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AGENDA

Committee POLICY REVIEW AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date and Time of Meeting WEDNESDAY, 13 DECEMBER 2023, 4.30 PM

Venue CR 4, COUNTY HALL - MULTI LOCATION MEETING

Membership Councillor Williams (Chair)
Councillors Ash-Edwards, Bowen-Thomson, Carter, Chowdhury,
Henshaw, Hinchey, Hunt and Thomson

*Time
approx.*

1 Apologies for Absence

To receive apologies for absence.

2 Declarations of Interest

To be made at the start of the agenda item in question, in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct.

3 Minutes (Pages 5 - 8)

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the previous meeting.

4 Mid-Year Performance 2023/24 (Pages 9 - 96) 4.30 pm

Pre-decision Scrutiny of the Councils mid-year assessment of performance.

5 RLDP Joint Scrutiny Report (Pages 97 - 150) 5.30 pm

Task & Finish report of the 5 scrutiny committees.

6 Committee Business (Pages 151 - 154) 6.00 pm

This document is available in Welsh / Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg

7 **Urgent Items (if any)**

8 **Way Forward**

6.05 pm

9 **Date of next meeting**

To be confirmed.

D Marles

Interim Monitoring Officer

Date: Thursday, 7 December 2023

Contact: Andrea Redmond, 029 2087 2434, a.redmond@cardiff.gov.uk

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POLICY REVIEW AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

22 NOVEMBER 2023

Present: Councillor Williams(Chairperson)
Councillors Ash-Edwards, Carter, Chowdhury, Henshaw,
Hinchey, Hunt and Thomson

34 : APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None received.

35 : DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Chowdhury declared a personal interest in Item 4 as she works with Public Health Wales.

36 : MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 October 2023 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairperson.

37 : PUBLIC SERVICES BOARD

The Chairperson advised that it is Committee's statutory responsibility to undertake strategic overview scrutiny of the Cardiff Public Services Board's (PSB) performance. The Well-being of Future Generations Act and the Council's Constitution confers on Committee the power to make recommendations to the PSB in respect of its functions or governance arrangements and copy Committee's recommendations to Welsh Ministers and the Future Generations Commissioner. Members would receive a presentation of the partnership's work over the past year including its review of governance arrangements.

For this item, the Chairperson welcomed (External witnesses): Alun Michael, Police & Crime Commissioner; Charles Janczewski, Vice Chair of Cardiff PSB & Chair of Cardiff and Vale University Health Board and Fiona Kinghorn, Executive Director of Public Health, Cardiff and Vale University Health Board. (And from Cardiff Council): Councillor Huw Thomas, Chair of Cardiff PSB & Leader; Paul Orders, Chief Executive; Sarah McGill, Corporate Director People & Communities; Gareth Newell, Head of Performance & Partnerships.

The Leader, as Chair of the PSB, the Police & Crime Commissioner and the Vice Chair of the PSB were invited to make opening statements after which Members were provided with a presentation from Officers.

The Chairperson invited questions and comments from Members.

Members asked about the impact of increasing demand pressures and declining public expenditure on partnership working. Members heard about successful solutions, such as the management of hospital discharge by the "pink army," which has minimised greater cost pressures. The growing need for partnership solutions in

the face of these challenges was noted, and there was reassurance that there is an urgent focus enabling partners to address issues collaboratively and find solutions.

Members considered citizens to be a significant stakeholder in partnership working. Members were assured by the importance placed on consultation with citizens. The Committee welcomed the overall acknowledgment that public consultation could be improved. The Commissioner's suggestion to address overlap in partner consultations and taking a more coordinated approach through the Board was noted. The Committee expressed an interest in reviewing the outcomes the Board currently monitors around the effectiveness of citizen engagement.

Members suggested the potential value of reintroducing community planning partnerships, especially considering the challenges to public services. Members were advised that the approach had been resource-intensive with often low community take up. Members noted the joined-up locality working on key issues within communities. Members did, however, feel there could be an opportunity to reinstate engagement between PCSOs (Police Community Support Officers) and local Councillors.

A discussion took place around the impact of public service pressures on partner workforces, especially in the health service. The significant pressures and emphasis on the importance of supporting staff in response to these challenges was noted.

The Committee learned about the Director of Public Health's report on Amplifying Prevention, which addresses themes targeting inequity, including a focus on childhood vaccinations, bowel screening, and healthy eating. The Commissioner also mentioned collaboration with Public Health Wales to develop a response to research on adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), indicating the Board's emphasis on both crime prevention and addressing health inequality.

Members noted the Vice Chairman's commendation of the Board for undertaking a comprehensive governance review, particularly addressing the relationship between the CPSB and the RPB (Regional Partnership Board). Members acknowledged the need for continual review due to incremental growth in partnership structures and commended the review process.

Members were assured by all partners understanding the line of sight whilst acknowledging the different locations that the CPSB and the RPB serve. Members were pleased to hear that the RPB Annual Report is now presented to the Board each year, and this adds to this enhanced clarity and connection between the organisations.

Members discussed the financial savings achieved through partnership working and noted that many actions have resulted in a return on investment, with the benefits often seen through cost avoidance rather than direct budget savings.

AGREED: that the Chairperson, on behalf of the Committee, writes to the Cabinet Member conveying the observations of the Committee when discussing the way forward.

38 : BUDGET 2023/24, MONTH 6 MONITORING REPORT

The Chairperson advised Members that for this item they would receive an update on the budget for 2023/24. This item provides the Committee with an opportunity to monitor the Council's financial position at month 6 of the 2023/24 financial year.

For this item, the Chairperson welcomed Cllr Chris Weaver, Cabinet Member, Finance, Modernisation & Performance; Chris Lee, Corporate Director, Resources and Ian Allwood, Head of Finance.

The Chairperson invited questions and comments from Members.

Members noted that the improved Revenue budget position at month 6, compared with month 4, was primarily achieved through the utilisation of £800,000 from reserves in the General Contingency fund and a Capital Financing underspend of £1.5 million.

Members inquired about whether the improved Revenue budget position is artificially improved. Members noted that since month 4, the pay award has been agreed, removing it as a risk, and there remains £1 million in the contingency budget. Members were assured that the monitoring report is structured to prompt management action to reduce the overspend. Officers advised there is close collaboration between the Finance team and service areas, involving regular senior management team conversations and focused one-to-one reviews with lead Directors. In situations of budget overspend, accountants challenge and may potentially delay the filling of all vacant posts in overspent services.

Members sought clarification that the option for staff to express an interest in redundancy remains open. The Council is permitted to capitalise any associated costs within certain rules, and this will be examined as part of the forthcoming budget. It was noted that the Corporate Director Resources prefers proactive workforce planning.

Members were concerned about the Children's Services overspend. They sought clarity on the breakdown of overspend and suggested engaging backbench Members in discussions. Officers advised that the Children's Services budget position is considered a Corporate issue and a multidisciplinary team is exploring invest-to-save options improving outcomes for children. Innovation is deemed necessary, and contributions from backbenchers via Scrutiny are welcomed.

Members asked questions around the ambitiousness of service change and efficiency savings, given the level of underachievement. Officers explained that the underachievement was acknowledged as possibly due to timing and unforeseen developments, such as the situation with St. David's Hall. Lessons are being learned, recognising that savings through service change carry higher risk than efficiency savings. Members noted Officers acknowledgement that percentages achieved will need to increase by year-end.

Members were concerned about low capital receipts at £183,000 compared to the £3 million target. Officers explained the need to balance the delivery of capital receipts against ensuring the best market values, considering it is a 5-year rolling target.

Members asked questions and noted the response that the Council can use Housing Revenue Account (HRA) funds to purchase council assets for repurposing. However, they noted that the Council must ensure that the value paid is a fair market rate.

A discussion took place around how the Chancellor's Autumn Statement might impact the Council's budget planning, especially considering the proposed funding strategy for the Indoor Arena development. Officers advised that they expected a challenging 2024/25 budget and the potential impact of interest rate changes.

Members requested a written response from the section 151 officer regarding the Autumn Statement's implications on the Council's budget planning and clarification of how revised growth figures in the Autumn Statement might affect the delivery of projects funded by borrowing, including the Indoor Arena.

AGREED: that the Chairperson, on behalf of the Committee, writes to the Cabinet Member conveying the observations of the Committee when discussing the way forward.

39 : URGENT ITEMS (IF ANY)

None received.

40 : DATE OF NEXT MEETING

13 December 2023, 4.30pm.

The meeting terminated at 8.00 pm

CYNGOR CAERDYDD**CARDIFF COUNCIL****POLICY REVIEW & PERFORMANCE****SCRUTINY COMMITTEE****13 December 2023****MID-YEAR PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT 2023/24****Reason for this Report**

1. To provide the Committee with an opportunity for pre-decision scrutiny of the Council's Mid-year Performance Assessment for 2023/24 prior to its consideration by Cabinet on 14 December 2023.

Structure of the Papers

2. The papers attached to this cover report to enable the scrutiny comprise:
 - Appendix 1** – Draft Cabinet report titled Mid-Year Assessment of Performance 2023/24
 - Appendix A** – Mid-Year Assessment of Performance 2023/24 (Narrative)
 - Appendix B** – Performance Panel letter from Scrutiny Committee Chairs
 - Appendix C** – Cabinet response to Performance Panel letter.
3. The assessment of performance contained within the Mid-Year Assessment is developed through a thorough process of self-assessment involving the political and managerial leadership of the Council, drawing from a wide range of sources of performance information and includes the performance data recorded in the [Public Corporate Performance Dashboard](#) against each Key Performance Indicator (KPI) and Step contained in the Corporate Plan.

Context

4. This committee's Terms of Reference confer overarching responsibility for scrutiny of the Council's corporate planning, performance assessment and reporting arrangements.
5. The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 places the onus on the Council to take ownership of its own improvement and develop a performance and governance

system that allows for the annual assessment of performance, that can be reviewed periodically by an appointed external panel. to implement a self-assessment process that measures and reviews the performance of its functions, ensuring that resources are used economically, efficiently, and effectively The strengthened performance framework the Council has put in in place assists the Council in developing a balanced picture of its improvement journey over the year, while also recognising areas which require further attention. The approach makes a strategic evaluative assessment of performance for each Well-being objective, recognising both successes and challenges, in order to identify areas of focus for the year ahead.

6. The self-assessment framework includes challenge by a number of stakeholders, including engagement with Scrutiny as a significant part of the governance of performance in Cardiff, alongside the formal role given to the Governance & Audit Committee in the Act.
7. The Leader of the Council takes an inclusive approach to meaningful scrutiny engagement in the corporate planning and performance process. This includes a commitment to scrutiny of performance at mid (Q2) and end of year (Q4) by the Committee, and informal policy development discussions with the Scrutiny Performance Panel to support Corporate Plan target setting and end of year performance assessments. This approach to scrutiny engagement acknowledges the benefit of progressive interaction of policy development, supporting effective scrutiny of corporate performance and its reporting processes.

Background

8. In February each year, Council approves a three-year **Corporate Plan** explaining how the Council will deliver the administration's priorities as set out in its Policy Statement and the Well-being Objectives for the year, in accordance with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. The Plan includes the **Steps** and **Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)** considered necessary to deliver and monitor progress.
9. As a key stakeholder in the Council's self-assessment of performance, this Committee will routinely scrutinise performance formally three times a year, as follows:
 - a. February - Corporate Plan and Target Setting

- b. June/July – End-of-Year assessment for the Annual Wellbeing Report – Q2
- c. December/January - Mid-Year Assessment of Performance – Q4

Structure of the Corporate Plan & Mid-Year Assessment Report

10. The Corporate Plan for 2023-26 is structured around seven **Well-being Objectives** linking the Administration’s Priorities to the Well-being Objectives (WBO) followed by all partners of Cardiff’s Public Services Board.

- Cardiff is a great place to grow up
- Cardiff is a great place to grow older
- Supporting people out of poverty
- Safe, confident and empowered communities
- A capital city that works for Wales
- One Planet Cardiff
- Modernising and integrating our public services

11. The Corporate Plan includes detailed delivery milestones, key performance measures and targets, and is supported by Directorate Delivery Plans, which set out in greater detail how the Administration’s priorities will be delivered. Members are advised that the Mid-Year Assessment has been evaluated against the Corporate Plan 2023/26.

12. Each Well-being Objective has been translated into a number of **Steps** the Council will take to make progress in achieving these objectives. The list of Steps is followed by a number of **Key Performance Measures** and allocated a **Target** that will enable the Council, and its scrutiny committees, to monitor how effectively the objectives are being delivered going forward.

Mid-Year Assessment of Performance

13. The Cabinet report at **Appendix A** summarises areas of progress and improvement (*point 9*) and areas of strategic challenge and corporate improvement priorities (*points 10-14*).

14. To arrive at the Mid-Year assessment of progress the report brings together information from several sources to assess performance, including:

- **Progress against the Council’s Key Performance Indicators and Steps under each Well-being Objective** (accessible via the [Public Corporate Performance Dashboard](#))

- **Inspection Reports** – The Council is subject to a number of inspections from regulatory bodies including Audit Wales, Estyn (Education) and the Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW). Their findings help the Council to assess areas of strong performance, as well as identifying areas that require improvement
- **Consultation surveys and citizen feedback,**
- **the Annual Complaints Report 2023/24.**
- **Financial Monitoring** – The Council’s month 6 Budget Monitoring Report 2023/24 serves to inform of the Council’s financial position mid-way through the financial year and project its position at year end 2023/24.
- **Scrutiny Committees and Governance & Audit Committee** – The Council responds to the issues raised and recommendations made by the Committees, which help inform performance improvement.
- **Risk** –The Council’s Year End risk report, and its Corporate and Directorate Risk Registers, provides an overview of the current risks and the actions in place to mitigate them.
- **Governance** – The Council’s Annual Governance Statement sets out an assessment of the Council’s framework of governance, risk management and internal control.

15. The [Corporate Performance Dashboard](#) provides a visual presentation of all Corporate Plan **Key Performance Indicators** and **Steps** for each well-being objective. By following the link, you can view progress at Q2 for all KPI’s and Steps. You will be able to filter results corporately, by Well being Objective, by Scrutiny Committee, or by Directorate.

16. Directorates have been asked to self-assess a RAG rating for each of the *KPI’s* and *Steps* for which they are the lead directorate using the following criteria:

Red = serious issues have occurred and without some form of assistance from outside of the Directorate it is unlikely that the Step will be delivered within the agreed time frame / or at all.

Amber = issues have occurred, not serious enough to require assistance, progress can be recovered, a plan is in place, and it is likely that the Step will still be delivered within the agreed time frame.

Green = there are no issues with progress / performance, and the Step will be delivered within the agreed time frame.

17. The Scrutiny Performance Panel considered the mid-year assessment of performance 2023/24 on 28 November 2023. The Council received feedback from the Performance Panel on the 4th December 2023 (**Appendix B**), which made 11 recommendations. In response, Cabinet have accepted 10 recommendations and partially accepted 1 (**Appendix C**), ensuring that the Mid-Year Assessment provides a balanced judgement and reflects the assessment of the Council's Scrutiny Committee Chairs.

Scope of the Scrutiny

18. The scope of the scrutiny will focus on the assessment of performance at mid-year and the challenges and priorities ahead.

19. Given their overarching performance role Members are welcome to comment on performance related to all seven Well-being objectives. However, the key objective relevant to the PRAP Terms of Reference is WBO7 – *Modernising and Integrating Our Public Services*.

20. Members are requested to consider whether there are comments and observations that need to be captured during the Committees discussion of this item at the Way Forward for submission to Cabinet.

21. To support this item the Leader of the Council, Councillor Huw Thomas; the Cabinet Member for Finance, Modernisation and Performance, Cllr Chris Weaver; the Chief Executive, Paul Orders; Corporate Director Resources, Chris Lee; Corporate Director Communities, Sarah McGill; and Head of Performance and Partnerships, Gareth Newell will attend to facilitate the discussion.

Legal Implications

22. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and

review matters, there are no direct legal implications. However, legal implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet/Council will set out any legal implications arising from those recommendations. All decisions taken by or on behalf of the Council must (a) be within the legal powers of the Council; (b) comply with any procedural requirement imposed by law; (c) be within the powers of the body or person exercising powers on behalf of the Council; (d) be undertaken in accordance with the procedural requirements imposed by the Council e.g. Scrutiny Procedure Rules; (e) be fully and properly informed; (f) be properly motivated; (g) be taken having regard to the Council's fiduciary duty to its taxpayers; and (h) be reasonable and proper in all the circumstances.

Financial Implications

23. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters, there are no direct financial implications at this stage in relation to any of the work programme. However, financial implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet/Council will set out any financial implications arising from those recommendations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is recommended to:

- I. Consider the information provided at the meeting, the Council's Mid-Year Performance Report 2023/24, and its appendices; and
- II. Determine whether it wishes to offer its comments, observations, or recommendations to Cabinet before its meeting on 14 December 2023.
- III. Consider whether performance issues identified as part of the mid-year assessment should inform the ongoing work programme of this scrutiny committee.

