding contracting matters, albeit advice can be offered on good practice. This area of interest

remains a priority of the Committee and we continue to support the production and use of best practice guidance in schools to strengthen financial stewardship and control.

7. Looking ahead to 2023/24

During the forthcoming municipal year, we will continue to be guided by the professional advice of our Corporate Director Resources, Audit Manager and the Internal and External Audit teams.

Our work programme will cover all areas of our terms of reference and we will monitor the management of the existing matters highlighted in section 6 of this report (the 'Opinion of the Committee for 2022/23') as well any new issues, which require our attention.

We will continue to deliver our responsibilities with the necessary level of flexibility to discharge our role comprehensively, through relevant engagement and consultation with relevant officers and stakeholders both within and outside of formal Committee meetings.

8. Committee Membership 2022/23

The Committee consists of four Independent Lay Members and eight Councillors, elected by Council (detailed in Annex 4). Independent members are appointed for no more than two administrative terms with Council Members reappointed annually.

- On 25 November 2021, Council re-appointed Gavin McArthur and David Price as Independent Members of the Committee, for a second 5-year term.
- Hugh Thomas, Chair of the Governance and Audit Committee, who was already serving a second term, stood down from the Committee at the financial year end (31.03.23).
- Gavin McArthur (Deputy Chair) became Chair of the Governance & Audit Committee on 31.03.23, when Hugh Thomas stood down.
- Two Independent Members are serving in their first terms. Dr Janet Wademan, Independent Lay Member of the Committee, was appointed on 30 September 2021. Chris Burns was appointed following the financial year-end, at Annual Council on the 25 May 2023.
- There is one Elected Member vacancy arising from Cllr Waldron stepping down following the financial year-end.

The position in respect of Committee Membership is shown in Annex 4.

The Committee has been serviced by Council Officers, principally the Corporate Director Resources (Section 151 Officer), and the Audit Manager. Representatives from Audit Wales have also attended Committee meetings.

9. Attendance in 2022/23

The Governance and Audit Committee met on 6 occasions throughout the municipal period 2022/23 on the following dates: 19 July 2022, 27 September 2022, 15 November 2022 (Special Meeting), 29 November 2022, 24 January 2023, and 21 March 2023.

Committee Meeting Attendance

Attendance 2022/23	Possible	Actual
Independent Lay Members		
Hugh Thomas (Chairperson until 31.03.2023)	6	4
Gavin McArthur (Deputy Chairperson until 31.03.2023)	6	6
David Price	6	5
Janet Wademan	6	6
Chris Burns (appointed to Committee on 25.05.2023)	0	0
Elected Members		
Councillor Saleh Ahmed	6	3
Councillor Kate Carr	6	6
Councillor Russell Goodway	6	2
Councillor Margaret Lewis	6	5
Councillor Jess Moultrie	6	5
Councillor Marc Palmer	6	5
Councillor Daniel Waldron (stepped down at year-end)	6	5
Councillor Joel Williams	6	5

All Committee Members received induction training prior to attending Governance & Audit Committee meetings.

10. Contacts

Gavin McArthur Chairperson of the Governance and Audit Committee	Please contact via the Audit Manager
Christopher Lee Corporate Director Resources	029 2087 2300 Christopher.lee@cardiff.gov.uk
Chris Pyke Audit Manager	029 2087 3455 cpyke@cardiff.gov.uk
Richard Harries Engagement Director (Financial Audit), Audit Wales	Richard.Harries@audit.wales
Phil Pugh Audit Manager (Financial Audit), Audit Wales	07964 118615 phil.pugh@audit.wales
Sara-Jane Byrne Audit Manager (Performance Audit), Audit Wales	07786 111385 sara-jane.byrne@audit.wales

Governance and Audit Committee Terms of Reference 2022/23

Statement of Purpose

- Our Governance and Audit Committee is a key component of Cardiff Council's corporate governance. It provides an independent and high-level focus on the audit, assurance, and reporting arrangements that underpin good governance and financial standards.
- The purpose of our Governance and Audit Committee is to provide independent assurance to the members of Cardiff Council, and its wider citizens and stakeholders, on the adequacy of the risk management framework, the internal control environment, and the performance assessment of the Council. It provides an independent review of Cardiff Council's governance, performance assessment, risk management and control frameworks and oversees the financial reporting and annual governance processes. It oversees internal audit and external audit, helping to ensure efficient and effective assurance arrangements are in place.

Governance, Performance, Risk & Control

- To review the Council's corporate governance arrangements against the good governance framework, including the ethical framework and consider annual governance reports and assurances.
- To review the Council's draft annual Self-Assessment Report, and make any appropriate recommendations for changes.
- To review the Council's draft response to the Panel Performance Assessment Report, and make any appropriate recommendations for changes.
- To review the Council's draft response to any Auditor General's recommendations arising from a 'special inspection' in respect of the Council's performance requirements, and to make any appropriate recommendations for changes.
- To review and assess the authority's ability to handle complaints effectively, and make any associated reports and recommendations.
- To review the Annual Governance Statement prior to approval and consider whether it properly reflects the risk environment and supporting assurances, taking into account the internal audit opinion on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's framework of governance, risk management and internal control.
- To consider the Council's arrangements to secure value for money and review assurances and assessments on the effectiveness of these arrangements.
- To consider the Council's framework of assurance and ensure that it adequately addresses the risk and priorities of the Council.
- To monitor the effective development and operation of risk management in the Council.
- To monitor progress in addressing risk-related issues reported to the Committee.

- To consider reports on the effectiveness of internal controls and monitor the implementation of agreed actions.
- To review the assessment of fraud risks and potential harm to the Council from fraud and corruption.
- To monitor the Counter-fraud strategy, actions and resources.
- To review the governance and assurance arrangements for significant partnerships or collaborations.

Internal Audit

- To approve the Internal Audit Charter.
- To review proposals in relation to the appointment of external providers of internal audit services and to make recommendations.
- To approve the risk-based internal audit plan, containing internal audit's resource requirements, the approach to using other sources of assurances and any work required to place reliance upon those other sources.
- To approve significant interim changes to the risk based internal audit plan and resource requirements.
- To make appropriate enquiries of both management and the audit manager to determine if there are any inappropriate scope or resource limitations.
- To consider any impairments to independence or objectivity arising from additional roles or responsibilities outside of internal auditing of the Audit Manager. To approve and periodically review safeguards to limit such impairments.
- To consider reports from the Audit Manager on Internal Audit's performance during the year including the performance of external providers of internal audit services. These will include:
 - Updates on the work of internal audit including key findings, issues of concern and action in hand as a result of internal audit work
 - Regular reports on the results of the Quality Assurance and Improvement Programme (QAIP)
 - Reports on instances where the internal audit function does not conform to the PSIAS and Local Government Application Note (LGAN) considering whether the non- conformance is significant enough that it must be included in the Annual Governance Statement.
- To consider the Audit Manager's annual report:
 - The statement of the level of conformance with the PSIAS and LGAN and the results of the QAIP that support the statement – these will indicate the reliability of the conclusions of internal audit
 - The opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's framework of governance, risk management and control together with a summary of the work supporting the opinion – these will assist the Committee in reviewing the Annual Governance Statement.

- To consider summaries of specific internal audit reports as requested.
- To receive reports outlining the action taken where the Audit Manager has concluded that management has accepted a level of risk that may be unacceptable to the authority or there are concerns about progress with the implementation of agreed actions.
- To contribute to the Quality Assurance and Improvement Programme and in particular the external quality assessment of internal audit that takes place at least once every five years.
- To consider a report on the effectiveness of internal audit to support the Annual Governance Statement, where required to do so by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- To provide free and unfettered access to the Governance and Audit Committee Chair for the Audit Manager, including the opportunity for a private meeting with the Committee.

External Audit

- To consider the external auditor's annual letter, relevant reports, and the report to those charged with governance.
- To consider specific reports as agreed with the external auditors.
- To comment on the scope and depth of external audit work and to ensure it gives value for money.
- To commission work from internal and external audit.
- To advise and recommend on the effectiveness of relationships between external and internal audit and other inspector agencies or relevant bodies.

Financial Reporting

- To review the annual statement of accounts. Specifically, to consider whether appropriate accounting policies have been followed and whether there are concerns arising from the financial statements or from the audit that need to be brought to the attention of the Council.
- To consider the external auditor's report to those charged with governance on issues arising from the audit of the accounts.
- To seek assurances on the arrangements for the management of the authority's financial affairs.
- To seek assurances that the Council has complied with the Treasury Management Strategy and Practices by demonstrating effective control of the associated risks and pursuing optimum performance consistent with those risks.

Accountability Arrangements

- To report to Council on the Committee's findings, conclusions and recommendations concerning the adequacy and effectiveness of the governance, risk management and internal control frameworks, financial reporting arrangements and internal and external audit functions.

- To report to Council on an annual basis and to publish an annual report on the Committee's work, its performance in relation to the Terms of Reference, and its effectiveness in meeting its purpose.
- To raise the profile of probity generally within the Council and to report on matters of concern to the individual Cabinet Member, relevant Scrutiny Committee, Cabinet or to Council as necessary and appropriate.
- To work in synergy with the five Scrutiny Committees of the Council and liaise with other Council Committees as and when appropriate to avoid duplication in work programmes.

Training & Development

- To attend relevant training sessions in accordance with the Member Development Programme including specialist training tailored for Members of the Governance and Audit Committee e.g., Treasury Management.

Self-Assessment Action Plan

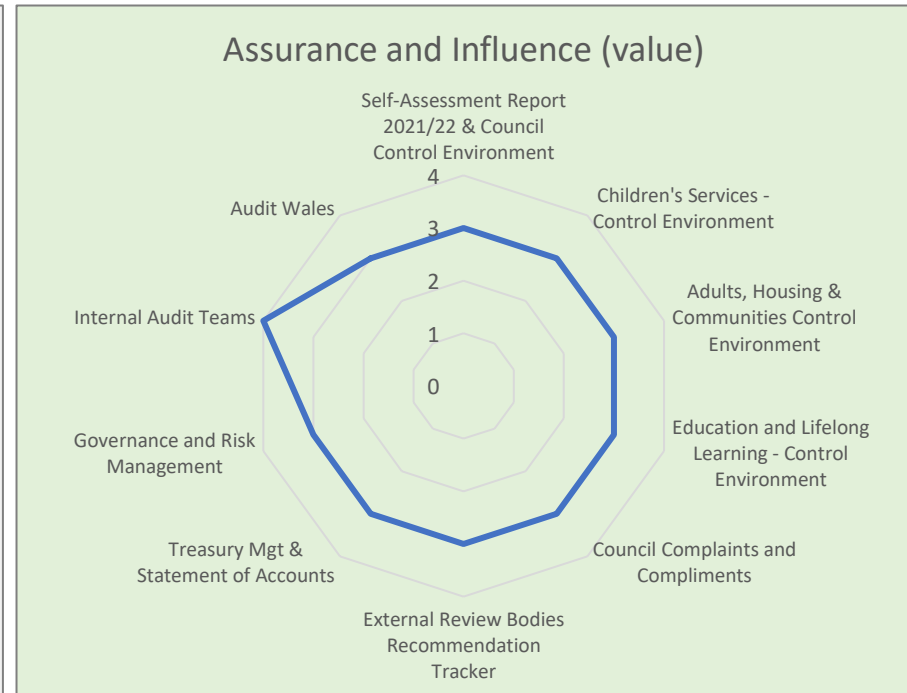
January 2023

	Action	Status / Target
1.	Refresher Committee training to be delivered on Risk Management and Internal Audit.	To be arranged in 2023/24
2.	Periodic private meetings to be arranged for the Committee and Audit Wales, which will not be attended by management.	To be arranged in 2023/24
3.	As background information, Committee to receive the Standards and Ethics Committee Annual Report each year.	Report to be circulated when published
4.	Senior officers currently provide information on partnership assurances within their control environment reports to Committee. The reflection of Committee is that there is scope to engage further in this area with senior officers.	From January 2023
5.	The Corporate Director Resources to provide HR information and assurances when next presenting on the directorate control environment.	Upon next attendance of Corporate Director Resources
6.	Committee to raise comments with officers on Committee papers as appropriate where they consider improvements may assist in future / ongoing Committee's reviews.	From January 2023
7.	Governance and Audit Committee to share relevant information with Scrutiny Committees of where it feels important assurances could be sought as part of a scrutiny process e.g., matters which could be explored as part of pre-decision scrutiny.	From January 2023
8.	Committee to continue to seek more value for money assurance from those it engages with.	From January 2023



The Committee requested feedback from those it engaged with in Committee meetings in respect of ‘performance’, ‘assurance and influence’ and ‘discussion and engagement’.

The results for 2022/23 were as follows.