LEANNE WESTON

Interim Deputy Monitoring Officer

7 December 2023

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MID-YEAR ASSESSMENT OF PERFORMANCE 2023/24

**FINANCE, MODERNISATION & PERFORMANCE
(COUNCILLOR CHRIS WEAVER)**

AGENDA ITEM:

Reason for this Report

1. The report enables the Cabinet to consider the Council's mid-year assessment of performance in 2023/24.

Background

2. The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 requires the Council to set and publish Well-being Objectives and take all reasonable steps to meet those objectives. These duties are fulfilled through the Council's annual Corporate Planning process, with the Corporate Plan being approved by Council in late February or early March. The Well-being of Future Generations Act also requires the Council to publish an annual report of progress made in meeting its Well-being Objectives in each financial year.
3. The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 established a new legislative framework for local government performance management, with an emphasis on self-improvement through a system based on self-assessment and a panel performance assessment. The purpose of the Act, in relation to performance, is *"to provide a framework which supports councils, through an ongoing process of review, to think about their performance and effectiveness now and for the future; to encourage more inquisitive organisations willing to challenge themselves to do more, to be more innovative and more ambitious in what they do"*.
4. As part of the Council's strengthened performance management arrangements, a mid-year self-assessment of performance is published annually. This ensures that performance is kept under regular review; there is collective understanding of progress, as well as areas of challenge, and corrective action can be identified and agreed if necessary.

Issues

Overview of Corporate Performance: Mid-Year Assessment

5. The mid-year assessment of performance in 2023/24 is attached as **Appendix A** to this report. The assessment provides a performance update for each of the Council's seven Well-Being Objectives, as set out in the Corporate Plan 2023-26. The assessment draws on a number of sources of performance information to assess progress against the Well-being Objectives, including:
 - Progress against the Steps and Key Performance Indicators under each Well-being Objective (**Appendix A**) (accessible via the [Public Corporate Performance Dashboard](#))
 - Regulatory assessment;
 - Surveys and citizen feedback;
 - Complaints – these are also considered separately as part of an annual report to Cabinet;
 - Financial monitoring – the Council's Month 6 monitoring report 2023/24 serves to inform the Council's financial position;
 - Feedback from Scrutiny Committees and the Governance & Audit Committee – the Council responds to the issues raised and recommendations made by Scrutiny Committees, which help to inform performance improvement;
 - Risk – the Council's corporate and directorate risks are considered fully;
 - The Annual Governance Statement, supported by the Senior Management Assurance Statement.
6. Reviewing this range of performance information assists the Council in developing a balanced picture of the Council's improvement journey over the year and enables the Council to identify areas of improvement and performance challenge, which may require further attention.
7. The Council also has in place a performance and accountability regime, which involves the wider political governance of the Council. In developing the self-assessment of performance, the following steps have been undertaken to provide opportunities for challenge and to ensure a full and balanced assessment:
 - Directorate self-evaluation of service performance, governance & financial challenges and priorities;
 - Performance and budget challenge sessions with each Director that are convened by the Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer to consider the findings of the directorate self-assessment;
 - A progress and performance session with the Cabinet and the Council's Senior Management Team; and
 - Consideration by the Council's Policy Review and Performance (PRAP) Scrutiny Committee.

8. The Scrutiny Performance Panel considered the mid-year assessment of performance 2023/24 on 28 November 2023. The Council received feedback from the Performance Panel on the 4th December 2023 (Appendix B), which made 11 recommendations. In response, cabinet have accepted 10 recommendations and partially accepted 1 (Appendix C), ensuring that the Mid-Year Assessment provides a balanced judgement and reflects the assessment of the Council's Scrutiny Committee Chairs. The PRAP Scrutiny Committee is also due to consider the mid-year assessment on 13 December 2023.

Areas of Progress and Improvement

9. The Council continues to evidence improvement across a range of council services, with clear progress being made in the delivery of Corporate Plan 2023-26 commitments to date in 2023/24 as set out below:
 - Cardiff became the first British city to be awarded Child Friendly City status by UNICEF with formal recognition received in September 2023, followed by the signing of a formal agreement with UNICEF in October 2023.
 - The Council has made good progress in delivering the Striving for Excellence in Children's Services Strategy 2023-26. Though there is more to be done, progress can be evidenced by a demonstrable shift within the balance of care where, at Quarter 2 of 2023/24, there has been a reduction in the proportion of children placed in external residential placements and an increase in the number of children fostered by local authority foster carers, as well as an increase in the number of children returned home from care.
 - In response to the cost-of-living crisis, the Council's support offer continues to be delivered effectively. Between April and September 2023, almost 3,300 people were helped with Universal Credit financial support. This figure has already exceeded the number of people anticipated to need help during 2023/24. During the same period, the Money Advice Team has also identified additional weekly benefit of over £10m for its clients.
 - The Council remains on track to deliver 1,000 new homes by December 2023, with 890 homes having been completed at Quarter 2 of 2023/24. Progress is set to continue with nine active development sites projected to deliver over 400 further homes. Work is also due to commence on 245 new homes across six new sites in the city before March 2024.
 - A greater level of integration has been achieved with the NHS, which is getting people safely out of hospital quicker.
 - The Council has continued to play a leading role in supporting refugees and asylum seekers, particularly those arriving from Ukraine and Afghanistan. In addition to responding to the immediate needs of those arriving in Cardiff, the Council is focussed on transitioning individuals and families into sustainable long-term

provision where possible. To date, Cardiff has welcomed over 1,200 Ukrainian nationals into the city for long-term settlement, all of which are due to be matched and settled into long-term accommodation by January 2024. The Council has also supported 800 people from Afghanistan into local temporary bridging accommodation as part of a national process where they are matched into long-term homes across the UK.

- The Council has made good progress in improving public and green spaces in Cardiff. Two more parks in the city, Parc Tredelech and Western Cemetery, were awarded Green Flag status in 2023, bringing the total number of Green Flag parks in Cardiff to 18.
- The Council's Housing Energy Efficiency Retrofit programme is progressing well and the number of energy efficiency measures installed in Council-owned domestic properties is currently above target at Quarter 2 of 2023/24 at 416. The success of this scheme is demonstrated by the energy performance of Cardiff's council homes being better than the average for any tenure. Additionally, work undertaken within private rented sector properties to improve energy efficiency has led to an estimated carbon dioxide improvement of 72.4 tonnes.
- Universal Primary Free School Meals have been rolled-out to Reception, as well as Years 1-3, in Cardiff schools and the Council is on track to deliver the rollout for pupils in Years 4-6, in line with Welsh Government expectations.
- The Council continues to see increases in the numbers of citizens interacting with the Council digitally, with over 82,500 citizens registered to use the Cardiff App, a 12% increase over Quarter 1 and Quarter 2 of 2023/24.
- During the first half of the 2023/24 financial year, the Council has established the Ardal procurement service, which delivers a collaborative procurement partnership with Monmouthshire, Torfaen and Vale of Glamorgan Councils.

Areas of Strategic Challenge and Corporate Improvement Priorities

10. The mid-year assessment highlights a number of performance challenges that will be the subject of corporate focus in Quarters 3 and 4 of 2023/24:
11. Sustained increase in the scale and complexity of demand across Council services: As identified in the end of year Self-Assessment report, the fundamental changes to the scale and complexity of service demand post-Covid are proving to be long lasting. This can be attributed to the lasting impacts of the pandemic, as well as the cost of-living crisis, which has placed pressure on households across the city – particularly vulnerable individuals and families – with increasing numbers of individuals relying on council services. These include:

Demand challenges remain evident in services for children and young people, with children's services continuing to face a significant rise in

both the number of cases. For example, referrals into the MASH are now 50% above pre-pandemic levels. In addition to rising numbers, cases are also becoming more complex, with a greater number of children needing a higher level of support. This demand pressures are being experienced at a time where there remain recruitment and retention challenges for children's social workers (despite the impact of the Council's interventions in this area) and a lack of available accommodation for placements. Shifting the balance of care towards preventative and lower cost interventions will continue to be the Council's focus over the year ahead.

In Education, school attendance has not yet returned to pre-pandemic levels and persistent non-attendance remain a significant concern in many parts of the city. There has also been a rise in exclusions, particularly in secondary schools, whilst a deterioration in pupil behaviour and an increase in the number of children entering school falling behind on their development milestones presents challenges for a number of schools. These, and other pressures associated with ALN and child mental health and wellbeing, are being met at a time when schools are facing significant budgetary challenges.

The adult social care sector continues to face ongoing pressures through rising demand and increasingly complex service requirements at a time when the market for care presents a range of challenges. Whilst the supply of care in Cardiff has improved, the fragility of the care market remains a concern due to an ongoing. New arrangements for the commissioning of care home placements for older people are being developed in response.

The Council continues to face unprecedented demand pressures in the housing system. Waiting lists for Temporary Accommodation are at historically high levels, having increased by 150% over the last two years with limited housing options available. A set of major proposals to respond to the Housing crisis is being brought forward as a corporate priority.

12. Ensuring continued financial resilience: The Council continues to face significant financial challenges as a result of increasing demand and pressures on services and inflationary pressures. A predicted budget gap in excess of £40m for the 2024/25 financial year represented a deterioration of the position reported in the end of year report with a total gap of £119.2m needing to be closed across the period of the Medium-Term Financial Plan. The overall position is set out in detail within the Month 6 Budget Monitoring Report and areas of significant pressures include:
 - Education Services, due primarily to home-to-school transport, out-of-county placements, and catering. The Council is also still awaiting Welsh Government's decision on price-setting for the new Universal Free School Meal offer.

- Children's Services continue to experience an increase in placements costs for the Council's children looked after cohort. This, along with sustained demand pressures and price increases have resulted in costs exceeding budget.
- The planned closure of City Hall continues to impact the Council's capacity to generate income, from both functions and catering. The closure of St. David's Hall, due to the presence of Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) has also had an impact on income for the Council.
- Energy, food, and fuel inflation, and the staff pay award, combined with an increasing demand for services from the 'long tail' impact of the pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis, have significantly increased the levels of risk. The Council continues to face unprecedented challenges in terms of financial resilience which will require close monitoring and management during this year and into the medium term.
- With high interest rates, inflation and energy costs, market conditions remain challenging, placing sustained pressure on revenue and the capital programme, whilst income recovery remains a challenge in some services.

13. Workforce pressures continue to impact all council services: The pressures relating to the recruitment and retention of staff continue to impact all directorates. Workforce issues, recognised nationally in areas such as children's social services and adult social care, are no longer restricted to those sectors. The shortage within the professional services sector is impacting the delivery of projects with the Council facing competition from other sectors, making it difficult to fill key positions. The recruitment and retention challenges remain in the education sector. The Council's Workforce Strategy 2023-27 sets out an enhanced approach to proactive workforce planning, which includes the further development of a supportive work environment, fostering employee engagement and continuing to develop new, tailored approaches to recruitment and retention in areas where the Council has skills and capacity gaps.
14. Responding to new risks and issues: New risks and issues have continued to emerge, which have required the Council to put in place rapid responses, working across directorates and with public service partners. Issues such as RAAC concrete, industrial action, community disorder in Ely and pressures in the asylum system could not have been planned for when setting the Corporate Plan. The Council anticipates further major unanticipated risks will emerge in Q3 and Q4 which will require concerted Council and city-wide action.

Reason for Recommendations

13. To provide Cabinet with a mid-year assessment of the Council's performance in 2023/24.

Financial Implications

14. This report sets out the Council's mid-year assessment of performance. The covering report sets out the challenging environment within which the Council currently operates, which is likely to continue for the medium term. The Month 6 Financial Monitoring performance report was considered by Cabinet on 23 November 2023 with a further monitoring report for Month 9 to be considered in late February/early March 2023.

Legal Implications

15. The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 ('the 2021 Act'), Part 6, Chapter 1 sets the new performance and governance framework for local authorities, which came into force in May 2021. Under these provisions, the Council is required to keep under review the extent to which it is fulfilling the 'performance requirements', that is, the extent to which:

- (i) it is exercising its functions effectively;
- (ii) it is using its resources economically, efficiently and effectively; and
- (iii) its governance is effective for securing the above.

The information set out in this report enables the Council to discharge this duty.

16. The Council is required to consult at least once in each financial year about the extent to which it is meeting the performance requirements. The statutory consultees are:

- a) local people;
- b) other persons carrying on a business in the council's area;
- c) the staff of the council; and
- d) every recognised trade union.

17. A self-assessment report must be prepared in respect of each financial year, setting out conclusions on the extent to which the Council has met the performance requirements during that financial year, and any actions it intends to take, or has already taken, to increase the extent to which it is meeting the performance requirements.

18. The performance and governance provisions of the 2021 Act are framed within the context of the well-being duty set by the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 requires the Council to consider how its decisions and actions will contribute towards meeting the well-being objectives set out in the Corporate Plan and to keep the well-being objectives under review. The Council must publish a report of the progress made in meeting its well-being objectives in each financial year, which may be included in the self-assessment report prepared under the 2021 Act (referred to in paragraph 15 above). Members must also be satisfied that the Council is complying with the sustainable development principle, which requires that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

19. When considering its performance and governance duties under the 2021 Act, the Council must have regard to the statutory guidance issued by the Welsh Ministers:
[https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2021-03/performance\[1\]governance-of-principal-councils.pdf](https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2021-03/performance[1]governance-of-principal-councils.pdf)

HR Implications

20. There are no HR implications that are directly related to this report.

Property Implications

21. There are no further specific property implications in respect of the Mid-Year Assessment of Performance 2023/24 report. Where there are any relevant property management matters, property transactions or valuations being undertaken by the Council to deliver any proposals, they should be done so in accordance with the Council's Asset Management process and in consultation with Strategic Estates and relevant service areas.

RECOMMENDATION

Cabinet is recommended to

1. note the mid-year assessment of the Council's performance as set out in this report and Appendix A, including the delivery of key commitments and priorities at the end of Quarter 2 of 2023/24, and the actions being taken to ensure the effective delivery of the Corporate Plan 2023-26.
2. Consider and agree the response to any recommendations made by the Policy Review and Performance Scrutiny Committee (PRAP) (Appendix C) in relation to the draft Mid-Year Assessment.
3. Delegate authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance, Modernisation & Performance to make any consequential amendments to the draft Mid-Year Assessment required to reflect the response to PRAP Scrutiny Committee recommendations (agreed under recommendation 2).

SENIOR RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Paul Orders Chief Executive
	8 December 2023

The following appendix is attached:

Appendix A: Mid-Year Assessment of Performance 2023/24

Appendix B: Performance Panel Letter

Appendix C: Cabinet Response to Performance Panel

Appendix D: Letter received from PRAP Scrutiny Committee

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Mid-Year Assessment of Performance 2023/24

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About This Report

What is the Mid-Year Self-Assessment?

As part of its performance management arrangements, Cardiff Council produces a Mid-Year and End-of-Year Self-Assessment of performance in delivering its Wellbeing Objectives.

These Wellbeing Objectives, including the steps the Council will take to achieve them and how performance will be measured, are set out in the [Council's Corporate Plan 2023-26](#).

These are:

1. Cardiff is a great place to grow up
2. Cardiff is a great place to grow older
3. Supporting people out of poverty
4. Safe, confident and empowered communities
5. A capital city that works for Wales
6. One Planet Cardiff
7. Modernising and integrating our public services

For each Wellbeing Objective, the areas of progress and performance and risk are summarised with next steps identified.

In undertaking the mid-year and end-of-year assessments, the Council fulfils its statutory duties in relation to both the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, and the publication of the reports ensures that Cabinet receive an update on the delivery of their policy agenda and performance of statutory services.

How is the Mid-Year Assessment Report developed?

The assessment of performance contained within the Mid-Year Assessment is developed through a thorough process of self-assessment involving the political and managerial leadership of the Council, drawing from a wide range of sources of performance information.

Sources of Performance Information

Sources of performance information which contribute towards the performance assessment include:

- **Performance against the Council's Key Performance Indicators** – The Council's Corporate Plan contains a suite of performance indicators which measure progress made in delivering the Wellbeing Objectives. Where applicable, targets are set against these performance indicators to demonstrate the desired level of achievement. Performance indicators are assigned a RAG status: **Green** where the indicator is on or above target, **Amber** where the result is within 10% of the target and **Red** where the result is more than 10% from the target.