Key	Score
1	Poor
2	Satisfactory
3	Good
4	Excellent



Current Membership

 <p>Gavin McArthur (Chair) (Independent Lay Member)</p>	<p>Gavin McArthur is an experienced internal audit and governance professional and qualified accountant. He was Head of Governance and Assurance for the Ministry of Justice Estates Directorate. He has also held senior management roles in internal audit functions in the private sector, local and central government.</p> <p>Following a degree in Geological Sciences from Birmingham University, Gavin qualified as a CIPFA accountant with Coventry City Council where he undertook a range of financial management and accounting roles, including audit.</p> <p>His professional experience and expertise lie in the fields of internal control, risk management, governance, internal audit, business case review, and performance management. He was appointed as Vice Chair of the Governance and Audit Committee of Cardiff Council in January 2020, and is Vice Chair of the Warwickshire Police Joint Audit and Standards Committee.</p> <p>On 31/03/2023, Hugh Thomas stepped down from the Governance & Audit Committee, at which point Gavin (previously Deputy Chair), assumed the role of Chair.</p> <p>A keen sportsman, who played semi-professional football, Gavin has coaching qualifications in rugby, goalkeeping and strength & conditioning. He currently coaches goalkeeping for a university football team and for many years coached at a local rugby club, he is also an experienced Tai chi practitioner.</p>
 <p>David Price (Independent Lay Member)</p>	<p>David Price is an independent management consultant, executive coach and interim manager who works primarily with tertiary education organisations. He formerly spent 25 years working for a number of UK universities and non-governmental departmental bodies in strategic planning and policy roles. His last permanent role was Pro Vice-Chancellor (Strategy & Performance) at Cardiff Metropolitan University.</p> <p>Over the last two years David has been the interim Director of the Open University in Wales, interim Chief Executive of Colegau Cymru/Colleges Wales (the representative body for the further education sector in Wales), provided consultancy services for Universities Wales (the representative body for higher sector in Wales), the University of South Wales and the British University in Egypt, served as an independent member of Cardiff Council’s Governance and Audit Committee and acted as a charity trustee.</p> <p>Educated at the universities of Sheffield and Newcastle-Upon-Tyne and at schools in the UK and abroad, David is a graduate of the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education’s Top Management Programme.</p> <p>David’s professional interests focus on the development and application of performance systems, business intelligence, risk management, regulation and governance.</p>



Dr. Janet Wademan
(Independent Lay Member)

Janet Wademan was awarded the degrees of BA and PhD in Pure Mathematics from Cardiff University. After graduation she enjoyed a corporate R&D career in the systems engineering, programme management, international marketing and bid directorship of safety critical applications in defence and civil domains. In 1995, Janet founded her advisory practice specialising in technology and innovation representing Wales and Welsh companies via the WDA's Global Link programme. She has advised consortia of international corporates resulting in winning substantial bids and the creation of 100s of STEM jobs.

Janet's underpinning professional interests are: sustainable regional development, building organizational resilience and the realization of societal impact from R&D. She was a Member of the Ministerial Advisory Group for the then Department of the Economy and Transport (2006-09). She also served as a Member of the First Minister's Economic Research Advisory Panel (2002-12). Having developed a breadth of experience as a non-executive since 1998, Janet currently serves as: Vice-Chair, Joint Audit Committee, Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner Gwent Police; Trustee and Chair of the Audit, Risk and Assurance Committee, National Library of Wales; Member, Wales Productivity Forum. She is a Fellow of the Chartered Management Institute and of the RSA.



Cllr Saleh Ahmed
(Welsh Labour)

Serving the **Fairwater** Ward

Terms of Office: 09/05/2022 - 09/05/2027

Serving on the following Committees:

- [Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee](#)
- [Community & Adult Services Scrutiny Committee](#)
- [Council](#)
- [Governance and Audit Committee](#)



Cllr Kate Carr
(Welsh Labour)

Serving the **Whitchurch and Tongwynlais** Ward

Terms of Office: 09/05/2022 - 09/05/2027

Serving on the following Committees:

- [Council](#)
- [Governance and Audit Committee](#)

Appointments to Outside Bodies:

- [South Wales Fire & Rescue Authority](#)



Cllr Russell Goodway
(Welsh Labour)

- Serving the **Ely** Ward

Terms of Office: 04/05/1995 - 08/05/2022
09/05/2022 - 09/05/2027

Serving on the following Committees:

- [Cabinet](#)
- [Cabinet \(Trustee Maindy Park Trust\)](#)
- [Constitution Committee \(Chair\)](#)
- [Council](#)
- [Democratic Services Committee](#)
- [Governance and Audit Committee](#)

Appointments to Outside Bodies:

- [Cardiff Airport Consultative Committee](#)
- [Consortium of Local Authorities in Wales \(CLAW\)](#)
- [WLG A](#)



Cllr Margaret Lewis
(Welsh Labour)

Serving the **Butetown** Ward

Terms of Office: 09/05/2022 - 09/05/2027

Serving on the following Committees:

- [Community & Adult Services Scrutiny Committee](#)
- [Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee](#)
- [Council](#)
- [Glamorgan Archives Joint Committee](#)
- [Governance and Audit Committee](#)

Appointments to Outside Bodies:

- [Cardiff Bay Advisory Committee](#)



Cllr Jess Moultrie
(Welsh Labour)

Serving the **Pentwyn** Ward



Terms of Office: 09/05/2022 - 09/05/2027

Serving on the following Committees:


- [Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee](#)
- [Constitution Committee](#)
- [Council](#)
- [Governance and Audit Committee](#)

Appointments to Outside Bodies:

- [Cardiff Mind](#)

 <p>Cllr Marc Palmer (Welsh Labour)</p>	<p>Serving the Whitchurch and Tongwynlais Ward</p> <p>Terms of Office: 09/05/2022 - 09/05/2027</p> <p>Serving on the following Committees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council • Democratic Services Committee • Governance and Audit Committee • Licensing Committee • Licensing Sub Committee • Public Protection Committee • Public Protection Sub Committee
 <p>Cllr Joel Williams (Welsh Conservatives)</p>	<p>Serving the Pontprennau & Old St Mellons Ward</p> <p>Terms of Office: 04/05/2017 - 08/05/2022 09/05/2022 - 09/05/2027</p> <p>Serving on the following Committees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council • Employment Conditions Committee • Governance and Audit Committee • Policy Review and Performance Scrutiny Committee (Chair)

Members who stood down from the Committee at the Year-End
(prior to the first meeting of 2023/24)

 <p>Hugh Thomas (Chairperson until standing down on 31.03.2023) (Independent Lay Member)</p>	<p>Hugh Thomas, a retired Solicitor, pursued a Local Government career for forty years culminating in his being Chief Executive of Mid Glamorgan County Council (the largest local authority in Wales) for fifteen years. During this time, he served as Clerk to the South Wales Police Authority and Honorary Secretary of the Assembly of Welsh Counties. He retired in 1995.</p> <p>He has since chaired a number of public bodies and national voluntary organisations including those in the health and higher education sectors. He was Vice Chairman and Chair of the Audit Committee of the Wales Centre for Health.</p> <p>He was also a non-Executive Director of Welsh Water. He served as Chairman of The Regulatory Board for Wales 2010 – 2016.</p> <p>He has served a term of fifteen years as a Trustee of The National Library of Wales. For more than 5 year's he occupied the position of the Deputy Chairperson of the Audit Committee of Cardiff Council, and was appointed as Chairperson in January 2020.</p>
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Cllr Daniel Waldron
(Welsh Liberal Democrats)

Serving the **Cyncoed** Ward

Terms of Office: 09/05/2022 - 09/05/2027

Serving on the following Committees:

- [Council](#)
- [Governance and Audit Committee](#)
- [Policy Review and Performance Scrutiny Committee](#)

COUNCIL:

25 JANUARY 2024

LEADER & CABINET STATEMENTS

1. Leader Statement – Councillor Huw Thomas
2. Investment & Development Statement - Councillor Goodway
3. Tackling Poverty, Equality & Public Health Statement - Councillors Bradbury and Sangani
4. Transport & Strategic Planning Statement – Councillor De’Ath
5. Deputy Leader & Education Statement - Councillor Merry
6. Social Services Statement - Councillors Mackie and Lister
7. Climate Change Statement – Councillor Wild
8. Culture, Parks & Events Statement - Councillor Burke
9. Finance, Modernisation & Performance Statement – Councillor Weaver
10. Housing & Communities Statement - Councillor Thorne

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COUNCIL: 25 JANUARY 2024

LEADER STATEMENT

European Commission Report on the Quality of Life in European Cities 2023

Cardiff has scored highly in a major new EU survey assessing the quality of life in major European cities, with the city being declared the best city for families with young children. The [report by the European Commission](#) follows an extensive survey of at least 839 residents in each of 83 cities in 36 countries in Europe, totalling 71,153 interviews, on a range of issues, including safety, jobs, transport infrastructure, culture, health, and quality of local administration. The survey showed that between 91% and 93% of people in Cardiff agreed that they were satisfied living in the city, which was on a par with people in the Tyneside conurbation and higher than the other UK cities in the survey – Glasgow, London, Manchester and Belfast – and far higher than major European capitals like Rome, Athens and Belgrade. Cardiff scored highly in several areas of the report, with Cardiff outperforming all 83 cities, including all of Europe’s principal capitals, in the following two categories:

- A good place for families with young children to live; and
- A good place for immigrants to live.

Cardiff was also placed in the top 10 in the following other categories:

- A good place for LGBTIQ people to live (5th);
- Satisfaction with green spaces (9th); and
- Satisfaction with noise level (10th).

In other categories, Cardiff outscored the other UK cities, including the main category, satisfaction with cultural facilities (more than 90% of respondents), satisfaction with public spaces (85%), air quality, cleanliness and the time it takes to get a request solved by the Council. It also had the lowest percentage of people in the UK cities surveyed who agreed there is corruption in the Council (c.36%). The city performed less well in perception of its transport infrastructure, compared with other cities, with one of the highest levels of car use in Europe (58%, behind Tyneside and Manchester) and the lowest level of public transport use and walking in the UK. The Council recognises that high levels of car use cause air pollution and congestion in the city, which is why we are building cycle lanes, improving walking routes and looking at new ways of funding improved public transport options. We recognise that public transport options across the city need to improve if we are to encourage people out of their cars; however, we need to find a way of funding the required public transport improvements and this will require us to have open and honest conversations with residents and neighbouring local authorities within the Cardiff Capital Region about how we do that.

South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee (CJC)

Members will be aware that the South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee (CJC) has been established in accordance with the provisions of The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 and The South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee Regulations 2021 (the Establishment Regulations), which came into force on 1 April 2021. The South East Wales CJC is comprised of the leaders of each of the 10 principal councils within the Cardiff Capital Region (CCR). Corporate Joint Committees are distinct corporate bodies and legal entities, which will be able to directly employ staff, hold assets and budgets, and be directly responsible for exercising specific functions. This differs from the existing City Deal joint working arrangements within the CCR where the Accountable Body (i.e. Cardiff Council) is required to hold responsibility for directly employing staff and holding assets and budgets.

In December 2023, the CCR Regional Cabinet and South East Wales CJC agreed to novate the City Deal funding agreement and project portfolio to the South East Wales CJC and, subject to final agreements, for the South East Wales CJC to take on responsibility for decision making and implementation of the City Deal. This will have related implications for the Council as the Accountable Body for the Cardiff Capital Region, which are currently being addressed by relevant legal and financial officers from both the Council and South East Wales CJC. I can confirm that a briefing on the transition to the South East Wales CJC is currently being arranged and is expected to be provided to councillors in Cardiff within the next month or so. I will ask officers to circulate details to members as soon as a date has been agreed.

Severn Estuary Commission

The Western Gateway Partnership's Severn Estuary Steering Committee, which I chair, forms part of Western Gateway's 'Decarbonisation of Energy' workstream that seeks to position South Wales and the South West of England as a global leader in green renewable energy systems. The Steering Committee has led the process of establishing an independent Severn Estuary Commission, which will consider the most appropriate use of the Severn Estuary's renewable energy potential and provide impartial and expert advice and recommendations to the Western Gateway Partnership Board, and in turn to Government, on the feasibility of options for developing sustainable energy solutions in the Severn Estuary. I'm pleased to report that the Commission has secured a chair who is a pre-eminent figure in the renewable energy sector, whose name will be announced later this month. The first meeting and public launch of the new Severn Estuary Commission is then expected to take in Cardiff in February.

Core Cities

I attended a meeting of the Core Cities UK Cabinet in Bristol on 5 January 2024. One of the main items was a discussion with Darren Jones MP, Shadow Chief Secretary to the Treasury. This focused on the potential solutions that the UK's major cities offer to the challenges facing an incoming UK government and what actions would be needed to enable this. Contributions highlighted the inadequacy of current levels of investment in infrastructure, which disadvantages UK cities relative to their competitors in Europe and elsewhere, and stifles growth and productivity.

Core Cities made a clear offer around the opportunity for an incoming UK Government to work in partnership and stress test ideas with the Leaders of the UK's major cities and use the wealth of experience and networks that exist across the Core Cities network.

World AIDS Day

I was pleased to join with colleagues and speak at a community event to mark World AIDS Day on 1 December 2023 in my role as both the Leader of Cardiff Council and Chair of Fast Track Cardiff & Vale Leadership Group, which was held at the National Museum in Cardiff. The event focused on three important themes – commemorate, celebrate and educate – and provided an opportunity to extend support to those living with HIV, as well as remembering those that have died as a result of the virus through the decoration of a memorial tree with ribbons and 'leaves' bearing the names of those who were being commemorated. The event provided an important opportunity to reflect on how far we have come in the fight against HIV and related stigma.

Whilst councils in Wales have no direct responsibility for sexual health, it has not stopped both Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan Councils from playing a full and active role in the Fast Track Cardiff & Vale partnership. As Chair of the Leadership Group, I am proud of the work that the partnership has done to date in Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan. This includes working with communities to tackle stigma by normalising conversations about HIV; the setting up of a HIV community support group; promoting HIV prevention work and treatment through council services, particularly in our Housing & Communities and Education directorates; and supporting our colleagues in Health to increase the uptake of HIV testing. What is clear is that this kind of collaboration and innovation is essential if we are to achieve the UNAIDS 2030 goal of ending new transmissions of HIV and tackling stigma by the end of this decade.

Festival of Light and Friendship

I was pleased to attend and speak at the Festival of Light and Friendship at the Norwegian Church Arts Centre in Cardiff Bay, which was held on 10 December 2023 and organised by the Norwegian Church Arts Centre in collaboration with the Welsh Norwegian Society. The event was attended by guests from Vestland County Council and Knarvik High School in Norway and included a religious service in both Norwegian and English led by Reverend Ingrid Ims from the Norwegian Seamen's Church in London. In addition to music provided by the Salvation Army Band and the lighting of the indoor and outdoor Christmas trees, a memorial plaque for former Welsh Norwegian Society member and manager of the Norwegian Church, Karen Allen, was also unveiled in the gallery. The annual Christmas event celebrates the twinning links between Cardiff and Vestland in Norway and helps to strengthen the historic ties between our two countries.

Councillor Huw Thomas
Leader of the Council
19 January 2024

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INVESTMENT & DEVELOPMENT STATEMENT

Economic Outlook

Despite the turbulent economic times being experienced by across Europe and in the United States, Cardiff continues to see more jobs being created. The latest Annual Population Survey data for Cardiff, released last week, shows that the number of residents in employment grew by 6% – more than any other UK Core City and against a background of zero growth for the UK, meaning that more Cardiff residents are in work than ever before.

The latest Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings also showed that annual salaries for full time workers in Cardiff rose by 7.4% in 2023, higher than the national average, though clearly this has been eroded by the price increases we have all experienced across the UK.

As always, we are aware that whilst there is positive news for many, the economic situation means that businesses in Cardiff continue to fight against the headwinds of energy costs and inflation, and a low growth economy.

East Cardiff Industrial Strategy

This month, the city saw a further step towards the delivery of key aspects of the Administration's East Cardiff Industrial Strategy. The Administration has long recognised the need to invest in the east of the city, to support those that live there through creating more jobs, developing the transport infrastructure and improving the local environment.

The recent planning approval for the new relief road and business park at the Cardiff East Park and Ride will see parts of the site used to address congestion in residential areas, improve connections between the east of the city and the city centre, as well as providing new employment opportunities.

As part of the new development, a new bridge built over the Rhymney River will link the communities of Llanrumney and Pentwyn, which are currently divided by the A48. The site will also include provision for offices and industrial units, as well as provision for electric vehicle charging.

The development reflects the Administration's ambition to make a Stronger, Fairer, Greener city, creating jobs and opportunities for people across all of our communities.

Shared Prosperity Fund

Members will be aware that as well as the Cardiff Growth Fund that has been established, a number of schemes have also been supported through our Shared Prosperity Fund to support businesses and our local economy. This includes funding to Business in Focus to provide community-based engagement and business support for entrepreneurs; funding for the Cardiff Circular Economy Network to provide help and advice to businesses and third sector organisations to reduce their carbon footprint, redesign their products and services to reuse, recycle and reduce waste; and funding has also been provided to the Prince's Trust to undertake an Enterprise Programme for young people who are economically inactive.

A range of additional projects that will support people into employment, targeting some of Cardiff's most deprived communities, and to support businesses to become greener and more sustainable will also be supported in the new financial year from the Shared Prosperity Fund open call. Schemes will also be supported to help attract visitors to the city.

The Council will continue to operate its other grant schemes for the Shared Prosperity Fund which can be accessed through our Support and Finance for Business page on the Cardiff Council website. In particular, the Administration is keen to support businesses to invest in ways to mitigate rises in energy costs and to become more sustainable in the long-term.

Councillor Russell Goodway
Cabinet Member for Investment & Development
19 January 2024

COUNCIL: 25 JANUARY 2024

TACKLING POVERTY, EQUALITY & PUBLIC HEALTH STATEMENT

PUBLIC HEALTH & EQUALITY

Participation Strategy 2023-27

The Administration's '[Stronger, Fairer, Greener](#)' policy statement, and the Council's [Corporate Plan 2023-26](#), include the commitment to: *"Introduce a new Community Participation Strategy, amplifying the voices of people who are currently less likely to get involved in the decision-making process.* This complies with the legal requirement in the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 for local authorities to produce a Participation Strategy. In developing the strategy, officers have engaged with a wide range of stakeholders, including elected members and the Council's Policy Review and Performance Scrutiny Committee, as part of an 11-week period of public consultation. The online survey was translated into a number of community languages and hard copies were printed and made publicly available across the city. I am pleased to say that we received over 1,300 responses and face-to-face engagement was undertaken with more than 200 people from under-represented groups. The draft Guide to the Constitution also formed part of the public consultation process, which is all about helping people understand how the Council works so they can get involved. I am particularly pleased with the extensive engagement work that has been done with seldom heard voices and we have received lots of insight into what we can do as a Council to improve engagement and drive-up responses from the under-represented groups. The Participation Strategy 2023-27 was approved by Cabinet on 18 January.

Measles Mumps and Rubella Vaccine

There has been a recent outbreak of measles among young children in Cardiff and so I would like to take this opportunity to highlight the importance of parents making sure that their children are up to date with the Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR) vaccine and that new parents make sure that they are taking up the opportunity in the first place. The MMR vaccine is a safe and effective vaccine that protects against three highly infectious diseases, which can easily spread between people who are not vaccinated and can potentially be fatal or lead to medical complications, including encephalitis (swelling of the brain) and hearing loss. The full course of the MMR vaccine requires two doses which is given at 12-13 months of age and at age 3 years and 4 months. If anyone has missed doses of the MMR vaccine for their children, they can still have it at any age. It is never too late to catch up on missed doses. If anyone is unsure if they or their child(ren) have had both doses of the vaccine, then they should contact their GP practice. I would urge everyone to protect themselves and their children.

Shingles Vaccine

I would also like to take this opportunity to raise the importance of ensuring that those people who qualify should take up the shingles vaccine. Shingles is an infection that affects many people as they get older and is caused by the same virus that results in chicken pox. Unlike other infectious diseases, you don't catch it from someone else. Most people had chicken pox when they were young. The virus that caused chicken pox can stay in your body for the rest of your life without you knowing it is there and it can then become active again later in life.

About 1 in 5 people who have had chicken pox will develop shingles. This means that every year in England and Wales, tens of thousands of people will have shingles. Although shingles can occur at any age, the risk, severity and complications of shingles all increase with age. Each year, a number of people aged 65 and over are admitted to hospital with shingles in Wales.

The eligibility criteria for a free shingle vaccine changed on 1 September 2023. Following this date, people are eligible for a free shingles vaccine when they become aged 65 and will remain eligible until they become 80 years of age. However, if someone was aged 65 before 1 September 2023, then they will have to wait until they reach 70 years of age in order to be eligible for the vaccine. Even if someone has already had shingles, they should still get the vaccine as it will reduce their risk of getting shingles again. The shingles vaccine will help to protect people by boosting their immunity and reducing the risk of getting shingles. If someone does go on to have shingles, then their symptoms may be milder and the illness shorter.

If someone meets the age criteria, or are severely immunosuppressed and aged over 50, then their GP practice should get in touch with them to arrange an appointment if they are eligible. If this doesn't happen or anyone thinks that they might have missed the invitation, then they should contact their GP practice and tell them that they think that they are due for a shingles vaccination. If anyone has any questions or wants more information, they can visit the [NHS 111 Wales website](#), talk to their doctor or nurse, or call NHS 111 Wales.

HIV Support Group

HIV continues to be a major global public health issue, having claimed approximately 40.4 million lives so far. There is no cure for HIV infection; however, with increasing access to effective HIV prevention, diagnosis, treatment and care, HIV infection has become a manageable chronic health condition, enabling people living with HIV to lead long and healthy lives.

Over the past five years, the Welsh Government, working with other partners, has made huge progress in improving access to HIV testing and treatment in Wales, and also published the HIV Action Plan for Wales 2023-2026 in March 2023. The Council has worked for some time with partners as part of Fast Track Cardiff & Vale who are passionately committed to making a difference to people living with HIV in Cardiff and achieving the goal of zero new infections by 2030. The Fast Track Cities initiative is a global partnership that works towards zero new infections, eliminating HIV related stigma and improving the quality of life of people living with HIV.

The Council's Community Volunteering Team, together with staff at Central Library Hub, have been working to develop a HIV community group, with the ethos being that it is 'run by and for people with HIV'. In line with this ethos, as part of the early stages of developing this new community group, a survey was undertaken to find out what people with HIV wanted from such a group so that the structure of the group could be tailored according to need. Peer support is important in helping people to share their own experiences and knowledge to support each other and improve wellbeing. Support groups are also safe spaces for people living with HIV to make connections with other people living with HIV, share their experiences, and get connected to resources that promote healthy living.

A volunteer facilitator has been recruited and the new HIV community group was launched this month. It will provide a safe space for people to connect with others who are going through similar experiences. Fast Track Cymru kindly funded training for the volunteer and staff involved in the setting up of the group, who also attended an HIV awareness session delivered by the George House Trust. I am very excited about the future of this group and hope that it will impact positively on all those who attend. Anyone interested in attending the group should phone: 07970 283 132.

Refugees and Asylum Seekers Update

In August 2023, the Council established a dedicated project team to respond to the exceptional new demand generated by the Home Office's Streamlined Asylum Processing initiative. This team is providing support to new refugees who have received a positive decision on their asylum application whilst living in asylum accommodation in our city, helping them to start their lives in the UK. From August to the end of December 2023, the team has already supported 500 people, helping them to secure suitable accommodation, find employment, access education and English classes and much more. This support helps them on their way to independence and achieving their potential as new citizens, as well as feeling welcome in both Cardiff and Wales. This work benefits from strong partnership working with the voluntary sector and effective cross-departmental working within the Council, which ensures that we provide the best start for people who have experienced multiple disadvantage and barriers, and recognise how these issues are connected. In 2024, we anticipate further demand from Streamlined Asylum Processing and the Council is putting in place plans to increase the availability of temporary accommodation in the city.

Food Strategy

Round two of the CCR (Cardiff Capital Region) Sustainable Food Challenge has commenced. Twelve applications were received involving a range of demonstrator projects focusing on innovative low carbon farming practices, dynamic trading tools and health benefits of sourcing from local supply chains. AMRC (Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre) Cymru was the successful applicant and has been awarded a contract to provide a number of smaller projects in the area of 'Innovative farming practices to reduce carbon emissions and increase yield'. Projects will include retrofitting agricultural vehicles and machines, and the use of Agri-Tech and Agri-Waste to lower emissions and increase production.

TACKLING POVERTY & SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE

Cost-of-Living Update

A refreshed Cost-of-Living publicity campaign was launched in December 2023 and will continue to run through to Spring 2024. The campaign will include a new animated video highlighting the help available. Households that received financial support under the Cost-of-Living Discretionary Fund last year have received a follow-up call from the Advice Team to check-in on them and to offer further money advice support. Given all the changes to bill, rents and mortgages, customers are being encouraged to speak to the team to have an updated financial health check and to ensure that they are accessing all the help that is available to them. Alongside this, a joint piece of work is being undertaken with the Council Tax team, supporting customers who are in Council Tax arrears and highlighting those who were previously supported through the Cost-of-Living Discretionary Fund with the hope of the Council being able to provide further financial advice and practical assistance. Food and Fuel Champions are continuing to provide support in the Warm Welcome Spaces in our Hubs and libraries and are assisting with the distribution of Winter Warm Packs, which include hot water bottles, winter clothing, (hat, scarf, gloves) and draught excluders.

Advice Services

Over the Christmas period, the Council's Money Advice Team at Central Library Hub supported the city's Foodbank by becoming a Foodbank distribution centre. The team provided food parcels to 30 families who were struggling over the festive period. The team also provided advice on income maximisation and obtained any emergency payments that the clients were eligible for. This included providing 80 Fuel bank vouchers. The Fuel bank voucher scheme has provided 210 vouchers to residents since the launch of the scheme in October 2023.

Adult Learning

In December, the Adult Learning Team continued to deliver Cooking on a Budget courses from a number of schools in Ely. Four courses were delivered, including a slow cooker session, as well as the popular air fryer cooking sessions, which were attended by a total of 73 people. Following the Cooking on a Budget courses, some of the participants have gained their accreditation in Food Safety Level 2 and are now volunteering with Dusty Forge Repair Café and the St Vincents Centre. One of the participants is now running the café at the Dusty Forge where they prepared and cooked 65 breakfasts on their first morning of opening.

Last month also saw the end of the 11-week term time childcare courses. The courses ranged from Level 1 to Level 2 and are accredited by Agored Cymru. Throughout the term:

- 78 people achieved Level 2 Supporting Teaching & Learning in Schools (TA)
- 36 people achieved Level 1 Parenting Skills (Managing Children's Behaviour)
- 32 people achieved Level 1 Child Psychology
- 13 people achieved Entry Level Child's Play – Designing a Game/Childcare Taster

Most adult learners will be returning throughout the new term to progress on to other childcare courses and improve their knowledge and skills. Some of the learners who achieved the Level 2 Supporting Teaching & Learning qualification have been offered employment either in a local school or with a childcare agency.

Play Update

Children's Play Services embraced Christmas fun over the festive period, providing a host of Christmas activities for children attending play sessions across the city. The events included a range of arts and crafts, including making homemade snow globes, fridge magnets and tree decorations. The team also held a mini-Christmas party for the children and young people at Yr Hafan hostel in Grangetown.

Alongside Christmas activities that took place throughout December, Children's Play Services, with the help of the Child Friendly City Team, were able to offer children and their families free tickets to the Bute Park at Christmas light trail. The teams were able to support over 150 children and their families within Riverside, Splott and Llanrumney areas, as well as children from the Rover Way Gypsy Traveller Site and Yr Hafan hostel. It is great to see the hard work of the teams being able to support families across the city, especially during the Christmas period.

Butetown Youth Development Project

In December, the Butetown Youth Development Project supported 12 local young people into employment, including positions at Cardiff Council, the Department of Work and Pensions, and in the security, retail and engineering sectors. In addition, 17 young people completed their Door Supervisor training, First Aid courses, and Customer Service and Digital Skills training. These young people will continue to receive bespoke support to source employment opportunities within their chosen career path. It is great to see the hard work of the Into Work Teams helping young people in the city to gain employment and enhance their skills.