- **Progress against the steps in each Wellbeing Objective** – Each Wellbeing Objective within the Corporate Plan also contains a set of ‘steps’ or actions. Monitoring progress against these steps provides an understanding of what has been achieved and where further work is required.
- **Consultation and Engagement** – The Council has a number of established consultation and engagement mechanisms such as the Annual Ask Cardiff Citizen Survey, the Budget Consultation, the Child Friendly City Survey as well as other surveys and consultation exercises which take place over the course of the year that provide residents, businesses and other city stakeholders an opportunity to share their views on a wide range of Council services and initiatives. In addition, the Council’s [Annual Compliments and Complaints Report 2022/23](#) provides valuable insight into where Cardiff’s citizens feel the Council needs to improve. The Corporate Plan contains a number of ‘qualitative’ Key Performance Indicators that relate to citizen satisfaction with services, and the findings of the consultation and engagement work forms an important part of the Council’s self-assessment process, policy development and budget setting process.
- **Finance Monitoring** – The Council’s Month 6 Budget Monitoring Report (link when published) serves to inform of the Council’s financial position in respect of the year ending 31 March 2024 and its findings contribute to the assessment contained within the Mid-Year Assessment Report.
- **Governance** – The Council’s Governance Framework comprises the systems, processes, culture and values by which the Council is directed, controlled, and the means through which it accounts to, engages with, and leads the community. The Council’s [Annual Governance Statement](#) sets out an assessment of the Council’s framework of governance, risk management and internal control.
- **Risk** – Delivering objectives requires frequent management of a wide range of risks at both operational and strategic levels, particularly in the dynamic external environment in which the Council is currently operating. The Council’s Year End [Risk Report](#), and its Corporate and Directorate Risk Registers, provides an overview of the current risks and the actions in place to mitigate them.
- **Scrutiny Committees and Governance & Audit Committee** – The Council responds to the issues raised and recommendations made by the Committees, which help inform policy development and performance improvement.
- **Inspection Reports** – The Council is subject to a number of inspections from regulatory bodies including Audit Wales, Estyn (Education) and the Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW). Their findings help the Council to assess areas of strong performance, as well as identifying areas that require improvement.

Wellbeing Objective 1: Cardiff is a great place to grow up

The Corporate Plan sets out the following priorities for ensuring Cardiff is a great place to grow up 2023/24:

- Becoming a Child Friendly City
- Supporting education recovery post-pandemic
- Continuing to deliver the Cardiff 2030 vision for education and learning
- Shifting the balance of care: place
- Shifting the balance of care: people
- Shifting the balance of care: practice
- Protecting the wellbeing of vulnerable children, young people and families

Overview of Performance at Quarter 2

Key Performance Indicators



Steps



A detailed assessment of performance against each Key Performance Indicator and step is accessible via the [Public Corporate Performance Dashboard](#).

A Child Friendly City

Cardiff became the first British city to be awarded Child Friendly City status by UNICEF with formal recognition received in September 2023 followed by a formal agreement in October. A sustainability plan has been agreed with UNICEF outlining a programme of work for the coming three years.

Deliver the Cardiff 2030 Vision for education and learning

The Council continues to demonstrate a sustained improvement in the quality and effectiveness of education in Cardiff. Attainment outcomes for pupils have been above or well above the Welsh average for GCSE and A-Level results in Summer 2023 for A* to A and A* to C results. School inspection outcomes have been good, especially in the primary sector. Of the 41 Estyn school inspections since March 2022, only two have been placed in a statutory category.

Cardiff Commitment engagement continues to improve, with 300 work experience placements secured through the What's Next project and additional partners onboarded including Cardiff and Vale Health Board, BBC Studios, construction providers and several Council departments.

Schools are, however, experiencing a number of pressures and challenges impacting children and young people post-COVID. These include:

- **School Attendance:** The fall in attendance levels post-pandemic remains an area of concern, having yet to return to pre-pandemic levels. In primary schools, attendance in 2022/23 was 91.7%, compared with 88.87% in 2021/22 and around 95% prior to the pandemic. In secondary schools, attendance was 88.20% in 2022/23, compared with 86.03% in 2022/21 and around 94% prior to the pandemic. The percentage of persistent absence (below 50% threshold) in secondary schools is also below target at Quarter 2. In response, the engagement programme with pupils, parents and schools is positively impacting the position, with the figures for academic year 2022/23 showing improvement.
- **Fixed-term exclusions:** Exclusions in both primary and secondary schools have risen in the 2022/23 academic year. These rates remain higher in secondary schools than in primary schools, with secondary schools reporting an increase of around 35% in 2022/23. The Education directorate continues to work closely with schools to support those with high rates of exclusions and supporting schools on pupil behaviour.
- **Additional Learning Needs:** The Council has made good progress on meeting the requirements of the new ALN reforms, with all specified year groups transferred to the ALN system in accordance with Welsh Government timescales. At Quarter 2, 131 new ALN places were created against a target of 141, though the supply of places is not keeping up with the rising demand. In July 2023, Cabinet approved plans to progress with projects to increase the total number of ALN places, covering a range of ages and complex needs, to 1,755.

- Pupil Development and Early Years – there has been a reduction in pupil development at reception into Primary School, with, for example, expected language ability well below pre-pandemic levels.
- Emotional Health and Wellbeing: The increase in the number of children with emotional health and wellbeing needs remains an ongoing challenge.
- Electively Home Educated: There has been a significant increase in the number of children who are Electively Home Educated (EHE) following the pandemic. The cohort in Cardiff has doubled in size between 2019 (219 children) and 2023 (443 children), though similar increases have been seen across Wales. The Council has a statutory responsibility to meet with a child who is being educated at home at least once a year to ensure the suitability of education is maintained and that the child is making suitable progress; during the pandemic this annual visit became a phone call. Concerns remain in relation to the attainment of EHE pupils and potentially safeguarding risks that will need to be actively managed.

Schools are also facing significant budgetary challenges, driven by a combination of record levels of inflation (which has devalued spending power despite the Council providing funding to schools above the Welsh Government settlement level), increasing and increasingly complex demand (see above) and an increase in vacant places across the city's school system (see below).

As of the Month 6 Budget Monitoring position, the Education directorate is projecting a £1.775m annual overspend with home-to-school transport, catering, and out-of-county placements sources of cost pressure. Further to this, meeting the cost of Universal School Meals represents an area of risk as the Council awaits confirmation that the funding levels received will be sufficient to meet the cost of provision.

Over the medium term the fall in birth rates projected across the city is projected to result in an increase in the number of vacant places across schools in Cardiff. These demographic trends will bring additional financial pressures to several schools in the short term and, over the medium term, is projected to impact the financial sustainability of the wider school system.

For 2023/24, the Council has committed circa £66m to the Schools Asset Programme to invest in the school estate to increase capacity where needed and improve the condition of school buildings. A Strategic Framework for Schools Organisational Planning is being progressed which will deliver additional secondary places at five secondary schools, including additional Welsh-medium places, and a new Early Years Unit. However, inflationary pressures are impacting on the Council's investment programme, both on maintaining the quality of existing schools and on the delivery of the School Organisation Programme.

Shifting the balance of care and protecting vulnerable children and young people

Though significant pressures on the service remain, the Council has made good progress in delivering the Striving for Excellence in Children's Services Strategy 2023-26. This progress can be evidenced by a demonstrable shift within the balance of care where, at Quarter 2, there has been a reduction in the proportion of children placed in external residential placements and an increase in the number of children fostered by local authority foster carers, as well as an increase in the number of children returned home from care.

The Council is also progressing the delivery of its Accommodation Strategy to address the rising demand and increasing costs of placements for children looked after. The Strategy aims to increase in-house residential provision for children looked after by securing additional properties within Cardiff, reducing the Council's reliance on external providers. This is critical given that the Month 6 Budget Monitoring position projects an overspend of £3.185m in Children's Services, primarily due to sustained demand and higher prices for accommodation for children looked after. This does represent a significant reduction from the £6.6m overspend at year-end in 2022/23 and points to the impact of the Accommodation Strategy.

Despite this work, finding suitable accommodation for children and young people, particularly those with complex needs, has been challenging. The percentage of children looked after in regulated placements in Cardiff is 56.9% against a target of 60%, and the percentage of children looked after in regulated placements either in Cardiff or a neighbouring local authority is 76.7% against a target of 80%. Equally, and despite the progress made in delivering the Accommodation Strategy, the percentage of children placed in regulated placements (excluding kinship) and in in-house residential placements is short of the target set at Quarter 2.

To accelerate the shift in the balance of care, operational process improvements have continued to be delivered within the Council's Fostering Team to promote in-house fostering. In Quarter 2, 135 children were placed with in-house foster carers, exceeding the target of 130. Progress in this area is key in reducing the Council's reliance on private independent fostering agencies and bringing down placement costs.

The sector continues to face a national workforce crisis, but the strategic interventions identified to respond to this locally are having an impact. Vacancy rates in Children's Services have improved throughout the year, reducing from 27% in March 2023 to 16% in September 2023.

In addition to local demand pressures, national policy decisions are causing additional pressures on the Children's Services system. The aspiration to eliminate profit from the care sector is exacerbating the lack of availability of accommodation for children and young people. The widening of the National Autism Strategy to include all neurodiversity is leading to additional demand on already stretched services.

Children's Services is one of a number of important services that support vulnerable children and young people. With demand rising and budgets constrained across public

services, partners are reducing their services, leaving Children's Services increasingly as the service of last resort. The introduction of the Right Care Right Person framework by South Wales Police over the coming period will, in particular, place new pressures on Children's (and Adult) Services.

The implementation of the new Youth Justice 'Building Safer Futures Together' Strategy continues to be delivered effectively with first-time entrants and re-offending rates well below targets. Whilst there has been a reduction in entrants to the Youth Justice System, the impact of diverting children from youth justice has placed significant pressure on other services for young people within Cardiff.

Wellbeing Objective 2: Cardiff is a great place to grow older

The Corporate Plan sets out the following priorities for making Cardiff a great place to grow older in 2023/24:

- Supporting older people to stay active and connected in an Age-Friendly City
- Supporting older people to live independently at home through strengths-based preventative services
- Working in partnership to deliver high-quality sustainable care and support
- Supporting unpaid carers and valuing their role
- Ensuring our services meet the needs of those living with dementia

Overview of Performance at Quarter 2

Key Performance Indicators



Steps



A detailed assessment of performance against each Key Performance Indicator and step is accessible via the [Public Corporate Performance Dashboard](#)

Supporting older people to stay active and connected in an age-friendly city and ensuring our services meet the needs of those living with dementia

The Annual Age-Friendly Cardiff Highlight Report, due to be published in November 2023, will set out the good progress being made in relation to the Council's priorities. Corporate awareness of Dementia is increasing with the percentage of staff completing the Dementia Friendly training module up to 58%, though this is short of the 85% target.

Areas of notable progress involves supporting older people into work, with the appointment of employment mentors. At Quarter 2, there were approximately 150 individuals, aged 50 or over, being supported into either employment or training by the mentors. Older people are also supported to improve their digital skills, with training offers available across the city to help build confidence and improve familiarity with common digital products, such as Microsoft Office.

Supporting older people to live independently at home through strengths-based preventative services

Care provision is generally good following a period of real concern about the resilience of the service. Access to domiciliary care is very good with all cases allocated to care provider by the end of each day whilst the availability of residential care is generally good, with some issues in accessing more specialist care home placements.

Despite excellent work to stabilize the provision of care, challenges remain. The recruitment and retention of qualified social workers and occupational therapists is a national challenge that remains clearly evident in Cardiff. As of Quarter 2, the percentage of adult social work vacancies stood at 21.98%, which is above target. There are also assessment delays in the community demanding that all cases are carefully prioritized. An Adult Services Workforce Strategy has been developed in response and a series of interventions are being progressed, including the launch of a "Social Work Cardiff" brand to promote recruitment to the service, the development of a Trusted Assessor approach to empower staff and reduce duplication, the recruitment of Resource Assistants to reduce administration for qualified staff and the introduction of a new streamlined Assessment and Care Planning process.

Excellent progress has been made to support the preventative agenda, with a programme of support offered across the city. Citizen feedback suggests the interventions are successful with 98% of people reporting that they feel able to live independently at home following support from the Independent Living Service. Further to this, 90% of people who contacted the First Point of Contact team have not contacted the team again for at least 6 months and Occupational Therapists now review all cases at the front door to identify alternative solutions to care. Service development is ongoing to further develop technology enabled care, aids and adaptations, which will support more people to remain independent. The Community Resource Team (CRT) homecare service modernisation programme is leading to improved continuity of care. At mid-year, 100% of service users were satisfied with the service which is now offering a rapid bridging service from its emergency unit to prevent admissions.

Despite good progress against key corporate plan steps, financial pressures continue and an overspend is projected at Month 6. This is offset by underspends and other budget planning arrangements, so a balanced position is currently shown with full detail available in the Budget Monitoring report considered by Cabinet in November. The spend on Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) to deliver disabled adaptations is over budget, necessitating a pause in the allocation of facilities to support independent living if no additional funding found. Not only does this represent budgetary challenge, but also impacts prevention. Further budgetary challenges are likely to arise with an anticipated reduction to the Regional Integration Fund next year.

Working in partnership to deliver high-quality sustainable care and support

The Council continues to work closely with Health colleagues to ensure a smooth, safe, and timely transition from hospital to help free up beds. Significant improvements to hospital discharge arrangements have been secured with the Integrated Discharge Hub and new hospital discharge pathways working well. Work is ongoing to develop a suite of new performance indicators to clearly demonstrate these improvements and the impact of the Council's interventions. In the meantime, the service is recording and reporting interim measures at Directorate level. On average, 43 discharges with care are being achieved each week, contributing to improved patient flow and increased bed capacity across all University Health Board (UHB) sites. In Quarter 2, 73% of referrals to the Integrated Discharge Hub were triaged within one working day against a target of 85%. The deep dive review of hospital social work has also improved flow, with hospital social work cases down from 160 in April to 107 and minimal unallocated social work cases at present.

The availability of specialist care homes for those with dementia and nursing, however, remains an issue, often resulting in the need to pay above the cost of care. The current commissioning arrangements also require reform as they do not allow effective market management or certainty for providers, leading to a risk that care providers may withdraw services. This is being mitigated as far as possible by ongoing communication with the sector. A cost of care exercise is under way for care homes. A long-term plan for Adult Services is currently being developed based on prevention, alternative models of care and cost-effective commissioning, to ensure the Service is sustainable into the future.

Changes to the legal environment present additional risks following a Supreme Court ruling that local authorities must provide and pay for "after care services" for out of county placements following re-admission to hospital under section 117 of the Mental Health Act. Given the size and scale of Cardiff this is likely to disproportionately impact the Council with potentially significant cost and delivery implications.

Supporting unpaid carers and valuing their role

The support for carers continues to be improved through the effective delivery of key Corporate Plan steps. The Hubs for All approach has been successfully developed allowing people with care and support needs to access sessions within their community and a package of support measures has been made available to support unpaid carers. Within

Care Hubs (Day Centers), over 3,600 service user sessions have been delivered so far this year, providing person centered activities, social activity and invaluable unpaid carer respite.

Older persons housing

The Council is committed to delivering modern, fit-for-purpose older persons housing that supports independent living and has an ambitious delivery plan for developing new schemes. Following the success of two supporting living schemes for individuals with mental health and learning disabilities – Blue Dragon and Llys Maelfryn – further schemes are due to open in December which will further allow for the step down from residential care. A Pipeline of schemes for the next 3 years has also been developed.

Wellbeing Objective 3: Supporting people out of poverty

The Corporate Plan sets out the following priorities for supporting people out of poverty in 2023/24:

- Supporting those most impacted by the cost-of-living crisis
- Continuing our Living Wage City ambition
- Tackling homelessness and ending rough sleeping

Overview of Performance at Quarter 2

Key Performance Indicators



Steps



A detailed assessment of performance against each Key Performance Indicator and step is accessible via the [Public Corporate Performance Dashboard](#)

Cost-of-Living Crisis

In response to the cost-of-living crisis the Council's support offer continues to be delivered effectively. Between April and September 2023 almost 3,300 people were helped with Universal Credit financial support; this figure has already exceeded the number of people anticipated to need help during 2023/24. During the same period the Money Advice Team has identified additional weekly benefit of over £10m for its clients. The Council has also reviewed its cost-of-living support to ensure that it is relevant and meets prevailing needs with key interventions, such as warm spaces at Community Hubs, planned from the end of October 2023. The Council's early intervention policy also ensures that Council contract holders (tenants) are contacted at an early stage to prevent rent arrears from escalating.

The alignment of Council support services, such as the Welfare Liaison team and Money Advice Team, has ensured additional capacity that has unlocked support for longer hours, including late nights and Saturdays. Services are now provided from eight Community Hubs on a drop-in basis including Ely & Caerau, St. Mellons and Grangetown, increasing the reach of the team.

The impact of inflation and rising costs on households means that, despite the Council's programme of support, the crisis is having an impact on the lives of many people which in turn is leading to service pressures across the Council. Housing costs, for instance, are becoming unaffordable due to the rising costs of mortgages, rent, food and energy. This has led to an increase in social service referrals for vulnerable people and greater demand for Council support services.

There is also uncertainty about Welsh Government funding for support schemes going forward, and the Department for Work and Pensions has reduced the total amount of Discretionary Housing Payment allocated to the Council. In response the Council is seeking to identify additional external funding and reviewing available budgets to meet demand.