Cardiff Youth Service Update

Cardiff Youth Service has had a busy period supporting young people throughout the communities of Cardiff, including in the city's open access youth clubs which have provided safe spaces for young people. Youth Support Workers in schools have also continued to support young people, either on a one-to-one basis or in small groups. This provides important support to our schools and other educational providers. The Youth Service also has teams on the streets engaging with young people and providing information, support and guidance. The service also makes an important contribution to young people's learning by providing bespoke activities and opportunities in schools and in the community.

Cardiff Youth Service Football Event

The joint partnership project between Cardiff Youth Service, Cardiff & Vale College and South Wales Police is supported by Cardiff City Football Club Foundation and aims to build positive relationships between young people who live in different areas

of the city. Teams from Gabalfa, Llanrumney, St Mellons, Powerhouse in Llanedeyrn, Eastmoors in Splott, North Ely and Caerau, as well as South Wales Police and youth workers competed in the tournament that was hosted at Cardiff & Vale College. Bringing young people together from so many communities enabled staff and young people to build relationships and partnerships that will continue to build community cohesion into the future. Young people enjoyed a competitive league format where an online application kept participants up-to-date with their results and league position. This excellent event will be replicated over the coming year and build on what was a successful start.

Christmas Activities

In December, staff and 15 young people at North Ely youth centre prepared and served a two-course Christmas meal for over 40 older people from the local community. They also provided entertainment and games. This inter-generational project helped to develop relationships, respect and understanding between different parts of the community.

The Youth Service Team also brought young people together from across the city's communities for an ice-skating event at Winter Wonderland. 304 young people were provided with a free skate, including many young people from the city's deprived communities who would otherwise not have had the opportunity to do so. This was an excellent way to finish the autumn school term and enable our staff and young people to come together to reflect on a busy and action-packed programme of activities.

Riverside Fitness Programme

Following on from the successful work with partners across Riverside over the summer months, the Council's Passport to the City Team, in partnership with Cardiff Youth Service, Riverside Warehouse and ION, is pleased to announce the launch of project Kickstart. This is a 12-week physical activity programme that is designed to engage young people and promote the numerous benefits of sports and exercise for their physical and mental well-being. The primary goal of the programme is to create a positive impact on the local community by providing a structured and engaging environment for young individuals, encouraging their active participation in physical activities. In collaboration with the Passport to the City Team and Cardiff Youth Service, ION will deliver a 12-week programme that aims to inspire and motivate participants and features influential individuals from both the sporting world and local communities in Cardiff, emphasising diversity in ethnicity and gender.

Digital Youth Work

The Digital Youth Work Team continues to provide a sector-leading service to the young people of Cardiff. The team's work continues to be recognised nationally with other local authority youth services seeking advice and support from the team as digital youth work continues to grow across Wales. The team is regularly asked to train and develop provision in other services and agencies, and this has also assisted in generating income for the Youth Service.

Youth Work Quality Mark

Cardiff Youth Service has been assessed by the Education Workforce Council and has successfully achieved the Silver Youth Work Quality Mark. Assessors undertook visits to a range of youth provisions to assess the quality of the work undertaken by staff. During their visits, assessors looked at the involvement of young people in designing, delivering and evaluating youth work provision. They also looked at the curriculum offer and the breadth of the activities and opportunities that are being delivered in Cardiff. Assessors were particularly complimentary about the support offered to the workforce and the processes in place to support staff wellbeing. The last part of the assessment looked at the Youth Service's approach to ensuring that activities and opportunities were providing support to the diverse communities of Cardiff. I want to say a big thank you to all the staff, students and volunteers that make Cardiff Youth Service the creative, innovative and dynamic service it is. I should also mention the involvement of the city's young people who are integral to providing a service that meets the needs of our diverse communities.

Councillors Julie Sangani & Peter Bradbury
Cabinet Members for Tackling Poverty, Equality & Public Health (Job Share)
19 January 2024

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TRANSPORT & STRATEGIC PLANNING STATEMENT

Winter Operations

The winter weather has continued to present challenges for the Highway Maintenance Operations Teams, especially the adverse weather service. Extended periods of wet and cold weather take their toll on the city's roads, with potholes becoming more prevalent. In December 2023 alone, 1,225 potholes were identified across the city and made safe (903 on carriageways and 322 on footways).

Much of the adverse weather has been associated with the unusually high number of named storms that we experienced at the end of 2023 and at the start of this year. During this period, the Council has responded to over 200 reports of localised flooding, monitored river levels at Ely Bridge due to the potential impact of flooding on adjacent homes, and closed Michaelston Road in St Fagans following a flood warning. Extensive work was also undertaken prior to Christmas, attending to known high-risk locations to help minimise the threat to properties and disruption on the highway network. Since the beginning of 2024, adverse weather resources have been focused on responding to the threat of ice and frost, with 58 precautionary salting treatments being carried out on 13 routes across the city in the first week of January alone.

Enforcement of Cycling on Queen Street

There has been a huge reduction in the use of pedal cycles on Queen Street in the city centre thanks to effective partnership working by the Council's City Centre Warden Team and South Wales Police to enforce the no-cycling rule along Queen Street as part of Operation Castor. In Quarter 3 of 2023/24 (October-December 2023), a total of 14 Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) were issued and two Section 59 notices were issued to e-scooter riders. These low FPN figures demonstrate the successful impact that this partnership work has achieved in Queen Street over the last two years or so. In addition, 98 stolen Nextbikes were seized and officers stopped 504 cyclists, engaged with them and instructed them to dismount when using Queen Street.

Canal Quarter

Following on from the soft launch and opening of the Dock Feeder Canal on Churchill Way in November 2023, a bespoke lights installation was placed within the canal during the festive period and will remain in place until the end of the half term school holiday period next month. The lights installation was commissioned by FOR Cardiff and designed by artist Grant Radford of Accent London, with music by Cardiff-based composer Ella Roberts. The installation combines light and sound to mimic reeds and is interactive through a series of accessible ground pads on the canal viewing platform.

Bus Stop Improvements

Recent improvements to bus stops include new Real-time Passenger Information displays, which have been installed in 138 bus shelters across the city. The remaining 32 installations will be completed early next month. Council officers have been working closely with Transport for Wales to achieve real-time arrivals information at bus stops, which now includes 99% of bus operations in Cardiff on the new displays (including Cardiff Bus, Newport Bus, Adventure Travel, Stagecoach, Mid Wales Travel, and Edwards Coaches). In addition, to date, 28 bus shelters have been raised higher to accommodate the new displays and a further five are being worked on. Buildouts and disabled access improvements have also been made to 20 bus stops within the Llanrumney, Rumney and Trowbridge wards.

Nextbike Scheme

Members will be aware that the Nextbike on-street cycle hire scheme in Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan has ceased to operate this month. Whilst the scheme was Nextbike's most successful in the UK in terms of usage, with two million rentals across both council areas during the life of the scheme, it has been adversely affected by regular incidents of theft and vandalism in Cardiff. Despite the scheme being well-used and liked by residents, the decision was taken to close the current scheme due to the rate of vandalism experienced in 2023/24, which meant that it was unfeasible for Nextbike to continue and offer a good service. Despite its challenges, the scheme has been immensely popular with a significant number of users and I want to thank its dedicated and loyal customers for their support over recent years.

Work is currently ongoing continuing to remove Nextbike stands from across the city. The Nextbike contract was also due to end in early 2025 and was an ageing scheme that was coming to the end of its lifespan. As a result, the Council had already started work in summer 2023 to review the current micro-mobility market and best practice schemes in the UK and internationally, and to consider and assess potential options for a replacement scheme. The Council wants to see a new cycle hire scheme return to the city as soon as possible and we hope to soon be able to go out to the market for a replacement scheme that is fit for the future, subject to funding.

Christmas Designated Driver Campaign

For the second year running, the Council was pleased to support South Wales Police's Designated Driver campaign, which saw the police team up with 19 pubs and restaurants in Cardiff during the Christmas period. These licensed premises offered free draught soft drinks to 'designated drivers' who abstained from drinking alcohol and acted as the responsible driver for groups of drinkers and diners as part of an initiative to promote responsible drinking and road safety in Cardiff and across South Wales.

Councillor Dan De'Ath
Cabinet Member for Transport & Strategic Planning
19 January 2024

COUNCIL: 25 JANUARY 2024

DEPUTY LEADER & EDUCATION STATEMENT

Estyn Inspections

The following five Cardiff schools have been inspected by Estyn and had their inspection reports published between September and December 2023, with none of them requiring any form of follow-up and four of the schools being identified to produce “Interesting or Innovative Practice Case Studies” following their inspections:

- [Rhiwbeina Primary School](#)
- [Llanishen High School](#)
- [Severn Primary School](#)
- [Mary Immaculate R.C. High School](#)
- [Trelai Primary School](#)

A further four schools were inspected by Estyn during this period and are currently awaiting publication of their reports: St Mary’s R.C. Primary School, Ysgol Mynydd Bychan, Whitchurch High School and Gabalfa Primary School. In addition, Ely and Caerau Integrated Children’s Centre has been inspected using pilot arrangements for the new framework to be used from September 2024 onwards.

Of the eight schools which were engaged in follow-up activity from the 2022/23 inspections, three have been removed during the autumn term 2023 – St Francis RC Primary School and Thornhill Primary School have been removed from Estyn Review, and Llanedeyrn Primary School from Significant Improvement. The remaining five schools are due to have their progress reviewed by Estyn later this year – Eastern High School, Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Plasmawr and The Pear Tree Federation (Tongwynlais Primary School and Coryton Primary School) are in Estyn Review and Pentrebane Primary School is in Special Measures.

Universal Free School Meals

Universal Free School Meals were rolled out to pupils in Year 4 from December in addition to pupils in Reception and Years 1, 2 and 3. We are now moving into the next phase, which is the roll-out to Years 5 and 6. This is expected to be in place after Easter.

Little Gigs Programme

The Council is encouraging young people to embrace music in line with the Welsh Government's National Plan for Music Education, and the Little Gigs programme provides pupils from Cardiff schools with the opportunity to develop their own unique musical talents and contribute to the city's vibrant music scene. In line with the Cardiff Music City Strategy, the Little Gigs programme also brings music and musicians right into the heart of schools.

I was pleased to join the Cabinet Member for Culture, Parks & Events in attending the official launch of the Little Gigs programme on 17 January at Llanishen High School. The event included performances by Chroma and Maditronique who each performed short sets in front of more than 100 pupils who had expressed an interest in learning more about the music business, including being part of a band, writing for the music press or becoming behind-the-scenes sound and lighting technicians.

Prior to this week's official launch event, Little Gigs have taken place in six high schools in Cardiff during the current academic year (Willows High School, Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Glantaf, Ysgol Plasmawr, Cardiff West Community High School, and Ty Gwyn and Woodlands Special Schools) and over 1,200 pupils from Years 8-11 have been introduced to acts from the Cardiff music scene, including Wonderbrass, The Successors of the Mandingue and Maditronique. These live performances in schools aim to inspire young people to sign up to the Little Gigs programme of mentorships, training and support from industry partners. This will assist in developing and providing a pipeline of future musical talent, which will ensure that Cardiff's music sector continues to thrive in the future.

Film-making Project

Pupils at St Mary the Virgin Church in Wales Primary School have been collaborating with the Council's Curriculum Team to develop their film-making skills. With support from partners at Buffoon Media and the Arts Council of Wales Explore Fund, Year 3 pupils had incredible hands-on production experience, as they produced their own film on what the city of Cardiff has to offer young people from all backgrounds and communities. Just before Christmas, these pupils and their families were invited to the BBC Roath Lock Drama Village in Cardiff Bay to watch the premiere of their movie. The pupils were then able to tour the studios and gain an understanding of the career opportunities available to them within the creative arts in Cardiff.

Dance Skills Development

The Curriculum Team has been working with Cardiff Metropolitan University and National Dance Company Wales to look at the progression of dance skills and how this fits into a school's curriculum. Twelve schools are involved with the project and will work with partners to offer workshops for pupils, as well as professional development for teachers.

Girls To Golf

The Curriculum Team is collaborating with Wales Golf to offer a programme to pupils, which will enable girls to recognise, articulate and regulate their own emotions in order to safeguard their own emotional health and well-being and to be able to support others with theirs. This programme helps to develop effective communication as a powerful tool to influence others and build healthy relationships.

Cardiff Commitment

The first Specialist Settings Business Forum of the academic year was held in November 2023 and was attended by seven specialist settings and a number of partners. This group has seen teachers creating strong partnerships with employers to enable them to work together to provide targeted approaches in delivering careers and work-related experiences, breaking down sector perceptions and raising awareness of opportunities available for young people with Additional Learning Needs (ALN). The group received presentations on work being undertaken by the Council to develop supported internships for pupils with autism, including more supported internships across school kitchens and an opportunity to extend the Dementia Champions project across further settings.

In November, the Cardiff Commitment Team also hosted their first monthly workshop to support contractors and contract managers shape and deliver on existing social value commitments. A website has also been developed to help direct businesses to projects aligned with relevant TOMs (Themes, Outcomes, Measures) to ensure that social value delivery has the impact and desired outcomes for children and young people in the city. Further social value work has seen Horan Construction support Ysgol Gymraeg Pen-Y-Groes to develop a new football pitch and sports area to ensure pupils can enjoy a good outdoor environment and experience all the benefits associated with outdoor activity and play. In addition, through a volunteer day, ISG cleared a space for a micro-greens growing project at Ysgol Glantaf Specialist Resource Base and supported pupils to gain hands-on experience within the construction sector.

In December 2023, 50 partners responded to a “call to action” to provide opportunities for Children Looked After in Cardiff. This was in response to the success of our partnership with John Lewis, which saw four young people participate in work experience placements and led to three of them now being employed by the organisation and one returning to college. The Cardiff Commitment is building on the success of this model and, during the current spring term, a pilot project will see four Children Looked After from Eastern High School participate in scaled insight days and a three-day work experience placement, which will lead to a 12-week supported internship with Cardiff & Vale University Health Board. The Cardiff Commitment Team also met the Minister for Economy, Vaughan Gething MS, to share the success of the supported internship model for pupils with ALN and to highlight the programme’s excellent outcomes and cost effectiveness. The Programme Manager has commissioned the Inclusive Growth Network to demonstrate both the short-term gains of this model and the long-term cost savings across Education and Social Services of supporting young people with ALN into employment through detailed economic and financial forecasting.