Supporting those most impacted by the economic crisis into work, education or training

Good progress has been made on supporting the progression of local people into work, education or training. Of those who received support from the Employment Gateway, 620 have secured work during the first six months of this financial year and 1,600 Council posts have been filled through placements from Cardiff Works during the same period. The Council has also created 35 new apprenticeship and trainee placements during this time, bringing the total number of apprentices and trainees working in the Council to 120.

A new city-wide engagement plan has been developed to reach priority groups, such as those with Additional Learning Needs, people who are economically inactive, carers, those at risk of homelessness, and people living in the southern arc of the city. Provision has also been enhanced to support individuals with learning difficulties and young people within the Youth Justice Service. The Into Work Advice Service has created bespoke packages for different employment sectors and the Teaching Assistant Recruitment Scheme has been expanded. Since April 2023, the scheme has enrolled 72 candidates and of those, 17 have entered employment and seven have completed work placements in local education

settings.

The Into Work Advice Service continues to work with the Economic Development directorate and the Commissioning & Procurement team to assess and influence contractors' social value commitments for all developments related to Atlantic Wharf. A new action plan will be developed during Quarter 3 to capitalise on the employment and skills opportunities afforded by major developments in Cardiff, with a focus on supporting citizens living in the nearby communities.

The Into Work Advice Service have three employment mentors supporting individuals in employment to up-skill or to secure higher paid or sustainable employment. There has been an increase in the number of individuals in employment accessing the services including the Cardiff Cares Academy, Teaching Assistant Academy and Onsite Construction Academy. Between April and September 2023, 558 individuals in employment have been supported with mentoring provision, 151 individuals have gained a different job following support and 144 individuals have successfully achieved a qualification.

Continuing our Living Wage City ambition

Cardiff is now recognised as a leading UK Living Wage City with the partnership continuing to meet all its delivery targets. In 2017, 20.7% of the workforce in Cardiff – around 42,000 people – were not earning the real Living Wage; the latest Office for National Statistics survey results show that this has now decreased to 7.9%, or 18,000 people. Cardiff has also achieved one of the highest uplifts in the number of employees being paid the Real Living Wage, with over 13,200 workers in the city now benefitting. Cardiff University estimate the value of this to be £68m for the Cardiff economy since 2012. There are now 210 accredited employers in Cardiff with Admiral, the only Welsh FTSE listed company, amongst the most recent organisations to be accredited.

Embedding our new approach to tackling homelessness and ending rough sleeping

The unprecedented demand for housing is placing significant pressure on Council services. Waiting lists for temporary accommodation are high across all Gateways. Waiting lists for temporary accommodation are at historically high levels, having increased by 150% over the last two years. At Quarter 2, all temporary accommodation units in Cardiff were full with extensive use of hotels for families.

The number of people recorded as sleeping rough in the city has also increased substantially. On average 39 individuals are now sleeping on the city's streets every night, compared with 11 at the same time last year. Many of the individuals have either no local connection or no recourse to public funds. The Outreach and Multi-Disciplinary Teams continue to engage with clients, either by supporting them into appropriate accommodation or in the case of those with no local connection, to encourage them to seek support in their local area.

The Council has delivered a number of interventions to help manage demand, with all support services continuing to operate effectively in the face of exceptionally challenging

circumstances. However there remains a significant lack of available and affordable properties to support people moving on from temporary accommodation. A report will be considered by Cabinet in December 2023 to set out the extent to which the situation in Cardiff now qualifies as a 'housing emergency' and to outline a comprehensive, system-wide response.

Wellbeing Objective 4: Safe, confident and empowered communities

The Corporate Plan sets out the following priorities for delivering safe, confident and empowered communities in 2023/24:

- Building new Council homes and investing in community facilities
- Ensuring children and adults are protected from risk of harm and abuse
- Creating safe and inclusive communities
- Promoting the Welsh language
- Working together to support a healthier and more active population

Overview of Performance at Quarter 2

Key Performance Indicators



Steps



A detailed assessment of performance against each Key Performance Indicator and step is accessible via the [Public Corporate Performance Dashboard](#)

Building new homes and making more homes available

The Council continues to do everything in its power to increase the amount of affordable, energy-efficient and low-carbon housing in the city:

- The Council remains on track to deliver 1,000 new homes by December 2023 with 890 homes completed at Quarter 2. Progress is set to continue with nine active development sites projected to deliver over 400 further homes and work is due to commence on 245 new homes across six new sites before March 2024.
- The Council continues to make progress in the delivery of the Local Development Plan (LDP), with a total of 3,295 new homes being completed across five strategic housing sites in Cardiff. Over the last five years of the plan, an average of 1,242 homes have been completed per annum. Despite this success, the plan faces site assembly, legal, and logistical challenges, meaning delivery is still slower than initially anticipated.
- Empty homes continue to be brought back into use, enhancing the available housing stock and as at Quarter 2 the Council is on track to meet its target, with 46 empty properties brought back into occupation to date.

Good progress has been made in driving up housing standards in the private rented sector with the Rent Smart Wales scheme tackling rogue agents and landlords. The Council has also continued to intervene where enforcement action is needed against landlords or where safety hazards in homes need to be addressed. Regarding Council housing stock, over 25,000 repairs were carried out in the first six months of this year, with just over 1,000 new jobs and around 2,400 follow-up jobs outstanding at the end of September. Between 93% and 96% of emergency repairs were completed on time. A new online repairs system is due to be launched before March 2024, making it easier for tenants to report and monitor repairs they need carried out in their properties.

The Council retain a focus on addressing critical repairs such as damp and mould in its housing stock, with regular monitoring in place. To further improve the Council's ability to respond, a new dedicated team is being established to provide a rapid response to issues raised. A strengthened approach will also be introduced to ensure that maintenance persons have ready access to a range of intervention to address damp and mould issues.

However, the pressure on the housing market, especially the rising cost and lack of availability of homes in the private rented sector, remains a strategic challenge for the Council, causing significant demand and cost pressures in housing and homelessness services and across numerous Council services, including social services, advice services and refugee and asylum seeker support (see Wellbeing Objective 3). As noted above, a report will be considered by Cabinet in December 2023 to set out the extent to which the situation in Cardiff now qualifies as a 'housing emergency' and to outline the response. This will include both immediate, short, medium and longer-term interventions and detail innovative proposals to substantially increase the number of new-build temporary accommodation units across the city.

Investing in communities

Performance monitoring at Quarter 2 indicates that the target of securing £1m in external funding is set to be achieved for investment in local communities. Good progress is also being made with the ongoing development of Community Hubs with notable progress in the delivery of the Wellbeing Hubs at Ely and Caerau Parkview, Lisvane and Plasdwr, the Michaelston Hub and the City Centre Youth Hub.

A range of performance indicators demonstrate that the existing network of libraries and hubs are highly valued community assets, being both well attended – with over 1 million visitors recorded so far this year – and achieving high customer satisfaction ratings. Though visits to the Council’s volunteer portal are higher at Quarter 2 than they were at the same point in the previous year, this has not translated to an increase in the number of volunteering hours committed within Housing & Communities. This is due to recruitment challenges in the Into Work Service, though these posts have now been filled and volunteer hours are expected to improve.

Work to ensure that the Council’s high-rise housing blocks meet stringent fire safety standards and that tenants receive regular updates and reassurance is progressing well. In Quarter 2, recladding work is proceeding at the Lydstep high-rise blocks with tender documents being prepared for the recladding of Loudan & Nelson House. Sprinkler installation has been completed at Lydstep and Loudan & Nelson House, with sprinkler designs planned for Beech & Sycamore House. Further to this, good progress is also being made in relation to Shared Regulatory Service commitments included within the Corporate Plan, with the delivery of relevant steps all marked as green.

Ensuring children and adults are protected from risk of harm and abuse

The wellbeing of vulnerable children and adults remains the Council’s highest priority, working closely with partners across the region to coordinate safeguarding activity. The governance arrangements supporting the Regional Safeguarding Board have been strengthened with an increased focus on data-driven decision-making and the implementation of the Safeguarding Adolescents From Exploitation (SAFE) Model continues to be implemented effectively. As part of this implementation, the Council has focussed on raising awareness of the various forms of exploitation, strengthening partnership working, embedding contextual safeguarding approaches, and ensuring clear guidance, procedures, pathways, and services are in place to respond to exploitation.

Corporate awareness of safeguarding is high, following a concerted programme of management action, and the percentage of staff who have completed Safeguarding Awareness Training is now well above the target of 85%.

The number of adult protection enquiries recorded has increased significantly in 2023/24 with 1,280 enquiries received at Quarter 2, compared to only 654 at Quarter 2 in 2022/23. This increase is primarily due to recording changes made in January 2023, where more accurate recording practices were implemented in the social care case management system to better reflect the full workload of the safeguarding team. While the data displayed does

not provide an accurate comparison with the previous year's data because of this, the service has still observed a moderate increase in demand over this period. Despite an increase in demand, the Council has still maintained its performance standards in completing 99% of enquires within seven days through Quarter 2.

The Council continues to employ a strengths-based approach to support vulnerable people, ensuring that they retain a choice in how their care is provided. Several strength-based mentors have been nominated across Adults' Services to promote and embed this approach and existing provision has been enhanced, with particular emphasis on overcoming language and cultural barriers to care.

The pressures on mental health services have continued during the year, in line with the ongoing pressures on health and social care services generally. The Council is working with the Cardiff and Vale University Health Board to identify a suitable venue for the new Sanctuary service for those facing a mental health crisis. However, at Quarter 2 this project has been delayed as no suitable venue has been found. Work continues between the Council and the Health Board to find a way forward for this project.

Creating safe and inclusive communities

The Council is working with partners to expand its multi-agency problem-solving approach to localised, complex anti-social behaviour (ASB) hotspots. In the city centre, the Council has utilised the UK Government Safer Streets Fund to commission murals in three pedestrian underpasses which were inspired by Cardiff's history¹, along with installing CCTV in targeted areas in the city centre and Cathays. Using an evidence-based approach, the Council has successfully secured further funding for the fifth round of the Safer Streets Fund, which will help to deliver interventions in Adamsdown and Riverside, including CCTV, youth intervention and education initiatives on bike safety, violence, and park security. Further work is also planned for Ely, Butetown and Splott.

On 22nd May 2023 the community of Ely saw serious disorder following the tragic death of two young boys in a road traffic collision. In response, an in-depth community engagement exercise is being led by Action for Ely and Caerau and an Ely and Caerau Community Reference Group to understand the community's priorities for the future. These will form the basis of a Community Plan which will be presented to the Cardiff Public Services Board in Spring 2024.

Engagement work to date has identified community safety, preventing ASB and criminal exploitation of young people as community priorities. Joint work is planned for Quarter 3 to explore these and co-produce new responses between the community and the city's public services.

The Council remains committed to tackling all forms of violence against women and girls. In May 2023 the Council's Cabinet agreed a new Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategy for 2023-28 and the associated Implementation Plan.

¹ [New murals inspired by Cardiff's history and musical heritage \(cardiffnewsroom.co.uk\)](https://cardiffnewsroom.co.uk)

Corporate awareness is also demonstrably high, with 82% of staff having completed the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence training.

The Council has continued to play a leading role in supporting refugees and asylum seekers, particularly those arriving from Ukraine and Afghanistan. In addition to responding to the immediate needs of those arriving in Cardiff, the Council is focussed on transitioning individuals and families into sustainable long-term provision where possible. To date, Cardiff has welcomed over 1,200 Ukrainian nationals into the city for long-term settlement, all of which are due to be matched and settled into long-term accommodation by January 2024. The Council has also supported 800 people from Afghanistan into local temporary bridging accommodation as part of a national process where they are matched into long-term homes across the UK. These processes, however, can place strain on other parts of the housing system. For example, those granted asylum may present immediately as homeless, seeking assistance from the Council to support them into accommodation. This impact is placing significant pressure on homelessness and wider housing services. It is anticipated that the recent decision by the Home Office to significantly accelerate the approval decision-making process will create further demand pressures in Quarter 3 and Quarter 4 2023/24.

Promoting the Welsh language

The 2021 Census showed that the number of people who could speak, read and write in Welsh has increased by 23%, or over 6,500 people, since 2011, the largest numerical and percentage increase across all Welsh local authorities. The growth of high-quality Welsh Language Education and the promotion of opportunities to speak Welsh across the city, delivered through the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) and the Bilingual Cardiff Strategy 2022-27 respectively, have helped to support this growth.

Working together to support a healthier and more active population

The Council continues to promote and facilitate physical activity through the delivery of its Physical Activity & Sport Strategy 2022-27². A report on Sport Wales's Regional Sports Partnerships is planned for Cabinet in Quarter 3 which will determine the future of any regionalisation proposals.

The Council has also made good progress in improving public and green spaces in Cardiff. Two more green spaces, Parc Tredelerch and Western Cemetery, have been awarded Green Flag status, bringing the total number of Green Flag parks in Cardiff to 18. Work to increase Cardiff's tree canopy, deliver the Allotment Strategy, and support volunteer work has also been taken forward effectively. Work on the development of a National Park City for Cardiff, however, has been paused in 2023/24 subject to establishing appropriate governance and delivery arrangements.

The Council continues to closely monitor its contract for leisure services with the provider GLL. A report proposing investment in Pentwyn Leisure Centre was approved by Cabinet in

² [Physical Activity and Sport Strategy](#)

June 2023 however the sustained high cost of energy remains a major challenge for both GLL and Parkwood, the operators of the International Swimming Pool.

The Llanishen Reservoir has also been opened, delivering 5km of circular paths around the reservoir and opportunities for a range of water sports, welcoming around 75,000 visitors between July and August 2023.

Wellbeing Objective 5: A capital city that works for Wales

The Corporate Plan sets out the following priorities for ensuring that the Capital City works for Wales in 2023/24:

- Leading the economic recovery in Wales
- Leading a recovery programme in Cardiff
- Supporting the recovery of the cultural sector and major events programme

Overview of Performance at Quarter 2

Key Performance Indicators*



Steps



**Many Key Performance Indicators in this chapter are reported on an annual basis which is why there are few RAG ratings to report at Quarter 2.*

A detailed assessment of performance against each Key Performance Indicator and step is accessible via the [Public Corporate Performance Dashboard](#)

Leading the economic recovery in Wales

Last year, Cardiff was allocated £42m over two and a half years from the Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF), the UK Government's new regional development funding programme. Working with the Cardiff Capital Region (CCR), a robust governance structure has since been developed to deliver the programme – including the creation of a Regional Investment Plan – which is funding a range of local business support, transport, skills and community safety initiatives. In July 2023, an open call for proposals was launched, to allow eligible organisations to propose projects or schemes that will deliver the SPF outputs and outcomes. The proposals are currently being assessed, ensuring that they fill a gap in terms of need, and are aligned with the city's priorities, as identified in Stronger, Fairer, Greener and Cardiff's Local Well-being Plan.

In addition, the Council, in partnership with Transport for Wales, has secured £50m from the Levelling Up Fund to improve public transport in the city, which will be match funded by a £50m Welsh Government grant. The funding will be utilised to implement Cardiff Crossrail Phase 1, improving connectivity to and from the Cardiff Bay area; the full business case is currently in development.

Leading a recovery programme in Cardiff

A range of projects are being progressed as part of Cardiff's recovery programme, supporting investment in visitor infrastructure. This includes a successful submission to Welsh Government for funding for the restoration of Cardiff Market, establishing new city centre warden arrangements and utilising the Transforming Towns facility to encourage the take-up and refurbishment of space for hospitality purposes in the city centre.

Economic challenges – including inflation in the construction sector and higher interest rates – are impeding the development of new commercial premises in the city. Nonetheless, it is imagined that when pressures begin to ease, because of underlying demand trends, there is likely to be a resumption of new commercial property development. Work on Central Quay has continued, with the first phase of residential development well underway (delivering 700 units) and work on the new multi-storey car park set to begin in Quarter 3.

As part of the Industrial Strategy for the East of the city, a significant amount of work was undertaken to prepare statements to support the Cardiff Parkway proposal through Welsh Government's planning application 'call in' process in Quarters 1 and 2. A decision is anticipated by Welsh Ministers in Quarter 3.

The Council has continued to progress projects related to the regeneration of Cardiff Bay. The Council is on target to complete the Red Dragon Centre business case by the end of the year; work continues to conclude the agreement to lease the Graving Docks; a disposal strategy was agreed by Cabinet in July 2023 for the International Sports Village and the option agreement has since been concluded and entered with the developer.

Work is ongoing to refine the funding strategy for the Indoor Arena following the changed economic environment and cost inflation. In Quarter 1, Cabinet agreed to the extension to

the pre-construction services agreement to enable the completion of a funding strategy to be considered at Cabinet in November 2023. If agreed, the project will move towards financial close in May 2024 with project delivery set to begin in mid-2024.