'Tech We Can' was also launched in December at Trelai Primary School. This project looks to engage the pupils from Year 1 to Year 5 in technology lessons delivered by partners such as PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) and the NDEC (National Data Exploitation Centre). The autumn term saw pupils from Years 1 and 2 learning about technology which helps people – from rockets to slime robots – and gave the pupils the opportunity to design their own robots which could help people.

TeenTech Festival

The first in-person TeenTech Festival took place in Cardiff on 7 December 2023, which followed a related live online event that took place on 21 November. Supported by AWS, Cardiff University and Network Rail, the events were enjoyed by more than 700 pupils from 12 different primary and secondary schools – Ysgol Gymraeg Coed Y Gof, Allensbank Primary School, St Joseph's RC Primary School, Ysgol Gymraeg Pwll Coch, Gladstone Primary School, Thornhill Primary School, Birchgrove Primary School, St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Cathays High School, Llanishen High School, Mary Immaculate High School, Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Glantaf. Pupils were able to engage with activities organised by organisations such as South Wales Police, BBC Wales, Admiral, CSA Catapult, Airbus, Stable, Arup, and The Urbanists, helping the pupils understand the range of opportunities across the world of digital, science and technology.

Councillor Sarah Merry
Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Education
19 January 2024

COUNCIL: 25 JANUARY 2024

SOCIAL SERVICES STATEMENT

ADULT SERVICES

Hospital Discharges

Over the Christmas period, the Hospital Discharge Teams worked tirelessly in collaboration with Health colleagues to ensure that a large number of discharges could be achieved to minimise pressures on the hospital. As a result, an unprecedented 106 discharges with care were facilitated over the festive period. This was achieved by the hard work and dedication of a number of teams, including the Integrated Discharge Team, Social Work Team, Community Resource Team, Community Occupational Therapists, and the First Point of Contact Team (Pink Army). I would like to thank all the teams involved for their continued hard work and effort during the winter months in enabling citizens to continue their support in the comfort of their own homes.

Supporting Vulnerable Citizens in Winter

In collaboration with the Money Advice Team, the Independent Living Service applied for a grant from the National Grid's Community Matters Fund to assist vulnerable residents in staying warm this winter through the provision of winter warm packs. A grant award of £9,975 has been secured and over 600 winter warm packs, including draft excluders, electric blankets, fleeced jumpers, and children's thermal clothing, have been received. The packs will be distributed to those in need at local Community Hubs or by Independent Living Services during home visits. All recipients will also be provided with information and guidance on tackling fuel poverty. To qualify for one of these packs, individuals or families simply need to let the service know that they are facing challenges with fuel poverty by emailing: ILSgateway@cardiff.gov.uk.

Working Towards a Neurodiverse Friendly City

Around 1-in-7 people in the UK are neurodivergent, meaning that they experience the world more uniquely than others. In Cardiff, there are 1,370 autistic children and young people aged 0-17. There are also 3,201 autistic people aged 18+ in Cardiff, but it's important to note that not all autistic people will have been diagnosed. I am very aware that the number of people aged 18-64 with an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is expected to increase by 13% between 2017-35. Furthermore, autism is just one condition within the wide umbrella of neurodiversity, which also includes Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD), Dyspraxia, Dyslexia, Dyscalculia and Dysgraphia, for example. People with neurodivergent traits and conditions face a range of challenges across society, including finding employment, increased likelihood of mental health diagnoses, and experience trouble in accessing public services.

Members will be aware that the Council agreed a motion in September 2023, which committed to removing the barriers that prevent those with neurodivergent traits and conditions from participating in society and to working across the city to make Cardiff more neurodiversity friendly. I was therefore pleased to join the Leader of the Council in attending a meeting of the Cardiff Public Services Board on 10 January, which received a presentation on a proposal for Cardiff to develop a city-wide approach and commitment to becoming a Neurodiverse Friendly City. The PSB agreed that public service and third sector partners will join the Council in working towards becoming a Neurodiverse Friendly City and increasing awareness and empathy towards people with neurodiversity across the city. This will include the development of a city-wide Neurodiversity Strategy and Action Plan. As an initial step, a mapping exercise will be undertaken over coming months to compile details of the existing action plans, strategies and initiatives of key stakeholders and partners within Cardiff.

Unpaid Carers Assembly

I was very happy to be asked to participate in the first Cardiff and Vale Unpaid Carers Assembly which took place at the end of last year in Sophia Gardens. Unpaid carers play a critical role in the community, providing essential care to adults or disabled children who are unable to manage without assistance. I am very aware that caring can come with significant challenges, many carers find that their friendships and relationships are impacted, with less time to spend with family and friends. This can lead to loneliness and isolation, with carers feeling unsupported and undervalued so it's very important that every opportunity is taken to work together to make their voices heard. It was so inspiring to be part of the Assembly event which had been organised by the unpaid carer representatives who attend the Regional Partnership Board's Unpaid Carer Board. It was moving to hear about some of the caring journeys of the people who attended the event which reinforced my commitment to working towards improving services and making Cardiff a place where unpaid carers are supported and valued. It was wonderful event and I was glad to be a part of it.

Carers Card UK

Unpaid carers in Cardiff can obtain a Carers Card, which can provide them with access to a range of support tools. Carers Card UK wants every unpaid carer in the UK to be recognised, supported and rewarded for the work they do and role they play. In line with this aim, they have developed a Carers Card that provides access to tools, support services, and discounts on goods and services. The Carers Card also includes emergency contact details for carers and gives access to a Carer Circle tool, an app that helps organise care by adding notes, tasks, appointments, and medication lists. There is normally a cost to unpaid carers for securing this card but, in a fantastic development, the unpaid carer representatives of the Cardiff and Vale Regional Partnership Board have negotiated two years free membership to the Carers Card UK digital ID card for unpaid carers in Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan. Unpaid carers can download the Carers Card at: <https://www.carerscarduk.co.uk/digital-only-card/promocode/CVFREE> by clicking on the "Buy your card" link and then completing the form to download the free Carers Card UK app from the appropriate app store. Anyone who needs help to get set up can contact the Council's Digital Inclusion Team by phoning 029 2087 1071 or emailing: digitalsupport@cardiff.gov.uk Alternatively, people can drop in to one of the team's digital support sessions, details of which can be found at: www.adultlearningcardiff.gov.uk/digital-support

Website User Testing

The most recent Age-Friendly Cardiff Forum meeting welcomed the Council's Web Team to carry out website user testing on a number of council websites, including the Telecare and Meals on Wheels, Dementia Friendly Cardiff, and Age-Friendly Cardiff websites. The session took place at Central Library Hub and was attended by a range of older people and partner organisations. The aim was for the Web Team to liaise with the attendees to compile a list of issues, suggestions and feedback relating to content, design and user experience. One of the highlights of the event was the brilliant feedback received regarding the usability of the Dementia Friendly Cardiff website, with attendees commenting that the website was "easy to navigate", had "simple language" and a "friendly feel". There were also some very positive responses to the Age-Friendly Cardiff website, including comments that the language is "user-friendly" and the "look of the website is bright and inviting", as well as some really valuable and constructive suggestions for improvements. The Web Team will be starting to action the identified improvements suggested by the group in the coming months and the changes will be fed back to the Age-Friendly Forum. I'm very much looking forward to seeing the results of this work.

Fairwater Care Hub Christmas Party

I was pleased to attend the Christmas Party at Fairwater Care Hub and it was lovely to be part of such a festive and joyful occasion. The staff had put on a fantastic Christmas Dinner for the service users, and I have to say I really enjoyed it too. It's so clear what a difference the team is having on the wellbeing of people who visit the Care Hub, and it was heartwarming to see service users taking part in carol singing and a snowball fight and really enjoying themselves!

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Joint Inspection of Child Protection Arrangements

I would like to place on record my thanks to all the staff who have played a part in the recent joint inspection of child protection arrangements, alongside our colleagues in education, health and South Wales Police. A huge amount of effort went into preparing for the inspection, which provided the team with the opportunity to showcase the work that takes place. It was a pleasure to join the Directors of Social Services and Children's Services in thanking staff at the end of the inspection, and I hope Members across the Chamber will join me in paying tribute to the fantastic work of our teams once again. Once we receive the final report, which will acknowledge areas of good practice, alongside informing learning and development, I will ensure that Members are able to access the findings.

Bright Sparks Awards

In December 2023, the annual Bright Sparks Awards were celebrated at a wonderful event held at County Hall. The ceremony recognised the achievements of more than 150 care-experienced children and young people. The event has now been running for 18 years and recognises carers, parents, staff, agencies, organisations, and services that have shown support for Children Looked After or care leavers throughout the past year.

I had the honour of attending the awards alongside the Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Education. Awards were presented for sporting achievement, musical achievement, kindness and care, volunteering, as well as Carer of the Year and School of the Year. It was a fantastic evening, organised in conjunction with the Bright Sparks group themselves, who were heavily involved in the planning of the event. Former Wales rugby captain, Sam Warburton, and Welsh international rugby players, Taulupe Faletau and Louis Rees-Zammit, sent special video messages congratulating the group on their achievements, which were shown during the evening.

Cooking and Nutrition for Young People

A member of staff has qualified to teach an NHS nutrition course called 'Get Cooking' that teaches basic cooking and nutrition to young people. Two young people have also recently passed the course and achieved the qualification. This is a particularly impressive achievement as the young people did not speak English as their first language, so interpreters were used to help them to complete the written work.

Christmas Campaigns

Once again last year, a small number of staff from Children's Services worked tirelessly in their own time to run the annual Christmas present campaign. Thanks to our regular partner, the Mr X Organisation, a huge number of gifts were collected for children of all ages. Though not able to fully participate in last year's campaign, it was a pleasure for me to catch up with the team and offer my thanks for all their hard work, as they both packed the gifts and handed them out to Social Workers. The generosity is heartwarming and I hope that this helped the families involved to have a very special Christmas.

It was also a pleasure to visit the St Mellon's Family Centre to help unpack some of the collected gifts, but also to meet staff from across the East Locality, hearing about the fantastic work they do with children and families. Whilst there, I was also able to judge the Christmas decoration competition – a truly difficult challenge after all the effort put in by staff and some of the children they work with.

Every year, staff and young people from the Youth Justice Service come together to create Christmas wreaths to sell and make money for charitable causes. This has been an ongoing tradition for 15 years. Over the years, the money raised has gone to many different causes, but for the last three years the money has been put towards Christmas gifts for Children Looked After. After a week of hard work, the wreaths were all made and sold very well raising £735, which is a new record. This money meant more than 200 presents could be bought, so lots of children had presents to open on Christmas morning.

Finally, I would like to thank staff in our Intake and Assessment Team who delivered frozen Christmas dinners to families in the build up to Christmas to ensure that they were able to have a Christmas lunch on Christmas Day.

Accommodation Strategy Update

It has been a year since the Children's Services Accommodation Strategy was presented to Cabinet and I am pleased to update Members on the excellent progress that has been made to date:

- Three properties (two one-bed properties and one two-bed) have been registered by Care Inspectorate Wales.
- A further one-bed property is in the final stages of registration.
- A property has been identified on the open market which is being rented while the purchase progresses. The property comprises five individual residences and is being used to alleviate the issue of the numbers of children in placements which are operating without registration.
- Arrangements have been made for work to commence on two new three-bed properties which have been purchased – one is due to start shortly, and the other is working towards completion of works in the coming months.
- A further two four-bed properties have been acquired and works are due to commence shortly.

I look forward to providing you with further updates as the implementation of the Accommodation Strategy progresses.

Councillors Norma Mackie & Ash Lister
Cabinet Members for Social Services (Job Share)
19 January 2024

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CLIMATE CHANGE STATEMENT

Waste & Recycling Collections Update

As a result of the ongoing strike action, the only change to collection services currently is the collection of absorbent hygiene waste products (e.g. nappies) alongside residual (black bin) waste. Residents are being asked to present their hygiene waste in bags alongside their black bin or bags.

With the strike action adding to the usual seasonal pressures on the service area over the Christmas and New Year period, the Council is aware that several areas did experience some disruption to services and delays in collections and would like to thank members and the public for their patience during this period. I would also like to thank collection staff for their hard work during this challenging period.

Christmas Tree Recycling

Christmas trees can still be delivered to recycling centres without a booking at the Recycling Centres. The Christmas tree drop-off point in Heath Park car park was extremely successful, with over 1,399 trees being recycled over two days, resulting in over 12 tonnes of recycled green waste.

Segregated Recycling – Next Phase

The service is making changes to recycling collections, which aim to improve the quality of the materials we collect from residents. This means more of it will remain within the UK to be recycled to create new products rather than being sent abroad, which reduces carbon emissions and helps prevent climate change.

From the week commencing Tuesday 20 February 2024, a further 36,000 properties in the city will begin segregated recycling in the following areas:

- Ely
- Gabalfa
- Grangetown
- Heath West
- Llandaff
- Pentwyn
- Pentyrch
- Radyr
- Rhiwbina
- Splott
- Trowbridge

This will mean over 45,000 properties in Cardiff will be participating in the segregated recycling scheme from February 2024. The final phase is planned to be undertaken in summer 2024, with a further 80,000 properties being moved to the segregated recycling service.

Taxi Emissions

As part of our clean air actions, the Council has been looking at ways in which we can support Cardiff's registered Hackney Carriage licenced vehicles to continue to transition to lower emission vehicles, reducing carbon emissions and improving air quality. We know upgrading vehicles can be expensive for drivers, and we are trying to find ways to provide support where we can.