Supporting the recovery of the cultural sector and major events programme

Visitor economy recovery has been impacted by the cost-of-living and energy crises, nonetheless, the Council continues to work with event promoters and cultural venues to support the capital city's event and cultural sector. Attendance at the Council's cultural venues was 14.87% above target at Quarter 2, with over 310,000 visits recorded. The development of the new Events Strategy is progressing in tandem with the development of a new Tourism Strategy, as well as a new Cultural Strategy. The Council has secured funding from Welsh Government's Events Wales to deliver an International Music Festival in Autumn 2024 and Cardiff has been confirmed as a host city for the 2028 UEFA European Championships.

Following changes to Health and Safety Executive (HSE) advice in the Summer of 2023 on Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) in public buildings, intrusive surveys were undertaken on the roof of St. David's Hall, with appointed engineers categorising the building as a RED risk, resulting in the building's closure until the roof is replaced and the building refurbished. The building was in the process of being leased to the Academy Music Group (AGM), however, considering recent developments, it has been agreed that the lease will be conditional for a period to enable them to work towards identifying a viable solution for the required works.

While visitor numbers across Council venues are improving, income generation has not quite returned to pre-COVID levels and remains short of budgeted income targets. The closure of buildings – including St. David's Hall and City Hall – are also impacting on budgets in year.

Wellbeing Objective 6: One Planet Cardiff

The Corporate Plan sets out the following priorities for delivering a One Planet Cardiff in 2023/24:

- Decarbonising the city and leading a green recovery
- Transforming Cardiff's public transport and active travel systems
- Putting sustainability and wellbeing at the heart of the city's growth
- Enhancing Cardiff's flood defences
- Building resilience into our highway network
- Making Cardiff a world-leading recycling city
- Working as one team to keep our streets clean

Overview of Performance at Quarter 2

Key Performance Indicators



Steps



A detailed assessment of performance against each Key Performance Indicator and step is accessible via the [Public Corporate Performance Dashboard](#)

Decarbonising the city and leading a green recovery

Significant progress has been made by the Council and its partners in developing a robust governance structure to deliver change, as well as making major carbon reduction improvements. This includes developing detailed studies and work programmes for major decarbonisation work areas, such as estates retrofit, fleet decarbonisation, low carbon procurement policy and supporting One Planet action planning within schools. However, constraints and challenges relating to cost and timescales for implementation are now being encountered, which look likely to affect the 2030 net-zero ambitions set out in the One Planet Cardiff Strategy. These constraints and challenges are being experienced by public sector partners across Wales, with regional and national-level discussions underway to consider holistic, partnership-led solutions.

Project updates include:

- Heat Network: Works to install the heat network are progressing well, with the Energy Centre nearing completion and internal works complete in two major customer buildings. However, issues regarding the interface of the scheme with proposed Council developments remain unresolved and under detailed discussion.
- Large-scale Renewable Energy Generation: Initial findings from an ecology survey of the Wentloog solar farm proposal site have given confidence to move to the next stage of ecological investigation. A recent change to Welsh Government policy on development in areas with ecological protection status has, however, placed the viability of the scheme in doubt. Discussions are ongoing with Welsh Government and Welsh Government Energy Services to establish whether there are any routes through. Moving forward, a clear picture of Council land that may be available for additional renewable schemes, subject to favourable business case analysis, will be established. The Lamby Way Solar Farm continues to perform above the expectations set in its business plan, and a series of improvement actions at the Radyr Weir Hydrogeneration Plant have delivered upgraded performance.
- Housing Energy Efficiency Retrofit: The programme is progressing well, following successful recruitment into some key vacancies in the team. The number of energy efficiency measures installed in Council-owned domestic properties is currently above target at Quarter 2, at 416. The success of this scheme is demonstrated by the energy performance of Cardiff's council homes being better than the average for any tenure³. Additionally, work undertaken within private rented sector properties – to improve energy efficiency - has led to an estimated carbon dioxide improvement of 72.4 tonnes.
- Electric Vehicles: A decision has been taken not to proceed with the Fleet Replacement Strategy, with delays also experienced in terms of the implementation of Fleet Replacement programme. The number of Council vehicles which are electric is above target at Quarter 2, however, at 85. Furthermore, the first part of the Electric Vehicle

³ The requirement for Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) is a SAP (Standard Assessment Procedure) rating of 65. Average SAP ratings for Cardiff Council stock: 72; Cardiff Council New Build: 85; Owner-occupied: 62; Rental (private): 63; and Rental (social): 71.

Infrastructure Road Map has been completed, examining levels of demand, current technology and delivery options.

- Healthy, Local and Low-Carbon Food: A £2m Cardiff Capital Region funded innovation programme is in progress, sponsoring new and innovative ways to grow, distribute and decarbonise the local food sector.

An annual update on the One Planet Cardiff programme is expected in January, which will present Council and city-wide emissions for 2022/23, although it is recognised that further work is needed to understand more precisely the required reductions in emissions due to changing methodologies related to Welsh Government's reporting framework.

Transforming Cardiff's public transport and active travel systems

Whilst good progress has been made to deliver the Council's programme of investment in public transport and active travel, several projects have been subject to delays, as well as difficulties in securing funding:

- Cardiff and Regional Metro: Whilst the Metro network continues to be progressed, issues have arisen in terms of securing commitment for the delivery of network improvements, including frequency improvements to Coryton and Radyr and new stations in Cardiff. Work is ongoing with partners to secure the funding needed to deliver the improvements.
- Bus Services: A Bus Priority Infrastructure Plan has been developed and is expected to be presented to Cabinet in January 2024, whilst the feasibility and optioneering work for several bus corridors is continuing. Further reductions in funding for bus services have, however, been announced by Welsh Government, with the Bus Transition Fund – which replaced the Bus Emergency Scheme - ending in March 2024. This is a significant risk for the Council and one which, unless mitigated, will result in a gap in bus service provision across the city.
- Wales 20mph Default Speed Limit: Work is ongoing to manage the transition to a default 20mph city; the implementation of Phase 1 of the 20mph default has been installed, including all necessary signage and carriageway amendments. Phase 2 of the programme has now been commenced.
- Active Travel: Work continues to develop a segregated cycle network across the city, with design work progressed for the majority of schemes. However, work on Blackweir has been placed on hold due to a lack of funding. Work to develop a data-led approach to prioritise Active Travel Network Map routes is ongoing, as well as work with schools to support the implementation of Active Travel Plans.
- Road User Charging Options: To develop a new source of long-term infrastructure funding the Council resolved, in April 2023, to consider a range of road payment schemes. Consultation with stakeholders has taken place in the autumn with further

stakeholder engagement and detailed business case work expected to take place throughout 2024.

- Intelligent Transport System (ITS): Preparation of the ITS strategy is on hold. The opportunity to comprehensively progress the strategy – and define the scope of what can be achieved – is dependent on reliable sources of funding, which may not be determined until 2025 subject to a robust business case and alignment with the potential road payment scheme.

Air Quality

Poor air quality is now considered the largest environmental risk to public health in the UK with clear scientific evidence that air pollution exposure reduces life expectancy. Substantial progress has been made with regards to implementing clean air improvement projects in the city centre; City Centre East Phase 1 is nearing completion whilst Welsh Government have agreed, in principle, to fund the full Castle Street scheme, subject to approval of the updated business case which has now been submitted to Welsh Gov. A final decision on funding is expected by Welsh Government in Quarter 4. Furthermore, design work has progressed to a final concept stage for the Boulevard De Nantes scheme, although a decision is needed from Welsh Government as to the source of funding.

An annual update on air quality monitoring will be presented to Cabinet in December 2023. The report sets out that, in 2022, all Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) within Cardiff were compliant with the relevant objectives for NO₂. However, one non-automatic monitoring site located within the Llandaff AQMA was close to the annual air quality objective limit of 40µg/m³ with a result of 39.3µg/m³. The Clean Air Strategy & Action Plan will therefore be subject to a full review in 2024/25 and a specific focus will be afforded to improving the NO₂ concentrations in the Llandaff AQMA.

Putting sustainability and wellbeing at the heart of the city's growth

Work continues on a full review of the Local Development Plan (LDP), with consultation completed on the Replacement LDP Preferred Strategy, which received over 1000 responses. Resourcing challenges, however, threaten to compromise the delivery of the next stage of the Replacement LDP within agreed timescales. Similar difficulties have led to a delay in the preparation of the Green Infrastructure Plan and Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty (BRED) Forward Plan, a requirement under Section 6 of the environment (Wales) Act 2016. This work is now not expected to commence until Quarter 4.

There has been a continued drop in the percentage of householder planning applications determined within agreed time periods; the Quarter 2 position was 72.9% against a target of 85%. A number of contributing factors account for the drop in performance, including staff vacancies and unprecedented workload demands. New technology is being deployed which will assist Officers with the timely completion of applications.

Enhancing Cardiff's flood defences

Some work related to enhancing Cardiff's flood defences have been subject to delay. For instance, pressures – related to staff recruitment and a recognised shortage of skills in the field - have resulted in delays in completing the Sustainable Water, Flood and Drainage Strategy for Cardiff, as required by the Flood and Water Management Act (2010) and Flood Risk Regulations (2009) within Welsh Government proposed timescales. Although considerable development work has been undertaken, the March 2024 publication deadline will not be achieved, and discussions are therefore taking place with Welsh Government regarding a revised deadline.

In terms of coastal defence improvements in Cardiff East, the construction contract has been formally awarded. A delay in the legal process for granting the contract led to the commencement of the enabling works being pushed back to October 2023. However, progress has been made in the development of outline and full business cases, with 100% Welsh Government funding, for flood alleviation schemes at key flood risk locations within the city. The Council is also working to mitigate flood risk relating to Roath Park Dam, considering the design of schemes and preparing a planning application for the proposed works which can be delivered in line with heritage requirements and budget allocation.

Building resilience into our highway network

Good progress has been made to deliver improvements to Cardiff's roads and footways, with localised road and footway surfacing taking place across the city. Looking ahead, a risk-based approach will be utilised to identify further work programmes, governed by asset deterioration and related conditions. In addition, the programme to place all 24,000 residential lighting to low-energy LED lighting is now approximately 95% complete, with 22,000 new LED units installed. Substantial completion is on track for Quarter 3 of 2023/24.

In terms of civil parking enforcement, deployment maps have been created to cover all areas within the city that have parking restrictions, building in patrol frequency and efficiency of service delivery. The 'Report a Parking Problem' section of the Cardiff Gov App has also been amended to capture further details of the problems being reported. This will enable Civil Enforcement Officers to prioritise problems and tackle specific areas of concern whilst undertaking their patrols.

Recycling and Street Cleanliness

Following the publication of its new Recycling Strategy (2022-25), the Council has begun to implement a major programme of reform to waste and collection services to improve efficiency and resilience. This includes a move towards segregated recycling across the city, with a timetable for implementation now in place, as well as an expansion of kerbside collection services. Recycling performance continues to fluctuate throughout the year, as the tonnage of waste collected varies monthly. In addition, waste collection services have also been impacted by recent industrial action. Further work is therefore needed to meet the 70% target by the end of the 2024/25 financial year. In Quarter 1, recycling performance was slightly below the current 64% target, at 63.59%, whilst in Quarter 2 recycling

performance was 61.11%. The Council remains in regular dialogue with the Welsh Government and the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) as it works towards achieving the 70% recycling target in 2024/25.

The percentage of highways inspected found to be of a high or an acceptable standard of cleanliness is above target, however it is recognised that areas of the city require improvement and levels of investigation and enforcement are below target at Quarter 2. In response, a programme of service reform has been developed to transition street cleansing from a 'reactionary' service which responds to cleansing issues as they emerge, to a proactive service area with good digital infrastructure which responds to data and intelligence. Despite a period of disruption, the service has established effective interim arrangements to maintain a baseline service.

Wellbeing Objective 7: Modernising and Integrating Our Public Services

The Corporate Plan sets out the following priorities for Modernising and Integrating Our Public Services in 2023/24:

- Delivering leaner and greener Council buildings, and protecting the Council’s historic buildings
- Improving the Council’s digital offer and enhancing the use of data
- Supporting a highly-skilled and productive workforce with the wellbeing of staff at its core
- Using the power of the public purse to support the city’s recovery
- Ensuring the Council represents and responds to the diversity of Cardiff’s communities

Overview of Performance at Quarter 2

Key Performance Indicators



Steps



A detailed assessment of performance against each Key Performance Indicator and step is accessible via the [Public Corporate Performance Dashboard](#)

Financial Resilience

The Council continues to face unprecedented challenges following year-on-year reductions to its budget in the face of increasing demand and pressures on services. A predicted budget gap of in excess of £40m for the 2024/25 financial year and a total of £119.2m across the period of the Medium-Term Financial Plan present significant immediate and medium-term budgetary challenges that will test the Council's financial resilience.

The overall monitoring position at Month 6 reflects a total projected net annual Council overspend of £5.388m. Areas of significant budgetary pressures include:

- Education Services, due primarily to home-to-school transport, out-of-county placements, and catering. The Council is also still awaiting Welsh Government's decision on price-setting for the new Universal Free School Meal offer.
- Children's Services continue to experience an increase in placements costs for the Council's children looked after cohort. This, along with sustained demand pressures and price increases have resulted in costs exceeding budget.
- The planned closure of City Hall continues to impact the Council's capacity to generate income, from both functions and catering. The closure of St. David's Hall, due to the presence of Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) has also had an impact on income for the Council.
- Energy, food, and fuel inflation, and the staff pay award, combined with an increasing demand for services from the 'long tail' impact of the pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis, have significantly increased the levels of risk. The Council continues to face unprecedented challenges in terms of financial resilience which will require close monitoring and management during this year and into the medium term.

Delivering leaner and greener Council buildings

The Council's land and property estate is considerable, with property running costs (approximately £38m) representing the second largest call on the Council's budget after staff costs. Managing, operating, and maintaining the estate presents its own challenges, due to the age and condition of many properties. The Council has worked to reduce the size of its estate to manage the rise in operational costs and to mitigate the growing maintenance backlog. The Council's ability to maintain and renew its existing assets, constrained by the lack of availability of capital funding for maintenance, is also emerging as a key risk in this area.

The delivery of capital receipts also remains a critical objective of both the Council's Property Strategy and the 2023-24 Annual Property Plan. A target of £3m was set to be achieved from the sale of property and, at the end of Quarter 2, £183,000 had been achieved. This programme will be closely monitored to ensure the target can be achieved.

In efforts to reduce running costs and assist with carbon reduction targets the Council has taken the decision to close two wings of County Hall, reflecting the reduced numbers of staff working from County Hall on a regular basis. Alongside this, it has also been agreed to

relinquish Willcox House and consequently the ARC (Alarm Receiving Centre) and Telecare Services have been moved to County Hall.

The hybrid working model has been further developed over the last two Quarters and an engagement programme will be undertaken with staff and services areas in the second half of the year. This will inform the detailed requirements of the new Core Office working environment to be included in the full business case.

Improving the Council's digital offer and enhancing use of data

Good progress continues to be made by the Council as it expands its digital offer and explores technology opportunities to enable citizens to interact with the Council through multiple platforms, as well as enabling services to be delivered more efficiently.

The Council continues to see increases in the numbers of citizens interacting with the Council digitally, with over 82,500 citizens registered to use the Cardiff App, a 12% increase over Quarter 1 and Quarter 2, 2023/24. Further updates to the App include the ability for residents to report faults with Street Lighting. This reporting functionality was also made available on the Council's website. In the first three months 284 of the 360 reports (78.8%) were received digitally.

Work will continue to expand the services available on online platforms to shift demand to lower-cost channels and an emphasis will be placed on ensuring the customer is supported effectively to enable digital interactions. Customer feedback channels are being reviewed to give better insight to the citizen experience when using digital services and work has been undertaken on the Chatbot to improve its capabilities.

The Council has focussed on moving high-volume processes, including the updating of Council Tax details, away from the Council's customer service team towards lower-cost digital channels. This digital shift has helped the Council more effectively manage demand on services, with the number of telephone calls for Council Tax falling from 1,612 per Quarter to only 35. This has also helped to reduce call waiting times for more complex enquiries while maintaining a high level of customer satisfaction. Similarly, successful initiatives have been delivered for waste enquiries, where approximately 95% of requests are now dealt with digitally.

Supporting a highly-skilled and productive workforce with the wellbeing of staff at its core

The Council continues to face a number of workforce challenges, including ensuring sufficient capacity, appropriate skills and in recruiting and retaining staff, particularly given the level of competition for some professions. In response, an enhanced approach to workforce planning at a corporate level has been put in place with detailed plans developed supporting the seven strategic themes from the 2023-27 Workforce Strategy. Where the challenge is particularly acute, for example in Adult and Children's Services, tailored approaches to recruitment and retention have been implemented.

Managing sickness absence continues to be a significant challenge to the Council, at the mid-year position results show a forecasted year end position of 11 working days/shift per full-time equivalent (FTE) lost to sickness absence, against a target of 9.5 days lost per FTE. This is an improved position when compared to the same period in 2022/23, which predicted an outturn result of 12.3 days lost per FTE. A targeted approach continues to be applied to areas with high sickness absence, such as Adult Services, Parks & Sports and Neighbourhood Services, particularly through the provision of support to managers on dealing with complex long-term absence cases. Non-work-related stress and Musculo-skeletal remain the two highest categories for sickness, and measures are in place to manage these types of absences through initiatives such as counselling services, referral to occupational health, employee network support groups and wellbeing sessions.