Before Christmas, we sought feedback from companies and taxi drivers as to what kind of support would be needed, and how it could be administered in a fair and equitable way. We are currently looking at the potential for establishing a pilot small grant scheme, which we hope to launch later in Spring 2024. Whilst the pilot scheme won't have the funds to support all Hackney Carriage vehicles, it is hoped that it will support a number of vehicles and provide evidence to support applications for further funding.

One Planet Cardiff

A new One Planet Cardiff Programme Manager, funded by Innovate UK, commenced work with the Council in December 2023 and has responsibility for leading a project which will look at how we can build Climate Emergency related thinking into our corporate processes. The Innovate UK support recognises that there is no clearly established national process for this type of approach and, therefore, Cardiff will be very much at the forefront of exploring and testing potential options. We expect the project to be very challenging, but fundamentally important to how the Council addresses the Climate Emergency.

Councillor Caro Wild
Cabinet Member for Climate Change
19 January 2024

COUNCIL: 25 JANUARY 2024

CULTURE, PARKS & EVENTS STATEMENT

Cardiff @ Christmas

I would like to wish all members a very happy and healthy 2024 and to take a moment to reflect on the collaborative work of our partners and officers in delivering a truly magic Christmas offer for residents and visitors.

The Cardiff Christmas Festival, presented in the breathtaking Spiegel tent and relocated from Cardiff Castle to Sophia Gardens this year, attracted just over 13,000 visitors. Sponsored by Admiral Money, the Festival also worked with the Holiday Inn and Hotel Indigo to offer both overnight stays in the city and pre-/post-event catering. Among other events, a comedy fundraiser was held for the official charity partner, Shelter Cymru, on 2 December 2023.

The opening night of Santa's Wish was attended by 80 families from the Dreams and Wishes Charity, which provides support for children with life-shortening illnesses. NSPCC Cymru also hosted and invited 100 supporters and volunteers to a performance. In addition, 120 discounted tickets were provided to enable families from deprived parts of the city to enjoy the show. There were also three dedicated performances of Santa's Wish for pupils from schools from across the city. The event organisers employed 106 freelance creative and event staff, and it is estimated that the event contributed at least £1m in additional monies to the local economy, mirroring the success of the inaugural event in Cardiff Castle.

Despite some changes to the layout, Cardiff's Christmas market was again extremely popular this year, including more than 150 different stall holders and specialist food outlets. It worked very well alongside the German bar and food outlets, and further complemented the new addition of Christmas lights within the trees in The Hayes this year. Footfall remained strong for all the areas associated with the Christmas market and, whilst it is difficult to provide an exact year-on-year comparison because of factors such as the autumn rugby internationals and weather conditions, footfall was reported as very good by the many outlets that the Council engaged with.

The combined offer of the Christmas market, Winter Wonderland and German bar remain a compelling reason to visit the city centre at Christmas and, of course, Santa was also in residence at Cardiff Castle. Tickets sold out within days and a lot of positive feedback was received. The bad weather failed to deter visitors who were very appreciative of the beautiful way in which the Castle had been dressed for Christmas. The children enjoyed sharing their wish lists with Santa and then choosing their gift, with the refreshments also being welcomed by the grown-ups.

Now in its third year, the Christmas at Bute Park light trail has evolved from a Christmas event to a rich celebration of arts and culture. Listed as one of The Guardian's Top Ten trails in the UK, the event generated £1.5 million of economic impact and attracted over 100,000 paying visitors. The event's organisers also increased the number of principal charities they worked with this year, which included City Hospice, Cardiff Women's Aid, Welsh Refugee Council, AP Cymru (a charity which supports families with neurodivergent children), Guide Dogs and Crisis. They also provided complimentary tickets to over 40 schools, foodbanks and other charitable groups, including the donation of 800 tickets to the Child Friendly Cardiff Team for wider distribution.

There was also an increased commitment by the event's organisers to working with home-grown creatives via the Welsh Government-supported Ignite Cymru scheme. More than 50 students from the Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama produced a specially composed audio for the trail, whilst 35 set design & lighting students produced key installations, including Wal Y Castell. In addition, 50 young people from Pontypridd charity, Citrus Arts, were involved in the creation of Hiraeth, and Molara Adesigbin and Grace Priest, two emerging Welsh visual artists, were chosen to design and create one of the new installations. The event also contributed £2,488 to the Bute Park Improvement Scheme.

Overall, it was a successful Winter Wonderland, with attendance close to pre-Covid levels, but for a period of bad weather after Christmas which affected numbers. Highlights included a new covered entertainment and seating area on City Hall Lawn, which allowed visitors to sit in comfort out of the weather and enjoy the daily free entertainment schedule, which included many local artists and entertainers performing live and even pop-up movie nights on Mondays. This year, the Ice Bar featured a 'Wales' theme, which celebrated famous Welsh landmarks and personalities that were all carved from real ice, including the Wales Millennium Centre and Gareth Bale. The extended Ice Walk within Cardiff Castle also proved very popular, as did the attractive Christmas-themed lantern installation at the Castle. This year, Winter Wonderland supported NSPCC Cymru and Passport to the City through the provision of free rides for children and young people.

I hope members had the opportunity to visit the city centre over the Christmas period and enjoy the attractions on offer.

Museum of Cardiff

2023 was a busy year for the Museum of Cardiff and it is encouraging that visitor numbers are now exceeding pre-Covid figures. As a result of the team securing funding from the Welsh Government for a new Fusion Project Assistant, the Museum has been able to deliver several projects to help people access arts and heritage. These included creating 100 children's craft packs and working with FareShare Cymru to distribute them to families over the festive period. The Museum also supported Kitsch'n'sync and Innovate Trust to deliver doorstep theatre performances, as well as assisting the Wales Puja Committee to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Durga Puja Festival in Cardiff. I am delighted that the Museum has been successful in securing further funding for January to March 2024 to continue this excellent project work.

Over the past 12 months, the Museum has held 46 free events for families and visitors, supporting local communities in the cost-of-living crisis. These events and activities were supported by, and delivered in partnership with, Kids in Museums, Passport to the City, FOR Cardiff and the Federation of Welsh Museums. Some of the highlights were as follows:

- 659 babies and toddlers sang and played at Dinky Dragons, the Museum's monthly free event.
- Five different themed gallery trails were developed for the school holidays for families to explore the Museum.
- 1,717 visitors came to the Museum during Welsh Museums Festival Week.
- The Museum welcomed artists and performers Jack Skivens, Mymuna Soleman, Cath Little and Taking Flight Theatre to run free workshops and performances for visitors.
- Visitors were taken behind the scenes on tours of the Old Library for the Cadw OpenDoors event and with the Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama for City of Arcades Day.
- Cardiff People First took over the Museum for a day, giving tours and talks to visitors.
- 38 people chatted over tea and biscuits at Reminiscence Monthly.
- The Museum also hosted three training tours for the Wallich Invisible Cities tour guide trainees, showing the group the wonders of the Old Library building to inspire them in creating their own tours.

In 2023, 16 volunteers gave over 270 hours of their time to welcome visitors to the Museum, help with events, and assist with caring for the Museum's collections. The Museum hosted two students from the University of Leicester and Cardiff University for their module placements. The Museum also continued to welcome schools on self-led visits around the exhibits.

In addition, 62 new objects and stories were taken into the Museum's collection, including panels from the iconic Cardiff-created cartoon Superted, adding the history of Cardiff's creative industries to the Museum's story. The Museum also added 20 objects to the @house_memories Cymru app, designed for and with people living with dementia and their carers, to explore objects from the past and share memories together.

Within the last year, the team has also collected oral histories from people who had worked at the iconic Howells/House of Fraser department store in the city in order to preserve the memories of the much-loved store, which closed in March 2023. This work to remember Howells has also included working in partnership with Cardiff University to conserve the maquette of the javelin thrower statue, the full-scale version of which was positioned on top of the store during the 1958 British Empire and Commonwealth Games that were held in Cardiff.

Cardiff International White Water

I'm pleased to report that Cardiff International White Water, which is managed by the Council, has been recognised by Tripadvisor as a Travellers Choice destination with a current rating of 5.0 based on over 1,200 reviews. The detail of the reviews evidences the high levels of customer service being provided by our staff. The venue also hosts water rescue training events for emergency service authorities/agencies from across the UK, with 30 such events having been accommodated in the current financial year to date. I am very encouraged by the number of repeat events that have been booked through until 2027 and the hosting of these events support the critically important delivery of services provided by these authorities/agencies.

Wheelchair Fencing World Cup

I was delighted to be invited to the launch of the Wheelchair Fencing World Cup, which came to Cardiff for the first time earlier this month. Held at the Sport Wales National Centre in Sophia Gardens from 11-14 January, this inclusive and accessible event saw athletes from across the world compete in the final European-based Wheelchair Fencing event before the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games. I would like to congratulate the event organisers and those athletes who took part, and wish all those who have qualified every success in Paris later this year.

Drovers Way Play Area

Prior to Christmas, along with the local ward members for Radyr and Morganstown, I attended the opening of the Drovers Way play area following completion of the refurbishment project and site drainage scheme. I was delighted with the quality of provision, which I'm sure will be enjoyed by current and future generations of children in the locality. Officers have also been preparing tender documentation for play schemes at Clare Gardens in the Riverside ward and on open space at Sanatorium Road in the Canton ward.

Coed Caerdydd

Despite the unfavourable ground conditions that we have been experiencing during the planting season to date, I can confirm that excellent progress is being made with the 2023/24 tree planting programme. Over 11,000 trees have already been planted towards our target of 30,000 and I'm encouraged by the levels of participation from corporate bodies, schools, local communities and, in particular, from volunteer networks, which has seen an increase in volunteer hours of 15% when compared with this time last year. This year's programme will see activity across all wards throughout the city, with an increased focus on planting within streets and on highway land.

Local Nature Partnership

There has been a positive response to the public consultation taking place with Cardiff residents feeding into the development of the Cardiff Nature Recovery Action Plan. The consultation commenced in November 2023 and ten workshops have been held across Cardiff attended by over 200 individuals. A final workshop specifically for schools is due to be held next week; this interactive event will enable schoolchildren to express their views on nature which will feed into the action plan. An online survey has been run alongside the face-to-face workshops and, to date, 242 responses have been received. The engagement with Cardiff residents will be critical in enabling the Council, along with partners, to shape the detail of future plans.

Cardiff Music Development

Following Cardiff's successful delivery of the BBC Radio 6 Music Festival in 2022, I am delighted that Huw Stephens' new show will be BBC Radio 6 Music's first regular programme broadcast from Wales, reflecting the BBC's Across the UK plans to better reflect, represent and serve all audiences. The show commenced on 9 January and airs from Tuesday to Friday between 4pm and 7pm.

To celebrate the launch of the new show, the Cardiff Music Board supported a free concert at Clwb Ifor Bach on 11 January. A full house enjoyed the concert, headlined by CVC, one of the most celebrated Welsh bands of this time, and there was much appreciation for the Council's music development work.

A Cardiff Music Officer has been successfully recruited and starts work this month to support the progression and development of the Cardiff Music Strategy. The team looks forward to delivering an exciting programme of music activity throughout this year.

I am also happy to report that the Council has helped the successful move of Porters live music and arts venue to a new premises in Barrack Lane/Charles Street. Officers have been working with the venue for some time and this work highlights how positive engagement and collaboration can lead to successful outcomes.

Councillor Jennifer Burke
Cabinet Member for Culture, Parks & Events
19 January 2024

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FINANCE, MODERNISATION & PERFORMANCE STATEMENT

Budget Consultation 2024/25

The Provisional Settlement from the Welsh Government, which was announced on 20 December 2023, includes a 4.1% increase for Cardiff, which would provide an additional £25.5m cash in 2024/25, which leaves a budget gap of £30.5m that needs to be addressed by the Council in order to balance the books in the next financial year. This gap will need to be filled by cuts to council services, efficiency savings and increases in charges like Council Tax. No final decision has been made at this stage, and proposals will be finalised prior to the Full Council Budget meeting in early March.

Following the Provisional Settlement, the Cabinet agreed the budget consultation for 2024/25 at a meeting on 8 January 2024, which then started later that day and will run for around four weeks until midnight on Sunday 4 February. The consultation sets out the potential changes to council services which are being considered, including:

- Considering charging for collection of garden waste
- Saving money by collecting black bin/bag waste once every three weeks instead of every fortnight. This should also help boost recycling rates.
- Restricting opening times of Hubs and libraries and using more volunteers to help run the service - but not closing any library in full.
- Increasing residential and pay and display parking charges.
- Increasing the cost of hiring sports pitches.
- Increasing the price of the burials and cremation service.
- Changing the ways parks are managed, including reducing the maintenance on sections of parks and green spaces, reducing the number of floral displays and re-wilding some planting areas.
- Increasing the cost of school meals, although we will continue to subsidise this service.

The online version of the budget consultation can be accessed at: www.cardiff.gov.uk/budget and is available in five different languages, including English, Welsh, Arabic, Polish and Bengali. Printed copies of the budget consultation in multiple languages are also available in Hubs, libraries and council buildings across the city.

I urge members to share the budget consultation in their communities and to encourage residents across the city to share their views.

Unfortunately, shortly after the consultation commenced, a minor discrepancy was identified between the online and printed versions of the consultation questions that was the result of an error during the design and print process. I can confirm that this has since been rectified and all uncompleted hard copies of the budget consultation have been replaced with a version that includes the correct question wording. It's important to note that no budget saving is being proposed at this time in relation to the specific question where there was found to be a discrepancy (i.e. within the Parks section in relation to Bute Park Nursery, its Visitor Centre and Roath Park Conservatory).

CardiffGov Mobile App

At the end of December 2023, the CardiffGov mobile app hit 88,055 downloads since its launch. The number of downloads decreased slightly in comparison with recent months, with 1,459 downloads last month.