Following the agreement of the nationally negotiated pay award the Unite Trade Union continued their dispute against the national pay settlement, pursuing discontinuous strike action from September. The Council were informed at the start of this dispute that the mandate for strike action in Cardiff was the national pay settlement with the Council making clear its commitment to the collective pay bargaining process. The Council has worked to ensure the continuation of Council services during this period and recognises the effort of all staff who have continued to provide services during this challenging time when demand has never been greater across all services. The Council continues to have in place well-established trade union partnership meetings which provide an opportunity for Trade Unions to raise issues of concern, make representations for changes that are not part of the national collective agreement and discuss areas of policy development collectively.

Using the power of the public purse to support the city's recovery

The Council spends over £600m a year procuring a diverse range of goods, services and works from over 8,000 suppliers and contractors. As well as achieving good value for public money spent on these, the Council is committed to ensuring it has robust procurement systems in place. Whilst the amount of social value secured within contracts is below target at Quarter 2, the Council Wide Framework for ensuring this is achieved has only recently been established and several potentially significant contracts are also currently being progressed. The Council's Senior Management Team continue to receive regular updates on procurement spend and compliance, including issues such as off-contract spend.

During the first half of the year the Council has established the Ardal procurement services, which delivers a collaborative procurement partnership with Monmouthshire, Torfaen and the Vale of Glamorgan Councils. The partnership will tackle inequality, help protect the environment and support the adaptation to climate change by working in partnership with suppliers to deliver social good. This will involve working with suppliers to adopt fair work, equity and safeguarding practices whilst also supporting small local businesses and the third sector to access the Council's procurement opportunities.

Ensuring the Council represents and responds to the diversity of Cardiff's communities

The Council is currently in the process of developing a new Public Participation Strategy, with a focus on engaging and involving seldom-heard groups in decision-making.

Stakeholder engagement has been undertaken as well as a policy development session of the Policy Review and Performance Scrutiny Committee and engagement sessions with members. The draft Participation Strategy was approved by Cabinet in July 2023 for a period of public consultation and the final draft of the strategy, including a response to the consultation feedback, will be considered by Cabinet in January 2024.

In June 2023, the Council launched a new pilot Cohesion Fund to support community groups seeking to create more inclusive communities and to build bridges between the city's diverse communities. The fund received a very large number of high-quality applications, and the Council is currently considering options for future rounds over the year ahead. This year the Cohesion team launched a new small grants scheme. The initiative enables grassroots community organisations to apply for microgrants for activities which support community cohesion objectives and received over 140 expressions of interest. Of those applying for funding, 11 applicants were successful and all are projected to be complete by the end of the financial year.

Work is ongoing to ensure the Council's workforce is representative and inclusive of the communities it services. Governance and Oversight arrangements have been developed and embedded for the Cardiff Race Equality Task Force with a half-year progress update completed for all 31 recommendations across the five thematic areas. Demonstrable progress was made against the Task Force recommendations, with notable progress made in relation to:

- Workforce development with the Council becoming a signatory to the Cardiff Community Jobs Compact and a pilot Leadership and Development Programme being launched for groups under-represented at senior management level.
- Improving ethnic minority representation in the local labour market through the development of a city-wide network for employees to encourage good practice and collaboration on employment action.
- Increasing the participation of minority ethnic groups in the Into Work Advice service. At Quarter 1, 53% of those who engaged with Into Work Advice service were from a minority ethnic background.
- Improving access to, and visibility of, Cardiff Works for minority ethnic groups. Data from April to August 2023 shows minority ethnic background represented over 55% of applicants.

The Cardiff Race Equality Taskforce will reconvene in May 2024 and will be provided with a year-end position as at 2023/24. The Council's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion training is also being reviewed to ensure it is fit for purpose and that it addresses identified skills gaps, and the development of a diverse recruitment panel process.

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Date: 04 December 2023

Councillor Huw Thomas, Leader
Councillor Chris Weaver,
Cabinet Member, Finance, Modernisation & Performance,
Cardiff Council,
County Hall,
Cardiff
CF10 4UW



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Neuadd y Sir
Caerdydd,
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Dear Huw & Chris,

Scrutiny Performance Panel 28 November 2023: Mid-Year 2023/24

Please find attached a record of the observations and comments made by all five Scrutiny Chairs at our recent informal meeting to consider the Mid-Year Performance Assessment Report 2023/24.

Thank you for attending in person, this was a most useful discussion. We offer our feedback to inform your final draft report, and I look forward to pre-decision scrutiny of the final report at the December meeting of PRAP.

Yours sincerely,

**COUNCILLOR JOEL WILLIAMS
CHAIR, POLICY REVIEW AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

cc Councillor Lee Bridgeman, Chair, CYP Scrutiny Committee
Councillor Owen Jones, Chair, Environment Scrutiny Committee
Councillor Rhys Taylor, Chair, CASSC Scrutiny Committee
Councillor Peter Wong, Chair, Economy & Culture Scrutiny Committee
Paul Orders, Chief Executive
Chris Lee, Corporate Director, Resources
Sarah McGill, Corporate Director, People & Communities
Mel Godfrey, Director of Education and Lifelong Learning
Gareth Newell, Head of Performance & Partnerships
Dylan Owen, Operational Manager Policy & Improvement
Suzanne Scarlett, Partnerships & Performance Manager
Mr Gavin McArthur, Chair, Governance & Audit Committee.
Chris Pyke, OM Governance & Audit

Mid-Year Performance Assessment Report 2023/24
Scrutiny comments and observations for further consideration

REF/PAGE	Comment / Observation
WBO1	<i>Cardiff is a great place to grow up</i>
MY report – page 6 K1.08 & K1.09	<p>School Attendance:</p> <p>Chairs noted that attendance isn't yet back to pre-pandemic levels, with Primary currently 91.7% and secondary at 88.2%. Acknowledge that it is moving in the right direction, but perhaps not quick enough.</p> <p>Chairs noted that, to aid acceleration, significant support is being provided to schools, including an attendance campaign including the use of multimedia assets. E&LL is also providing direct support where attendance is a particularly stubborn issue.</p> <p>Members recognised that attendance is wider than a school issue – it is a societal issue, so there is a need for more support for community focussed provisions. Some areas have community focus managers to link with families and align with other services if needed.</p> <p>Chairs acknowledged and supported the need to refresh and refocus services – not just physical attendance at school but a focus on ensuring teaching and learning. Flexi-school learning, hybrid learning and using technology more are a range of options E&LL are working through.</p>
MY report – page 7	<p>Electively Home Educated (EHE):</p> <p>Chairs noted the reasons why some children and young people are EHE, which were not as a consequence of the pandemic. Anxiety; lifestyle choice; and those who are not happy with school provision and “drop out” until they can find an appropriate place.</p> <p>Chairs heard that guidance on the process is low level, which states that one inspection is required per year for an individual young person but doing this for over 400 children and young people is a challenge. To combat this, an officer (with child protection expertise) is undertaking “risk based” inspection approach, with the inspection including testing that the young person is getting the right attainment and is safeguarded. If not, appropriate notices are served or discussions with the local school to try and get a return. Good headway is being made in this area and links with Children’s Services are in place as well.</p> <p>Chairs noted the Leader’s suggestion that some analysis be undertaken to better understand this area, including levels of attainment and the underlying reasons for EHE.</p>

K1.14	<p>ALN Funding:</p> <p>Chairs asked about ALN funding and support and difficulties with this, particularly in the primary sector. What is the response and how is it being addressed?</p> <p>Chairs heard that Primary heads are seeing this as a funding freeze, but this is not the case – it’s a change in mechanism. A formulaic process has been used to give them the funding up front, which links closely with the ALN reforms for schools to provide the support themselves.</p> <p>In terms of support, Chairs heard that there will be strengthened governance arrangements around an ALN Strategy Group. This means that the funding side of ALN and planning side will be brought together to tackle expectation of paperwork, manage workload and streamlining it to ensure support is on the ground and not spent filling in paperwork.</p> <p>ALN Strategy Group - three strands:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funds are allocated in the right places • Strategic overview of ALN across the City • Ensuring that the right processes and tracking are in place <p>Chairs sought assurances that the funding formula is easy to understand and flexible. Members heard that, for the current year, it doesn't address schools where there has been a large increase in ALN numbers as it is predicated on the previous year. What will be done is make sure there is a formula waiting to address this over time. The reason for this is to limit destabilising schools during a time when stability is critical.</p> <p>Chairs recommend that the ALN funding model review include the relevant scrutiny committee and form a priority area of work for the service area.</p>
MY report – page 8 K1.20 & K1.21	<p>Children’s Services – Accommodation for CLA</p> <p>Chairs noted that improvements are being made in this area in shifting the balance of care towards the lowest level of intervention possible. Significant improvements in areas that have had to be used. Now down to 3 unregistered placements and these are currently in assessment with CIW. In-house opportunities have increased – quadrupling supply, but still a long way to go. Some delays due to building works.</p> <p>The Leader restated that unregistered does not mean unregulated, and there are examples and evidence where outcomes for individuals in this area have been very positive. The Chairs suggested that better communication on this could assure Members. Members noted that there had been a need to reshape provision in this area.</p>

<p>MY Report – pages 8 & 9</p>	<p>Children’s Services - Working with Others: Members heard that this is an area that has caused some concern. Discussions are ongoing with SWP colleagues, and it is important that we know exactly what this means, particularly around the types of response they won't be providing. There is a concern about what this means for the council and health.</p> <p>There are a series of workshops being arranged by SWP (with council colleagues nominated to attend), but currently, the Council is still not clear about what this will mean. Assurances were given that as things develop, CYPSC will be kept informed. Chairs request that CASSC also be kept informed of the implications of changes by SWP.</p>
<p>MY Report - Page 7</p>	<p>Decrease in Pupil numbers: Chairs sought assurances that the Council is constantly reviewing fluctuations and changes in pupil numbers and changing SOP proposals accordingly. Members were told that everything in this area is evidence based and has to be more flexible. This will be reflected in the SOP Strategy that is currently being updated, which will include flexible accommodation.</p> <p>Members also asked how much head teachers are told about changes in pupil numbers. It was responded that head teachers are very aware (the Director gave the example of a meeting with all Heads the previous week where they were informed of population and migration statistics), and it is a frequent and ongoing discussion around budgets and managing of school places.</p>
<p>WBO2</p>	<p><i>Cardiff is a great place to grow older</i></p>
<p>MY report - Page 11</p>	<p>Adult Services Budget: Chairs noted the draft Mid-Year Performance report details that ‘<i>an overspend of approximately £2m on care is projected, though this is offset by underspends and other budget planning arrangements, so a balanced position is currently shown.</i>’</p> <p>Chairs noted the verbal assurance provided at the meeting regarding overall cost pressures management in Adult Services – however recommend the narrative in the report be expanded to include this assurance / insight.</p>
<p>MY report - Page 12</p>	<p>Community Resource Team/ Hospital Discharge: Chairs noted the draft Report does provide an assessment of the issue of hospital discharge. Although the assessment provided does recognise issues remain, Chairs noted it makes no specific reference to the continued pressures on the Community Resource Team; or the initiatives CASSC Members are aware of to address ongoing pressures such as -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embedding a new call monitoring system for the carers

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Returning the teams focus to only supporting individuals who require reablement (e.g., not double handed care) • Boost staff morale by providing the team with more regular updates / opportunities to contribute to the service areas vision for the future. <p>The Chair of CASSC also raised that in recent performance monitoring work undertaken by the committee, it was noted by CASSC Members that quarterly targets on the CRT KPI's had been removed.</p> <p>Chairs noted the explanation given on the target's removal (i.e., the need to better reflect the quality of service).</p> <p>Chairs noted the update that a national set of indicators (together with health) is being worked on regarding hospital discharge, and there is also internal discussion on preparing a new package of data as part of the process for developing the forthcoming Corporate Plan.</p> <p>Chairs agree the CRT KPIs (numbers of hours / people accessed services) may not best reflect the quality of service, however, recommend, given the substantive work ongoing in the CRT to address the ongoing pressures within the team, this is captured in the report.</p> <p>At the end of the meeting, Chairs asked how well this service was prepared for dealing with Winter Pressures. Chairs noted the service is well-prepared, with the joined-up discharge process working well; however, Chairs noted there are pressures elsewhere on the pathway and that the new national set of indicators should provide the metrics to enable nuanced conversations to resolve these issues.</p> <p>Chairs recommend that, in the absence of the new metrics discussed at the meeting, that the Q2 performance against the CRT targets are included in the report, to illustrate the pressures on the service.</p>
Corporate Plan – page 19	<p>Older People Employment:</p> <p>Chairs noted the draft Mid-Year Performance report does not contain an update on this Corporate Plan step. Chairs noted officers' response that there is a comprehensive update in the dashboard narrative, with good progress.</p> <p>Chairs therefore recommend a paragraph setting out progress in delivering the Older People Employment step is included in the Mid-Year Performance report.</p>

WBO3	<i>Supporting people out of poverty</i>
	<p>Council House Repairs:</p> <p>Although Chairs recognise Council House Repairs does not have a specific step in the Corporate Plan, through CASSC’s performance monitoring work Chairs are aware of the ongoing performance issue in the Responsive Repairs Units regarding the continued and notable number of outstanding repair jobs and significant pressures around damp and mould maintenance.</p> <p>Given the importance of this ongoing performance issue, and the importance of providing greater visibility, and the likelihood of high levels of public interest, Chairs recommend insight into the performance pressures within the Responsive Repairs Unit is provided in the final Mid-Year Performance report, including the extent of work undertaken by the team (e.g. the average number of repairs they complete and how long it has taken to respond to) against the number of outstanding repair jobs and the ongoing work to address this issue such as: the launch of a ‘Repairs Online’ service (in the summer of 2023), which allows contract-holders to report and monitor progress of their repair requests online; introduction of a dedicated damp and mould team; and commissioning of new resource within the in-house repairs team and through external contractors.</p> <p>Further, Chairs also recommend, in the forthcoming Corporate Plan development process, due consideration is given to this being a specific Step, with relevant KPIs, drawing on the KPIs provided in the service area’s Directorate Delivery Plan.</p>
	<p>Enforcement Powers on Landlords:</p> <p>Chairs noted the enforcement powers available to the local authority against poor landlords and therefore stressed the need for the authority to ‘lead from the front’ in terms of quality of council homes.</p> <p>Within the discussion, Chairs noted and welcomed the assurance that the Executive holds high significance in resolving repair issues for council contract holders.</p> <p>Chairs further noted that CASSC have recently been briefed that in some instances, particularly in the private rented sector, contract holders may refuse entry for repair services. If this is an issue also apparent for the council’s Response Repairs Service, where contract holders do not allow entry, this may be worthwhile including in the forthcoming Step or KPI (recommended above).</p>
MY report – Pages 14-15	<p>Into Work Services:</p> <p>Chairs noted the draft Mid-Year Performance report and KPIs associated with Into Work Services highlight the high numbers of people supported,</p>

	<p>with the cumulative total up to the end of Q2 nearly equalling the whole year target and asked whether there is sufficient resource available to assist all those who require Into Work services.</p> <p>Chairs note the Leader’s response that the Council has worked to attract different funding streams, such as Shared Prosperity Funding and DWP monies, to support this work and so there is currently sufficient resource; however, the concern is whether funding will continue post -2025.</p>
Corporate Plan – page 26	<p>In Work Support:</p> <p>Chairs highlighted that they had previously recommended an In-Work support step be included in the Corporate Plan and were pleased that this had been accepted; however, the draft Mid-Year Performance report does not include an update on this work and Chairs sought assurance on progress.</p> <p>Chairs therefore recommend a paragraph setting out progress in delivering the In Work Support step is included in the Mid-Year Performance report.</p>
WBO4	<i>Safe, confident and empowered communities</i>
MY report – Page 18	<p>Adult Protection Enquiries:</p> <p>The Report notes the number of adult protection enquiries recorded has increased significantly in 2023/24 with 1,280 enquiries received at Quarter 2, compared to only 654 at Quarter 2 in 2022/23.</p> <p>Though it is noted the increase in numbers is due to more effective ways of reporting enquiries, Chairs request further insight into what these enquiries are related to.</p> <p>Chairs noted this will be investigated and so recommend due consideration be given to whether this increase in number is primarily due to more effective reporting arrangements or if this increase in data, and the nature of the enquires, are signposting a particular issue in Adult Services that may need addressing. If so, this assessment / insight must be included in the final report.</p>
MY report – Page 17-18 K4.17	<p>Libraries & Hubs:</p> <p>Chairs noted the positive story shown by the number of Green indicators associated with this step, coupled with the recent Welsh Public Library Standards report that shows good service provision. However, Chairs highlighted the performance indicator for number of volunteer hours, K4.17, is Red and asked whether this is causing an issue with achieving the budget saving that was predicated on use of volunteers in libraries and hubs.</p> <p>Chairs noted the response that performance has improved to date in Q3, largely because volunteer mentors are now in place. Chairs note the Leader’s point that this illustrates the limitations of relying on volunteers to</p>

	deliver services, even where there is a good record of volunteering and where this is coupled with other aims, such as assisting people into work.
Corporate Plan – page 37	Shared Regulatory Services (SRS): Chairs noted the draft Mid-Year Performance report does not contain an update on this Corporate Plan step. Chairs noted the Chief Executive’s response that Cabinet are due to receive the SRS Annual Report shortly and therefore Chairs recommend a paragraph setting out progress in delivering the Shared Regulatory Services step is included in the Mid-Year Performance report.
MY Report – page 20	Fields in Trust: Chairs noted the draft Mid-Year Performance report does not contain an update on this Corporate Plan step. Chairs noted the Leader’s response that there has been dialogue with Fields in Trust, with a shortlist of potential sites due in Q3 and a report on progress to be included in the End-Year Performance report.
MY report - page	Healthy, Active Population: Chairs noted that achieving the overall aim of a healthy, active population relies on partnership working, with Public Health leading, and a whole system approach that encourages and supports people to move more and eat well. Chairs noted pilot interventions are underway in Riverside and Llanrumney focusing on supporting and motivating people regarding moving more and eating well.
WBO5	<i>A capital city that works for Wales</i>
MY report – pages 17 & 22	Recovery and Regeneration - 15-minute cities: Chairs noted the draft Mid-Year Performance report details successes and the current economic challenges but sought views on progress with steps on recovery and regeneration, including the 15-minute city approach and toolkit. Chairs noted the response that the report captures the notable wins to date and recognises delays that are beyond the Council’s control, such as delays related to Cardiff Parkway, and that, overall, there is significant confidence in the economic renewal direction.
K5.02	Jobs Created/ Safeguarded: Chairs noted indicator K5.02 is red but that it is anticipated the target will be achieved by year end, due to forthcoming announcements about jobs being created in Cardiff.
MY report – page 23	Venues and Income: Chairs noted the draft Mid-Year Performance report details good performance in terms of attendees at Council venues but note that this does not translate to meeting income targets for council venues and sought views on this and measures being taken to address this.

	<p>Chairs noted there are several reasons for this, including: during covid, free access to Cardiff Castle was introduced and this is still in place and this, coupled with the events programme at the Castle, has led to an increase in the numbers using this space, but this has not translated to visitors paying to enter the rooms of the Castle, which is reducing the Castle income; and the closure of St. David’s Hall.</p> <p>Chairs noted the covid recovery reserve has been used to mitigate the loss of income. Chairs noted the Leader’s comments that there needs to be discussion about how future budgets utilise income generation and whether there needs to be consideration of externalising certain assets, which would lead to surety of income generation, for example the Cardiff White-Water Rafting Centre could become part of the wider ISV package operated by a private company.</p> <p>Chairs noted the Council’s approach to income generation is set out in the Medium-Term Financial Plan and this is important for the Budget Strategy going forward, with challenge and review of the robustness of fees and charges.</p> <p>Chairs highlighted the need to ensure inclusive discussions about significant service changes happen as early as possible and in public, to enable interested backbench members and members of the public to be aware of issues and to work collaboratively to assist in identifying possible resolution of issues; this would also help ensure transparency. Chairs noted the Leader’s response that the administration aim to achieve this where possible, with decisions taken outside the budget process where possible, but that sometimes time pressures do not enable this.</p>
WBO6	<i>One Planet Cardiff</i>
MY report – page 28	<p>Recycling:</p> <p>Chairs note that while there are many reasons why Cardiff are not currently meeting our recycling targets and that there is a significant gap to where we need to be in a relatively short space of time, how patient/ tolerant will Welsh Government be?</p> <p>The Leader commented that the expectation from Welsh Government is that we need to roll out separated recycling across the city and that it is anticipated that this will deliver the desired outcomes, although it was acknowledged that this has been delayed.</p>
MY report – page 26	<p>Transport:</p> <p>Chairs noted that while many of the exciting projects happening in Cardiff are out of our control, many are, for example cycleways, and these have completion dates that continually slip. Does the delay and then the</p>

	<p>increased costs impact the deliverability of these projects that are within out control?</p> <p>It is recommended that when the new Corporate Plan is written, if projects are no longer included, that a clear and full explanation/rationale is provided. The Leader noted that where projects are within our control, we have more confidence they will be delivered. It was also noted that much of the monies spent in relation to the South Wales Metro are currently being spend outside Cardiff.</p>
Corporate Plan – page 50	<p>Llanrumney Bridge: Chairs noted the draft Mid-Year Performance report does not provide an update on this step and sought a progress update.</p> <p>Chairs note and accept the Leader’s offer to provide a written update on this step to the Economy & Culture Scrutiny Committee, as the committee that has previously scrutinised this issue, and to all Scrutiny Chairs.</p>
WBO7	<i>Modernising and integrating our public services</i>
K7.04	<p>Capital Receipts: Chairs noted that delivery of capital receipts at Q2 is below target, with K7.04 marked Red, and asked for views on this. Chairs noted the response that the Council takes a long-term view and seeks to achieve the best possible capital receipt, which can mean in-year targets are missed, but that, overall, there is confidence that the target will be met.</p>
	<p>Customers: Chairs highlighted that whilst the draft Mid-Year Performance report includes a KPI for customer satisfaction, there is a need to ensure a more systematic approach to capturing citizen voice. The Chairs request that the Ask Cardiff survey results, which include customer satisfaction, be made available to the Scrutiny Committees when published in January 2024.</p>
MY report – page 32 & 33 K7.11	<p>Workforce: Chairs sought views on the challenges facing the Council regarding workforce issues. Chairs noted that local government pay has dropped in value since 2010, leading to recruitment issues in some areas, which the Council addresses via market supplements if required. Chairs noted that, in relation to strike action, the Council is keen to make reasonable adjustments to resolve disputes and reduce disruption to residents, working across all unions to enable this. Chairs noted that, in relation to grievance complaints, the Council has a process for dealing with these that looks at the specificity of complaints, investigating and testing these independently whilst also ensuring that the Council’s duty of care to all staff is maintained.</p>

GENERAL	<i>Cross Cutting Issues</i>
	<p>Workforce:</p> <p>Chairs noted their awareness that vacancies and sickness rates in Adult Services has gone up and welcomed the recognition in the draft Mid-Year Report on the services area’s Workforce Development Plan to mitigate pressures.</p> <p>During the discussion Chairs sought insight and assurance on the use of agency social workers in Adult Services including the cost pressures this measure may present. Chairs wish to thank officers for their initial insight and advise the CASSC Committee have confirmed they wish to explore this issue of the use of agency workers in Adult Services in detail and have scheduled it as an agenda item in a forthcoming committee meeting.</p> <p>On general workforce matters, Chairs stressed the importance of remaining mindful to deliverability and capacity when managing workforce pressures (across the authority) and were informed there is an awareness within the executive on the possibility of moving resource around the authority as a way of managing workforce pressures.</p> <p>Chairs also sought assurance the work force pressures apparent in the Council’s Community Resource Team will be effectively managed and addressed; particularly in light of forthcoming winter months.</p> <p>Chairs note the progress being made in the wider hospital discharge pathways and were informed key issues in delay can be more aligned to issues within the ward part of the process.</p> <p>Chairs also wish to confirm ongoing conversation are being had between CASSC Members and the service area on which data metrics could be reported to the committee in their Quarterly Performance Reports to provide CASSC Members with a full insight into the hospital discharge process (alongside the national KPI’s being drawn).</p>

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Fy Nghyf / My Ref: [CE:0045146]

Dyddiad / Date: 7 December 2023

Councillor Joel Williams
Chair, Policy Review & Performance Scrutiny Committee
County Hall
Cardiff

Annwy/ Dear Joel

Thank you for convening the Performance Panel on 28 November, and my thanks to all the Scrutiny Committee chairs for attending. This is now an important part of our planning and monitoring arrangements and once again the Panel offered an opportunity for constructive discussion and the strengthening of the mid-year assessment.

The Panel made 11 recommendations – 10 were accepted and 1 were partially accepted. Where the Panel made requests, we have provided a response which I trust the Scrutiny Committees will find helpful and useful in supporting Committee work programmes moving forward.

Yn gywir / Yours sincerely

**CYNGHORYDD / COUNCILLOR HUW THOMAS
ARWEINYDD / LEADER
CYNGOR CAERDYDD / CARDIFF COUNCIL**

CC: Councillor Lee Bridgeman, Chair, CYP Scrutiny Committee
Councillor Owen Jones, Chair, Environment Scrutiny Committee
Councillor Rhys Taylor, Chair, CASSC Scrutiny Committee
Councillor Peter Wong, Chair, Economy & Culture Scrutiny Committee
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GWEITHIO DROS GAERDYDD, GWEITHIO DROSOCH CHI

Mae'r Cyngor yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg, Saesneg neu'n ddwyieithog. Byddwn yn cyfathrebu â chi yn ôl eich dewis, dim ond i chi roi gwybod i ni pa un sydd well gennych. Ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

WORKING FOR CARDIFF, WORKING FOR YOU

The Council welcomes correspondence in Welsh, English or bilingually. We will ensure that we communicate with you in the language of your choice, as long as you let us know which you prefer. Corresponding in Welsh will not lead to delay.



**STRONGER
FAIRER
GREENER**



Mid-Year Assessment of Performance 2023/24

The recommendations, requests and observations of the Performance Panel on 28 November 2023 have been welcomed. The responses have been grouped into five categories (below), depending on the nature of the Panel’s comments, with a response or explanatory note included as necessary.

- Recommendation Accepted
- Recommendation Partially Accepted
- Request Accepted
- Observation Noted
- Action

REF/PAGE	Comment / Observation	Cabinet Response
<p>WBO1 Cardiff is a great place to grow up</p> <p>MY report – page 6 K1.08 & K1.09</p>	<p>School Attendance: Chairs noted that attendance isn’t yet back to pre-pandemic levels, with Primary currently 91.7% and secondary at 88.2%. Acknowledged that it is moving in the right direction, but perhaps not quick enough.</p> <p>Chairs noted that, to aid acceleration, significant support is being provided to schools, including an attendance campaign including the use of multimedia assets. E&LL is also providing direct support where attendance is a particularly stubborn issue.</p> <p>Members recognised that attendance is wider than a school issue – it is a societal issue, so there is a need for more support for community focussed provisions. Some areas have community focus managers to link with families and align with other services if needed.</p>	<p>Observation Noted</p>

	<p>Chairs acknowledged and supported the need to refresh and refocus services – not just physical attendance at school but a focus on ensuring teaching and learning. Flexi-school learning, hybrid learning and using technology more are a range of options E&LL are working through.</p>	
<p>MY report – page 7</p>	<p>Electively Home Educated (EHE): Chairs noted the reasons for why some children and young people are EHE, which were not as a consequence of the pandemic. Anxiety; lifestyle choice; and those who are not happy with school provision and “drop out” until they can find an appropriate place.</p> <p>Chairs heard that guidance on the process is low level, which states that one inspection is required per year for an individual young person but doing this for over 400 children and young people is a challenge. To combat this, an officer (with child protection expertise) is undertaking “risk based” inspection approach, with the inspection including testing that the young person is getting the right attainment and is safeguarded. If not, appropriate notices are served or discussions with the local school to try and get a return. Good headway is being made in this area and links with Children’s Services are in place as well.</p> <p>Chairs noted the Leader’s suggestion that some analysis be undertaken to better understand this area, including levels of attainment and the underlying reasons for EHE.</p>	<p>Action: An analysis of EHE trends has been undertaken. Further work is currently underway.</p> <p>The findings of this analysis and the Council’s response could be considered as part of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee work programme.</p>
<p>K1.14</p>	<p>ALN Funding: Chairs asked about ALN funding and support and difficulties with this, particularly in the primary sector. What is the response and how is it being addressed?</p>	<p>Recommendation Accepted: ALN funding review could form part of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee Work Programme.</p>

<p>MY report – page 8 K1.20 & K1.21</p>	<p>Chairs heard that Primary heads are seeing this as a funding freeze, but this is not the case – it's a change in mechanism. A formulaic process has been used to give them the funding up front, which links closely with the ALN reforms for schools to provide the support themselves.</p> <p>In terms of support, Chairs heard that there will be strengthened governance arrangements around an ALN Strategy Group. This means that the funding side of ALN and planning side will be brought together to tackle expectation of paperwork, manage workload and streamlining it to ensure support is on the ground and not spent filling in paperwork.</p> <p>ALN Strategy Group - three strands:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funds are allocated in the right places • Strategic overview of ALN across the City • Ensuring that the right processes and tracking are in place <p>Chairs sought assurances that the funding formula is easy to understand and flexible. Members heard that, for the current year, it doesn't address schools where there has been a large increase in ALN numbers as it is predicated on the previous year. What will be done is make sure there is a formula waiting to address this over time. The reason for this is to limit destabilising schools during a time when stability is critical.</p> <p>Chairs recommend that the ALN funding model review include the relevant scrutiny committee and form a priority area of work for the service area.</p>	
	<p>Children's Services – Accommodation for CLA Chairs noted that improvements are being made in this area in shifting the balance of care towards the lowest level of intervention possible. Significant improvements in areas that have had to be used. Now down to 3 unregistered</p>	<p>Observation Noted</p>

	<p>placements and these are currently in assessment with CIM. In-house opportunities have increased – quadrupling supply, but still a long way to go. Some delays due to building works.</p> <p>The Leader restated that unregistered does not mean unregulated, and there are examples and evidence where outcomes for individuals in this area have been very positive. The Chairs suggested that better communication on this could assure Members. Members noted that there had been a need to reshape provision in this area.</p>	
<p>MY Report – pages 8 & 9</p>	<p>Children’s Services - Working with Others:</p> <p>Members heard that this is an area that has caused some concern. Discussions are ongoing with SWP colleagues, and it is important that we know exactly what this means, particularly around the types of response they won't be providing. There is a concern about what this means for the council and health.</p> <p>There are a series of workshops being arranged by SWP (with council colleagues nominated to attend), but currently, the Council is still not clear about what this will mean. Assurances were given that as things develop, CYPSC will be kept informed. Chairs request that CASSC also be kept informed of the implications of changes by SWP.</p>	<p>Request Accepted:</p> <p>Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee and CASSC to receive update on the roll-out of the Right Place Right Time model and its implication for Council and partner services.</p>
<p>MY Report - Page 7</p>	<p>Decrease in Pupil numbers:</p> <p>Chairs sought assurances that the Council is constantly reviewing fluctuations and changes in pupil numbers and changing SOP proposals accordingly. Members were told that everything in this area is evidence based and has to be more flexible. This will be reflected in the SOP Strategy that is currently being updated, which will include flexible accommodation.</p>	<p>Observation Noted</p>

	<p>Members also asked how much head teachers are told about changes in pupil numbers. It was responded that head teachers are very aware (the Director gave the example of a meeting with all Heads the previous week where they were informed of population and migration statistics), and it is a frequent and ongoing discussion around budgets and managing of school places.</p>	
<p>WBO2 Cardiff is a great place to grow older MY report - Page 11</p>	<p>Adult Services Budget: Chairs noted the draft Mid-Year Performance report details that <i>'an overspend of approximately £2m on care is projected, though this is offset by underspends and other budget planning arrangements, so a balanced position is currently shown.'</i></p> <p>Chairs noted the verbal assurance provided at the meeting regarding overall cost pressures management in Adult Services – however recommend the narrative in the report be expanded to include this assurance / insight.</p> <p>Community Resource Team/ Hospital Discharge: Chairs noted the draft Report does provide an assessment of the issue of hospital discharge. Although the assessment provided does recognise issues remain, Chairs noted it makes no specific reference to the continued pressures on the Community Resource Team; or the initiatives CASSC Members are aware of to address ongoing pressures such as -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embedding a new call monitoring system for the carers • Returning the teams focus to only supporting individuals who require reablement (e.g., not double handed care) • Boost staff morale by providing the team with more regular updates / opportunities to contribute to the service areas vision for the future. <p>The Chair of CASSC also raised that in recent performance monitoring work undertaken by the committee, it was noted by CASSC Members that quarterly targets on the CRT KPI's had been removed.</p>	<p>Recommendation Accepted: Narrative amended on page 12, setting out that the detail can be reviewed in full in the <u>Month 6 Budget Monitoring Report</u> on 23rd November.</p>
<p>MY report - Page 12</p>		