The number of people accessing our services are split by the type of device they use (iOS and Android). There were 889 downloads of the CardiffGov mobile app to iOS devices in December 2023. The CardiffGov mobile app was also opened 19,229 times by iOS devices. In addition, 570 Android users downloaded the CardiffGov mobile app to their device in December 2023. There were also 12,094 active Android users last month, which was a 1.3% decrease from the previous month.

Website

Key statistics from December 2023 in relation to the Council's website:

- 267,000 people visited www.cardiff.gov.uk viewing 501,000 pages, with 79.4% of visitors using a mobile device, which is the highest percentage to date.
- 26,900 online payments received totalling £3.1million.
- 320,000 residents checked their waste collections online, which was an increase of 52,000 from November 2023.
- 99.9% (14,800) of recycling centre bookings and 94% (5,000) of bulky item collections were made online.
- 6,500 A-Z of Recycling and Waste lookups were made with 'wrapping paper' and 'Christmas trees' being most searched for.
- 92% of problem parking reports (819) were made online, along with 81.4% of street lighting reports (114).
- 4,600 online forms were submitted.

Customers accessed their Council Tax account 19,300 times via the website and app. www.cardiff.gov.uk scored 99% in the January audit by SOCITM's accessibility partner Silktide, which puts the website in joint first place in Wales and 18th in the UK for accessibility compliance (over 375 websites reviewed).

Chatbot (BOBi)

There was a total of 4,729 conversations in December 2023, with just 510 resulting in handoff to agents. Feedback was provided by 332 people who spoke to the chatbot, with 83% of feedback was rated as Ok, Good or Very Good, with Very Good being the highest percentage of these ratings (52%). Chatbot users mostly engaged with our waste options, Council Tax and parking scenarios, with most interactions relating specifically to the waste collection calendar and Council Tax & benefits information.

Since the last update to BOBi, the team has finished making changes to the address search for multiple scenarios, including fly-tipping, problem parking, graffiti, waste collections calendar, HWRC booking and others. The next services in scope to be developed on BOBi include information on Planning and improvements to the 'Do Not Understand' options and messages, where BOBi will give extra options to users in order to try tackle their queries directly, rather than handing off to an agent. Work will also take place to link BOBi to services already on the CardiffGov mobile app and website by displaying service information directly on the chatbot or linking to the website. Examples of these services include highways defects, cleansing and street lighting.

Connect to Cardiff

December is historically a quieter month on traditional channels; however, Connect to Cardiff assisted citizens by dealing with:

- 16,373 phone calls – Council Tax and Housing Repairs had the highest demand respectively;
- 5,416 webforms – average answer time of 11.6 hours against a targeted turnaround of 48 hours; and
- 1,604 webchats (live one-to-one chat session).

Social Media

A total of 5,064 messages were received across a range of platforms, including Facebook and X as the two mostly highly utilised platforms. C2C actioned 3,796 messages and replied directly to 421 of these. Each contact received is assigned a 'tag' by a C2C operative for data intelligence purposes to understand what is driving citizens to contact us via socials. The number one tag last month was for residents checking Christmas waste collection arrangements.

Councillor Chris Weaver
Cabinet Member for Finance, Modernisation & Performance
19 January 2024

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HOUSING & COMMUNITIES STATEMENT

Demand for Homelessness Services

Demand for homelessness services continues to grow and, in December 2023, the Cabinet declared a housing emergency in Cardiff. The Council is continuing to support high numbers of families and single people turning to us for help. The number of families residing in temporary accommodation is now 701, which is more than double the number in April 2021. The service is having to respond rapidly to these ongoing demands and continues to increase emergency and temporary accommodation to help meet these pressures.

As the weather has become colder, the Council has rapidly increased the provision of emergency accommodation for single people across the city. These spaces are now almost full and additional spaces will be opened if this level of demand continues during the winter. This additional accommodation has encouraged rough sleepers, who have previously not wanted to access support from us, to come forward for assistance. This has resulted in the number of rough sleepers in Cardiff being reduced by 50% and 19 previous rough sleepers are now in emergency accommodation. Teams will be working hard with them to encourage them to continue to access all the support available.

Despite these pressures, a large amount of work has gone into transforming the emergency out-of-hours service for single people. With the number of presentations reducing from 85 to less than 20 a night, the aim is to reduce this further by increasing the managed accommodation offer and creating more move-on capacity.

Working in partnership with United Welsh Housing Association, December saw the opening of the new-build Min Y Coed site in St Mellons. This site provides an additional 18 good-quality, temporary accommodation units for families. In addition, our innovative modular build programme continues to be delivered, with 79 families moving into energy-efficient units at the Gasworks site in Grangetown. The remaining units are due to be ready within the next few months.

Demand for young people facing homelessness remains exceptionally high too. The new Tai Ffres scheme, in partnership with Llamau and United Welsh Housing Association, allocated its first new units to five young people in December. The scheme aims to provide 130 additional units to young people by 2027. Work is ongoing to increase accommodation specifically for young people in Cardiff.

Homelessness Prevention

Whilst the combined Homelessness Teams are continuing to see high numbers presenting to the services each month, the Homeless Prevention Team has recorded the lowest number of open prevention cases since 2022, with 424 people/families being supported. A big contributor to the lower number of open cases is the initial advice and support given to customers through the dedicated Housing Helpline and Community Hub-based Housing Solutions Team, which provides timely and accurate information to stop customers from requiring a Prevention Caseworker. Since April 2023, 80% of prevention cases have been closed due to customers being supported to remain in their homes or supported to find alternative accommodation.

To further support young people, a second Young Person's Prevention Officer is now in post, providing a permanent presence in the Grassroots building on Charles Street in the city centre and the capacity to be able to carry out emergency homeless-on-the-day assessments at locations of the young person's choosing.

Addison House Community Living Scheme

I was delighted to join the Leader of the Council in attending and speaking at the official launch of the Council's first new build community living development for older people, Addison House, on 19 December 2023. This represents an exciting chapter for the Council in delivering homes for people at every stage of their life and the new scheme responds directly to the needs identified in our Older Persons Housing Strategy.

The state-of-the-art community living scheme includes 44 self-contained apartments in a four-storey building, built to the highest standards. These apartments will form part of the wider housing development at Aspen Grove, off Newport Road in Rumney, and like the other homes on the site, the apartments will be highly energy-efficient, making them more affordable to run and kinder to the planet. All of the apartments benefit from the latest technologies to minimise energy use and help to tackle rising fuel costs. The building has also been designed to ensure that residents can retain their independence in a safe and secure environment.

The building is due for completion and handover in the middle of February 2024 and the Older Persons Accommodations Team has been preparing the new residents to move in, with additional support being provided by the Rehousing Solutions Team through the new 'Right-Sizing' scheme, which seeks to ensure a smooth and positive experience. The scheme offers practical and financial support for older people who want to downsize to more manageable accommodation, with dedicated officers supporting them through all aspects of the moving process. The pilot scheme has been welcomed by tenants, with 27 due to move into their new properties shortly. The moving process can be daunting and this additional help and support will assist in removing barriers and providing much-needed reassurance to older tenants.

It is great to see the success of the scheme, which provides good-quality accommodation for older people in the community. It also frees up larger properties in the city that can be offered to families on the housing waiting list who are overcrowded or homeless.

Addison House is the first community living scheme of 10 such schemes that we are delivering across Cardiff as part of our new build housing development programme. Works to develop other new community living schemes at Leckwith Road and Bute Street have commenced on site and are progressing well. When all 10 new community living schemes are completed, we will have invested over £190 million in delivering 620 new older person apartments across the city.

Housing Development Update

The Housing Development & Regeneration Team completed the delivery of 183 new properties during the period from April to end of December 2023. This takes the overall total delivery of new council homes to 1,032 by December 2023.

The Council is continuing to work hard to find new ways to tackle the current Housing Emergency in the city. For example, the highly successful scheme to install 155 new modular homes for families facing homelessness at the former Gasworks site in Grangetown is leading the way in housing innovation in the UK by making a short-term, meanwhile use of what would have been a vacant brownfield site for years to come, and delivering new homes at scale and pace to help prevent homelessness in the city.

I am pleased that the scheme is generating significant interest across the UK, and we have recently hosted visits by representatives from the Welsh, Scottish and Irish Governments, as well as other Welsh local authorities including Swansea and Monmouthshire Councils. The success of this project has resulted in us now working to deliver further meanwhile use modular homes across other vacant sites within our housing development programme. It is important that we are able to make use of these sites in the short-term whilst we are designing and seeking planning approval for our longer-term permanent housing developments.

Volunteering in Cardiff

I am very grateful to all of the people who give up their valuable time to help their own communities and to help us support the people of Cardiff. The Community Volunteer Programme is continuing to grow, with over 70 volunteers donating their time each month. Volunteers are providing a range of activities for communities across Cardiff that people can participate in. These include art exhibitions, peer support groups, craft clubs and exercise classes like Tai Chi, which are attended by over 700 people each month. New links have also been created with Cardiff Metropolitan University and Cardiff University to develop a dedicated volunteer pathway for the many students in the city, which will help to grow community activities even further.

One of the biggest success stories of 2023 was the Ukrainian Film project, which was run in partnership with the BBC. The aim of the project was to create a way for young people to learn about Wales and to meet new people whilst gaining some new skills. Fifty young people who were new to Cardiff engaged with the project and were mentored by industry professionals who taught a range of media skills. The project included visits to the BBC studios and special guest speakers. The project was well received and I know that the Volunteer Cardiff Team is hoping to utilise this partnership for future projects.

In December, Volunteer Cardiff hosted a celebratory thank you event to recognise the support volunteers provided throughout 2023. The event coincided with the annual UN International Volunteer Day, which is 'a day to pay tribute to volunteers' and was based on the theme of 'if everyone did'. Over 25 volunteers attended the event held at Central Library Hub. Volunteers provide a valuable contribution to our Advice Services and Hubs, as well as supporting local communities, and the event provided an opportunity to recognise volunteers' successes and development. Each volunteer in attendance received a Certificate of Appreciation and was presented with an award to thank them for their contribution. I would personally like to thank all volunteers for the help and time that they provide for their community.

Hubs Christmas Programme

The Community Hubs across the city do a great job bringing people together by ensuring that there is something for everyone. I am really pleased that this community engagement continued over the Christmas period, which can be a very difficult time for some people. The Hub Teams all worked hard to put on events, including toy appeals, Christmas lunches, scavenger hunts, Christmas crafts, festive story times and children's crafts, and community craft fairs. It was great to see how many adults and children took part and enjoyed themselves. One example of this was the Christmas Lunch at Lou's Coffee Shop in Llandaff North Hub, which was attended by 85 people. I would like to remind everyone that the Hubs are a source of help to all those who need it. All of our Hubs and libraries are providing a Warm Welcome space this winter. Everyone is welcome to visit and spend time in a warm environment where they can relax and enjoy the free WiFi and activities. There is also advice and support available for those who are experiencing financial difficulties during the Cost-of-Living crisis.

Clwb Cwtsh

The Council is committed to the promotion and development of the Welsh language to realise its vision of Cardiff as a truly bilingual capital city. I was therefore pleased to hear about the collaboration that has been taking place with Mudiad Meithrin, which is a key provider of Welsh-medium early years care and education. Mudiad Meithrin have been rolling out the Clwb Cwtsh taster programme across Hubs and libraries in the city, including in Rhiwbina, Grangetown and Central Library Hubs. Clwb Cwtsh is a fun-filled, seven-week taster programme focussed on speaking Welsh with young children and is aimed at parents-to-be, parents, carers and members of the extended family. Clwb Cwtsh introduces Welsh words and phrases for parents and carers to use at home with their young children.

Landlord Enquiry and Tenants Services Team (LETS)

The Landlord Enquiries & Tenancy Support (LETS) Team has been working closely with landlords across the city over the past few months to encourage sign-up to the Leasing Scheme Wales, the Welsh Government-backed leasing scheme that offers guaranteed rental income for between five and twenty years. I am pleased to say that, as of the beginning of this month, the Council has reached the target of signing up 67 properties to the scheme, which has resulted in additional accommodation being made available for those at risk of homelessness and provided help to landlords wanting to support vulnerable people. Of these 67 properties, 27 were previously empty. Over the coming months, the team will be working to extend the scheme to take on additional properties.

The LETS Team has benefited from Empty Homes funding by bringing together the Private Rented Sector Team and Leasing Scheme Wales into one easy-to-access service. The team provides a range of support for private landlords, including a tenancy matching service, free pre-tenancy inspection and rent valuation, support and financial assistance to register with Rent Smart Wales, and a health & safety package, which includes renovation grants of up to £15,000 to assist in bring properties back into use. This will help to increase the number of private rented sector properties that clients within the service can access and provide additional housing solutions. The team also provides resettlement support to tenants when they have moved into their private rented accommodation to ensure that their tenancy succeeds. Since January 2023, the LETS team has supported 208 people into private rented sector properties.

The LETS Team works closely with colleagues from Shared Regulatory Services (SRS) and Housing Development & Regeneration to bring empty properties back into use. Regular meetings between the teams have provided an additional platform for information sharing, effective referral mechanisms and discussion of property specific solutions and updates. The team also hosts and attends bimonthly meetings of the Cardiff Landlord Forum.

Empty Homes

The Council continues to do all it can to bring empty homes back into use across the city. Empty homes are a waste of resources and a missed opportunity during a time of significant housing need.

To ensure all sections of the Council are aware and involved with this work, an Empty Homes Working Group has been established that meets on a quarterly basis, which I chair. This facilitates improved co-ordination between SRS, Council Tax and Housing Development & Regeneration Teams, and the Housing Options Service in particular, by promoting the resources, tools and financial assistance available to tackle empty homes in the city.

The Empty Homes section of the SRS website has recently been redesigned and updated to include improved information, signposting links, an online customer reporting form and an online empty property owner questionnaire. This resource will further increase accessibility of assistance and provide improved contact opportunities for both property owners and the public to highlight or request advice on empty properties.

A small team of officers within the Housing Enforcement Team focuses on tackling private sector empty homes across the city, supported by additional resources provided via income generated through the Council Tax premium. This work includes writing to all known owners of empty properties listed on the Council Tax register to offer advice and assistance on how to bring the property back into use. Owners are invited to complete a questionnaire, which gathers property-specific information and identifies areas for bespoke advice. The team provides assistance through site meetings, advice on property standards and rental requirements, as well as referrals and signposting to other departments and avenues of financial assistance. This proactive approach to engaging with owners of properties listed as empty for more than six months continues to be effective, with an increase in the number of returned questionnaires compared to previous years.

122 properties have been identified as empty for more than five years on the Council Tax register in 2023/24. These properties are individually reviewed and categorised. Owners are contacted with more direct advice and where they fail to respond or engage, then enforcement action is considered.

An action plan, submitted to and agreed by Welsh Government, has identified the most problematic empty properties in the city and prioritised associated actions. Targeted enforcement of these problem properties is yielding positive results, with several properties now occupied, cases progressing with the serving of enforcement notices, and works in default being completed at two properties, with the aim of enforcing sale of the property if the debt is not paid. In addition, two properties previously subject to a Compulsory Purchase Order have now both been fully renovated by the new owners and returned to occupation. This continued progress has enabled the team to select several more problem properties for inclusion in the action plan.

In addition to the above-mentioned proactive work, the team also works reactively, responding to complaints and enquiries specifically relating to empty properties, with 111 complaints and enquires received in 2021/22, 157 received in 2022/23 and 80 received to date in 2023/24.

The Neighbourhood Service Technical Officers have an active caseload of 177 empty properties, which will be visited, categorised and ongoing contact maintained with the owner. Not all the properties dealt with by the team are listed as empty on Council Tax records as they are often unrated or are listed as occupied or second homes.

Through the overall work of the SRS Team, the number of private sector empty properties brought back into use continues to increase year on year, with 84 properties or dwellings brought back into use in 2021/22 and a further 95 dwellings in 2022/23. The target for the current year is 100 properties and, after nine months, 85 dwellings have been returned to occupation so far in 2023/24.

Houses into Homes Loan

The Houses into Homes Loan is a Welsh Government-funded, interest-free loan administered in Cardiff by the Council's Housing Development & Regeneration Team. The key purpose of the scheme is to help bring empty properties back into habitable use for the rental or sales market, thereby increasing housing supply. Upon repayment of the loan monies, the funds are recycled to maximise the number of properties assisted.

To qualify for the scheme, the property must be empty for at least six months. The maximum loan available is £25,000 per unit of accommodation, up to a total of £150,000 per individual or company. If the property is to be let, then the loan is repayable within three years, but if the property is to be sold, then the loan is repayable within two years. The loan is interest-free for the agreed term; however, if there is a breach of the loan agreement, then interest is charged at 6%. The loan covers renovation of residential properties, conversion into multiple dwellings and conversion of commercial properties into domestic dwellings. The loans are secured by a legal charge and the proposed loan amount, plus any existing mortgage or secured lending, cannot exceed 80% of the current property value.

Since 2012, 68 loans have been issued by the Council, the majority of which have been loans to let. The loans covered 83 empty properties (some of the loans applied to multiple properties), 70 of which were residential properties and 13 were commercial properties. The total value of the loans issued is £4.1 million, which includes recycling of previous loan monies.

171 residential units have either been returned to use or created from previously empty properties. A further 10 units are due to be completed shortly and should be ready for occupation by the end of March 2024.

Enquiries about the scheme have increased within the last six months and 11 new applications are currently being processed.

Violence Prevention Strategy

A significant amount of progress has been made with the Community Safety Partnership's Violence Prevention Strategy. An evidence-based profile has been created, which highlights a number of key themes that the strategy will focus on – City Centre and Night-Time Economy; Knife Crime and Possession of Weapons; Violence Involving Children and Young People; Exploitation and Organised Crime; Street Based Lifestyles and Complex Needs; and Violence Against Women and Girls, and Sexual Violence. This Cardiff profile explores what violence we see (when reported to the police and the public perception of violence), where it happens, when it happens and who is involved.

A draft strategy is nearing completion, which sets out the approach, guiding principles, key areas of focus and main objectives/priorities to support a co-ordinated response to violence in Cardiff. This has all been achieved through several partnership meetings and identified best practice and frameworks, which have been developed from Public Health and the Violence Prevention Unit, ensuring that we are building on existing knowledge of what works.

To provide a higher level of detail in how the strategy will be achieved, a delivery plan has also been drafted, which sets out key projects and plans to address the causes of violence. This is currently being finalised with key partners who will lead on its delivery. The Community Safety Partnership will own the delivery plan and it will be monitored via the Violence Prevention Group.

Councillor Lynda Thorne
Cabinet Member for Housing & Communities
19 January 2024

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CYNGOR CAERDYDD CARDIFF COUNCIL

COUNCIL:

25 JANUARY 2024

REPORT OF THE INTERIM MONITORING OFFICER

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Reason for Report

1. To receive nominations and make appointments to current committee vacancies as set out in the report and in accordance with the approved allocation of seats and political group wishes.

Background

2. The Annual Council meeting 25 May 2023 established the Committees and Panels of the Council and their composition. The seats allocated to political groups on each committee were calculated in accordance with the rules on political balance, and nominations were received for each committee from the political groups.
3. In accordance with the Welsh Audit Office Statement of Action P3b (report March 2016), Membership of Committees is a standing item on monthly Group Whips meetings and Full Council, as appropriate.

Issues

4. Current Committee vacancies, in accordance with the approved allocations to political groups, are as follows:

Table A

Committee	Vacancy	Group	Nomination Received
Planning Committee	1 vacancy	1 x Liberal Democrat	
Governance & Audit Committee	1 vacancy	1 x Liberal Democrat	
Democratic Services Committee	1 vacancy	Non-grouped (Propel)	

5. Further nominations to fill existing vacancies received from political groups prior to Full Council on 25 January 2024 will be reported on the amendment sheet.

Legal Implications

6. The Council is required at its Annual Council meeting (and at certain other specified times) to determine the allocation of Committee seats to political groups in accordance with political balance principles set out in Section 15 of Local Government and Housing Act 1989. Having determined the allocations, the Council is under a duty to exercise its power to make appointments to each Committee so as to give effect to the wishes expressed by the relevant political group about who is to be appointed to the seats allocated to their group (section 16 of the 1989 Act).
7. The Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 ('the 1990 Regulations') requires political groups to be notified of their allocation on each Committee in order that they may nominate individuals to serve on that Committee (Regulation 14). Regulation 15 contains a residual power for the Council to make appointments if the political groups fail to do so. However, apart from this provision, the Council has no discretion in the matter - its function is simply to make appointments, which give effect to the wishes of the political groups.
8. The wishes of a political group are to be taken as those expressed to the Proper Officer (a) orally or in writing by the leader or representative of the group; or (b) in a written statement signed by a majority of the members of the group. In the event that different wishes of a political group are notified, the wishes notified in accordance with point (b) shall prevail (Regulation 13).

Planning Committee

9. The Size and Composition of Local Planning Authority Committees (Wales) Regulations 2017 (made under s.39 of the Planning Wales Act 2015), provide that, *except in the case of a local authority which is comprised solely of multiple member wards*, only one Member from a multiple member ward may sit on the planning committee, in order to allow other ward Members to perform the representative role for local community interests (Regulation 6 of the Size and Composition of Local Planning Authority Committees (Wales) Regulations 2017). As Cardiff is currently comprised solely of multiple member wards, this rule is not currently applicable to Cardiff.

Financial Implications

10. There are no financial implications directly arising from this report.

RECOMMENDATION

The Council is recommended to receive nominations and appoint to the vacancies on the Committees, in accordance with the Party Group wishes, as set out in Table A and on the Amendment Sheet.

D MARLES
Interim Monitoring Officer
19 January 2024

Background Papers

Council Report, Minutes and Amendment Sheet 26 October 2023

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**CITY & COUNTY OF CARDIFF
DINAS A SIR CAERDYDD**



COUNCIL:

25 January 2024

REPORT OF THE INTERIM MONITORING OFFICER

APPOINTMENT OF GOVERNORS TO SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES

Reason for this Report

1. (i) To appoint Local Authority School Governors to fill vacancies on the Governing Bodies of Maintained Schools; and
- (ii) To appoint temporary governors to the new temporary Governing Body which is to be constituted for a proposed new primary school in the Cathays area, as approved by Cabinet on 18th January 2024.

Background

2. Section 19 of the Education Act 2002 ('the 2002 Act') makes provision for the constitution of governing bodies of maintained schools to include Local Authority appointed governors, along with other categories of school governors, with further detail contained in the Government of Maintained Schools (Wales) Regulations 2005 ('the School Government Regulations'). When Local Authority school governor vacancies arise, either by appointees reaching the end of their term of office or resigning, it is the statutory duty of the Council to fill the vacancies as soon as possible.
3. Where new maintained schools are being established, section 34 of the 2002 Act requires the local authority to make arrangements for the constitution of a temporary governing body for the new school. For temporary governing bodies, the School Government Regulations are modified by the New Maintained Schools (Wales) Regulations 2005 (together referred to in this report as 'the Regulations').
4. The Local Authority Governor Panel has responsibility under its approved Terms of Reference '(a) To advise the Council on appointments (and removal) of governors to be made by the Local Authority' and '(b) To consider and make decisions relating to the recruitment, training and vetting of potential governors and any other matters that may be referred to the Panel by the Cabinet or the Constitution Committee', for all school governing bodies which are constituted under the Government of Maintained Schools (Wales) Regulations 2005.

Issues

5. The Local Authority Governor Panel will meet on 22 January 2024 to consider new applications to fill current and future school governor vacancies due to arise by 31 May 2024. The recommendations of the panel, in respect of new appointments will be reported on the Amendment Sheet.
6. The Council has set out proposals to open a new primary school in the Cathays area from September 2025 and following consultation, a statutory notice was published to discontinue Allensbank Primary School and Gladstone Primary School from September 2025 and to establish a new two forms of entry (FE) English-medium primary school in the premises currently shared between Gladstone Primary School and St Monica's Church In Wales Primary School. The proposed new school will have a capacity of 420 places and will cater for the age range 3-11 incorporating 48 full time equivalent (FTE, that is a total of 96 part time) nursery places.
7. The statutory notice was published on 9 November 2023 and allowed a period of 28 days from the date of publication for receipt of formal objections to the proposals. The proposals were considered and approved by the Council's Cabinet on 18 January 2024: 'School Organisation Planning: Primary School Places to Serve Cathays and Parts of Gabalfa, Heath, Llandaff North and Plasnewydd,' 18 January 2024: [CARDIFF COUNCIL \(moderngov.co.uk\)](https://www.moderngov.co.uk/council/cabinet/2024-01-18/school-organisation-planning-primary-school-places-to-serve-cathays-and-parts-of-gabalfa-heath-llandaff-north-and-plasnewydd).
8. Under the New Maintained Schools (Wales) Regulations 2005 (Regulation 5(1)), the local authority may put in place arrangements to establish a temporary governing body for a new maintained school in anticipation of approval of the proposals, after the proposals have been published via a statutory notice. The arrangements include the appointment of temporary Local Authority, Parent and Staff governors in accordance with the Regulations.
9. Following consultation with Allensbank Primary School and Gladstone Primary School, it has been agreed that the Council will put arrangements in place for a temporary governing body for the proposed new primary school in Cathays in anticipation of approval of the proposals. The appointments to the temporary governing body are conditional and subject to Cabinet's approval of the proposals.
10. In accordance with its approved terms of reference, the Local Authority Governor Panel will consider applications for the temporary Local Authority and Parent governor positions on the temporary governing body at its meeting on 22 January 2024 and the recommendations of the Panel will be included on the Amendment Sheet.

Legal Implications

11. Relevant legal provisions are set out in the body of the report.
12. Under Regulation 25 of the Government of Maintained Schools (Wales) Regulations 2005, school governor appointments are for a fixed term of 4 years from the date of the appointment (with certain exceptions) and governors may be re-appointed for a further 4 year term.
13. Provisions for the conduct of new schools with temporary governing bodies and the transition from a temporary governing body to a permanent governing body constituted under an instrument of government are set out within the New Maintained Schools (Wales) Regulations 2005.
14. Appointments to outside bodies is a local choice function, which is reserved under the Council's Constitution to full Council. Accordingly, the appointment of school governors to governing bodies of maintained schools, to be made having regard to the recommendations of the Local Authority Governor Panel pursuant to its approved terms of reference (detailed in paragraph 4 of the report), requires the approval of full Council.

Financial Implications

15. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Recommendation

In accordance with the recommendations of the Local Authority Governor Panel, to:

- (i) Approve the new appointments and re-appointments of Local Authority governors to the school governing bodies as set out on the Amendment Sheet, each for a term of 4 years from the date of the appointment; and
- (ii) Approve the appointment of temporary Local Authority and Parent school governors to constitute the temporary governing body of the new two forms of entry English-medium primary school being established in Cathays (referred to in paragraphs 6 and 7 of the report), as set out on the Amendment Sheet.

D MARLES
Interim Monitoring Officer
19 January 2024

Background Papers

Statutory Notice of School Organisation Proposals, 'Community Primary School Provision in the Cathays/Gabalfa Areas', 9th November 2023: [Statutory Notice \(cardiff.gov.uk\)](https://www.cardiff.gov.uk/statutory-notice)

Cabinet Report: 'School Organisation Planning: Primary School Places to Serve Cathays and Parts of Gabalfa, Heath, Llandaff North and Plasnewydd,' 18 January 2024: [CARDIFF COUNCIL \(moderngov.co.uk\)](https://www.moderngov.co.uk)