	<p>Chairs noted the explanation given on the target's removal (i.e., the need to better reflect the quality of service).</p> <p>Chairs noted the update that a national set of indicators (together with health) is being worked on regarding hospital discharge, and there is also internal discussion on preparing a new package of data as part of the process for developing the forthcoming Corporate Plan.</p> <p>Chairs agree the CRT KPIs (numbers of hours / people accessed services) may not best reflect the quality of service, however, recommend, given the substantive work ongoing in the CRT to address the ongoing pressures within the team, this is captured in the report.</p> <p>At the end of the meeting, Chairs asked how well this service was prepared for dealing with Winter Pressures. Chairs noted the service is well-prepared, with the joined-up discharge process working well; however, Chairs noted there are pressures elsewhere on the pathway and that the new national set of indicators should provide the metrics to enable nuanced conversations to resolve these issues.</p> <p>Chairs recommend that, in the absence of the new metrics discussed at the meeting, that the Q2 performance against the CRT targets are included in the report, to illustrate the pressures on the service.</p>	<p>Recommendation Accepted: Page 12 of the report has been amended to reflect the development of a national set of indicators regarding hospital discharge, as well as the local work being progressed to establish a new package of performance metrics for consideration in the next Corporate Plan.</p> <p>Recommendation Partially Accepted: The CRT indicators were removed from the current Corporate Plan as they were not considered appropriate. This was the subject of discussion with the Performance Panel during the target-setting session in February. The CRT data</p>
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Corporate Plan – page 19		continues to be monitored at service area level, however as noted in the Corporate Plan, new indicators are being developed which will be the subject of future discussion with the Panel as part of the process of developing the new Corporate Plan.
Corporate Plan – page 19	<p>Older People Employment: Chairs noted the draft Mid-Year Performance report does not contain an update on this Corporate Plan step. Chairs noted officers’ response that there is a comprehensive update in the dashboard narrative, with good progress.</p> <p>Chairs therefore recommend a paragraph setting out progress in delivering the Older People Employment step is included in the Mid-Year Performance report.</p>	<p>Recommendation Accepted: A paragraph setting out the performance against this step (S2.02) has been included in the report on page 11. A full update on progress is included in the Corporate Performance Dashboard.</p>
<p>WBO3 Supporting people out of poverty</p> <p>Council House Repairs: Although Chairs recognise Council House Repairs does not have a specific step in the Corporate Plan, through CASSC’s performance monitoring work Chairs are aware of the ongoing performance issue in the Responsive Repairs Units regarding the continued and notable number of outstanding repair jobs and significant pressures around damp and mould maintenance.</p> <p>Given the importance of this ongoing performance issue, and the importance of providing greater visibility, and the likelihood of high levels of public interest, Chairs recommend insight into the performance pressures within the Responsive Repairs Unit is provided in the final Mid-Year Performance report, including the extent of work undertaken by the team (e.g. the average number of repairs they complete and how long it has taken to respond to) against the number of</p>		<p>Recommendation Accepted: A summary of performance and delivery pressures for the Council’s Responsive Repairs Unit has been included on page 18.</p>

	<p>outstanding repair jobs and the ongoing work to address this issue such as: the launch of a 'Repairs Online' service (in the summer of 2023), which allows contract-holders to report and monitor progress of their repair requests online; introduction of a dedicated damp and mould team; and commissioning of new resource within the in-house repairs team and through external contractors.</p> <p>Further, Chairs also recommend, in the forthcoming Corporate Plan development process, due consideration is given to this being a specific Step, with relevant KPIs, drawing on the KPIs provided in the service area's Directorate Delivery Plan.</p>	<p>Recommendation Accepted: The inclusion of appropriate performance metrics will be considered as part of the development of the Corporate Plan refresh.</p>
	<p>Enforcement Powers on Landlords:</p> <p>Chairs noted the enforcement powers available to the local authority against poor landlords and therefore stressed the need for the authority to 'lead from the front' in terms of quality of council homes.</p> <p>Within the discussion, Chairs noted, and welcomed the assurance that the Executive holds high significance in resolving repair issues for council contract holders.</p> <p>Chairs further noted that CASSC have recently been briefed that in some instances, particularly in the private rented sector, contract holders may refuse entry for repair services. If this is an issue also apparent for the council's Response Repairs Service, where contract holders do not allow entry, this may be worthwhile including in the forthcoming Step or KPI (recommended above).</p>	<p>Observation Noted</p>
<p>MY report – Pages 14-15</p>	<p>Into Work Services:</p>	<p>Observation Noted</p>

	<p>Chairs noted the draft Mid-Year Performance report and KPIs associated with Into Work Services highlight the high numbers of people supported, with the cumulative total up to the end of Q2 nearly equalling the whole year target and asked whether there is sufficient resource available to assist all those who require Into Work services.</p> <p>Chairs note the Leader's response that the Council has worked to attract different funding streams, such as Shared Prosperity Funding and DWP monies, to support this work and so there is currently sufficient resource; however, the concern is whether funding will continue post -2025.</p>	
<p>Corporate Plan – page 26</p>	<p>In Work Support: Chairs highlighted that they had previously recommended an In-Work support step be included in the Corporate Plan and were pleased that this had been accepted; however, the draft Mid-Year Performance report does not include an update on this work and Chairs sought assurance on progress.</p> <p>Chairs therefore recommend a paragraph setting out progress in delivering the In Work Support step is included in the Mid-Year Performance report.</p>	<p>Recommendation Accepted: Progress in delivering the In Work Support step (S3.03) has been included in the Mid-Year Performance report on page 16.</p>
<p>WBO4 Safe, confident and empowered communities</p>		
<p>MY report – Page 18</p>	<p>Adult Protection Enquiries: The Report notes the number of adult protection enquiries recorded has increased significantly in 2023/24 with 1,280 enquiries received at Quarter 2, compared to only 654 at Quarter 2 in 2022/23.</p> <p>Though it is noted the increase in numbers is due to more effective ways of reporting enquiries, Chairs requested further insight into what these enquiries are related to.</p>	<p>Recommendation Accepted: Although there has been an increased demand for services since 2022/23, the change to the recording methodology is the primary reason for the increase.</p> <p>The way that referrals are recorded in Carefirst was changed in January</p>

	<p>Chairs noted this will be investigated and so recommend, due consideration be given to if this increase in number is primarily due to more effective reporting arrangements, or if this increase in data, and the nature of the enquires are signposting a particular issue in Adult Services that may need addressing. If so, this assessment / insight must be included in the final report.</p>	<p>2023 to reflect the full workload of the Adult Safeguarding team in regard to statutory duties. Previously referrals received that did not meet the statutory Adult at Risk definition (S126 Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014) were not recorded. Since January, all referrals are recorded. For this reason, previous years' data is not comparable with 2023/24 and the Corporate Performance Dashboard will be amended to reflect this.</p> <p>Adult protection enquiries can be split into the following categories: Physical; Sexual; Emotional/psychological; Financial; Neglect. A detailed breakdown is available on request.</p>
<p>MY report – Page 17-18 K4.17</p>	<p>Libraries & Hubs: Chairs noted the positive story shown by the number of Green indicators associated with this step, coupled with the recent Welsh Public Library Standards report that shows good service provision. However, Chairs highlighted the performance indicator for number of volunteer hours, K4.17, is Red and asked whether this is causing an issue with achieving the budget saving that was predicated on use of volunteers in libraries and hubs.</p>	<p>Observation Noted</p>

	<p>Chairs noted the response that performance has improved to date in Q3, largely because volunteer mentors are now in place. Chairs note the Leader's point that this illustrates the limitations of relying on volunteers to deliver services, even where there is a good record of volunteering and where this is coupled with other aims, such as assisting people into work.</p>	
<p>Corporate Plan – page 37</p>	<p>Shared Regulatory Services (SRS): Chairs noted the draft Mid-Year Performance report does not contain an update on this Corporate Plan step. Chairs noted the Chief Executive's response that Cabinet are due to receive the SRS Annual Report shortly and therefore Chairs recommend a paragraph setting out progress in delivering the Shared Regulatory Services step is included in the Mid-Year Performance report.</p>	<p>Recommendation Accepted: Updates on performance against all steps which cover work delivered by SRS are included in the Corporate Performance Dashboard – the steps are S3.04, S4.03, S4.04, S4.09, S4.17 and S6.05.</p> <p>All steps relating to SRS are Green and this progress is reflected in the report.</p> <p>Established governance arrangements are in place for SRS. Managerial leadership is provided by the Officer Management Board, which the Director of Economic Development sits on. Oversight by Elected Members is provided by the SRS Joint Committee – Cardiff is represented by the Cabinet Member for Transport and Strategic Planning, and the Chair of the Licensing and Public Protection Committees.</p>

<p>MY Report – page 20</p>	<p>Fields in Trust:</p> <p>Chairs noted the draft Mid-Year Performance report does not contain an update on this Corporate Plan step. Chairs noted the Leader’s response that there has been dialogue with Fields in Trust, with a shortlist of potential sites due in Q3 and a report on progress to be included in the End-Year Performance report.</p> <p>Healthy, Active Population:</p> <p>Chairs noted that achieving the overall aim of a healthy, active population relies on partnership working, with Public Health leading, and a whole system approach that encourages and supports people to move more and eat well. Chairs noted pilot interventions are underway in Riverside and Llanrumney focusing on supporting and motivating people regarding moving more and eating well.</p>	<p>Observation Noted</p>
<p>MY report - page</p>	<p>Healthy, Active Population:</p> <p>Chairs noted that achieving the overall aim of a healthy, active population relies on partnership working, with Public Health leading, and a whole system approach that encourages and supports people to move more and eat well. Chairs noted pilot interventions are underway in Riverside and Llanrumney focusing on supporting and motivating people regarding moving more and eating well.</p>	<p>Observation Noted</p>
<p>WBO5 A capital city that works for Wales</p>		
<p>MY report – pages 17 & 22</p>	<p>Recovery and Regeneration - 15-minute cities:</p> <p>Chairs noted the draft Mid-Year Performance report details successes and the current economic challenges but sought views on progress with steps on recovery and regeneration, including the 15-minute city approach and toolkit.</p> <p>Chairs noted the response that the report captures the notable wins to date and recognises delays that are beyond the Council’s control, such as delays related to Cardiff Parkway, and that, overall, there is significant confidence in the economic renewal direction.</p>	<p>Observation Noted</p>
<p>K5.02</p>	<p>Jobs Created/ Safeguarded:</p>	<p>Observation Noted</p>

	<p>Chairs noted indicator K5.02 is red but that it is anticipated the target will be achieved by year end, due to forthcoming announcements about jobs being created in Cardiff.</p>	
<p>MY report – page 23</p>	<p>Venues and Income: Chairs noted the draft Mid-Year Performance report details good performance in terms of attendees at Council venues but note that this does not translate to meeting income targets for council venues and sought views on this and measures being taken to address this.</p> <p>Chairs noted there are several reasons for this, including: during covid, free access to Cardiff Castle was introduced and this is still in place and this, coupled with the events programme at the Castle, has led to an increase in the numbers using this space, but this has not translated to visitors paying to enter the rooms of the Castle , which is reducing the Castle income and the closure of St. David’s Hall.</p> <p>Chairs noted the covid recovery reserve has been used to mitigate the loss of income. Chairs noted the Leader’s comments that there needs to be discussion about how future budgets utilise income generation and whether there needs to be consideration of externalising certain assets, which would lead to surety of income generation, for example the Cardiff White-Water Rafting Centre could become part of the wider ISV package operated by a private company.</p> <p>Chairs noted the Council’s approach to income generation is set out in the Medium-Term Financial Plan and this is important for the Budget Strategy going forward, with challenge and review of the robustness of fees and charges.</p> <p>Chairs highlighted the need to ensure inclusive discussions about significant service changes happen as early as possible and in public, to enable interested backbench members and members of the public to be aware of issues and to</p>	<p>Observation Noted</p>

	<p>work collaboratively to assist in identifying possible resolution of issues; this would also help ensure transparency. Chairs noted the Leader's response that the administration aim to achieve this where possible, with decisions taken outside the budget process where possible, but that sometimes time pressures do not enable this.</p>	
<p>WBO6 One Planet Cardiff</p>		
<p>MY report – page 28</p>	<p>Recycling: Chairs note that while there are many reasons why Cardiff are not currently meeting our recycling targets and that there is a significant gap to where we need to be in a relatively short space of time, how patient/ tolerant will Welsh Government be?</p> <p>The Leader commented that the expectation from Welsh Government is that we need to roll out separated recycling across the city and that it is anticipated that this will deliver the desired outcomes, although it was acknowledged that this has been delayed.</p>	<p>Observation Noted</p>
<p>MY report – page 26</p>	<p>Transport: Chairs noted that while many of the exciting projects happening in Cardiff are out of our control, many are, for example the cycleways, and these have completion dates that continually slip. Does the delay and then the increased costs impact the deliverability of these projects that are within our control?</p>	<p>Recommendation Accepted: Moving forward, the Council's policy framework will establish a more explicit relationship between transport projects committed to within the Corporate Plan and the</p>

	<p>It is recommended that when the new Corporate Plan is written if projects are no longer included, that a clear and full explanation/rationale is provided. The Leader noted that where projects are within our control, we have more confidence they will be delivered. It was also noted that much of the monies spent in relation to the South Wales Metro are currently being spend outside Cardiff.</p>	<p>performance updates provided against them.</p> <p>For any projects removed from the Corporate Plan 2024-27, a clear and full rationale will be provided to Committee.</p> <p>A review of the delivery of transport projects could form part of the future work programme of the Environmental Scrutiny Committee.</p>
<p>Corporate Plan – page 50</p>	<p>Llanrumney Bridge: Chairs noted the draft Mid-Year Performance report does not provide an update on this step and sought a progress update.</p> <p>Chairs note and accept the Leader’s offer to provide a written update on this step to the Economy & Culture Scrutiny Committee, as the committee that has previously scrutinised this issue, and to all Scrutiny Chairs.</p>	<p>Action: A written update to be provided to Scrutiny Committees by the Directorates on the delivery of Llanrumney Bridge.</p>
<p>WBO7 Modernising and integrating our public services</p>		
<p>K7.04</p>	<p>Capital Receipts: Chairs noted that delivery of capital receipts at Q2 is below target, with K7.04 marked Red, and asked for views on this. Chairs noted the response that the Council takes a long-term view and seeks to achieve the best possible capital receipt, which can mean in-year targets are missed, but that, overall, there is confidence that the target will be met.</p>	<p>Observation Noted</p>

	<p>Customers: Chairs highlighted that whilst the draft Mid-Year Performance includes a KPI for customer satisfaction, there is a need to ensure a more systematic approach to capturing citizen voice. The Chairs requested that the Ask Cardiff survey results, which includes customer satisfaction, will be made available to the Scrutiny Committees when published in January 2024.</p>	<p>Action: All Scrutiny Committees to receive a copy of the Ask Cardiff Report as soon as it is published.</p>
<p>MY report – page 32 & 33 K7.11</p>	<p>Workforce: Chairs sought views on the challenges facing the Council regarding workforce issues. Chairs noted that local government pay has dropped in value since 2010, leading to recruitment issues in some areas, which the Council addresses via market supplements if required. Chairs noted that, in relation to strike action, the Council is keen to make reasonable adjustments to resolve disputes and reduce disruption to residents, working across all unions to enable this. Chairs noted that, in relation to grievance complaints, the Council has a process for dealing with these that looks at the specificity of complaints, investigating and testing these independently whilst also ensuring that the Council’s duty of care to all staff is maintained.</p>	<p>Observation Noted</p>
<p>GENERAL Cross Cutting Issues</p>		
	<p>Workforce Chairs noted their awareness that vacancies and sickness rates in Adult Services has gone up and welcomed the recognition in the draft Mid-Year Report on the services area’s Workforce Development Plan to mitigate pressures. During the discussion Chairs sought insight and assurance on the use of agency social workers in Adult Services including the cost pressures this measure may present. Chairs wish to thank officers for their initial insight and advise the CASSC Committee have confirmed they wish to explore this issue of the use of agency</p>	<p>Observation Noted</p>

workers in Adult Services in detail and have scheduled it as an agenda item in a forthcoming committee meeting.

On general workforce matters, Chairs stressed the importance of remaining mindful to deliverability and capacity when managing workforce pressures (across the authority) and were informed there is an awareness within the executive on the possibility of moving resource around the authority as a way of managing workforce pressures.

Chairs also sought assurance the work force pressures apparent in the Council's Community Resource Team will be effectively managed and addressed; particularly in light of forthcoming winter months.

Chairs note the progress being made in the wider hospital discharge pathways and were informed key issues in delay can be more aligned to issues within the ward part of the process.

Chairs also wish to confirm ongoing conversation are being had between CASSC Members and the service area on which data metrics could be reported to the committee in their Quarterly Performance Reports to provide CASSC Members with a full insight into the hospital discharge process (alongside the national KPI's being drawn).

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**CYNGOR CAERDYDD
CARDIFF COUNCIL**

POLICY REVIEW & PERFORMANCE

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

13 December 2023

RLDP JOINT SCRUTINY INQUIRY – Final Report

Reason for this Report

1. To seek Committee's approval for the final draft of the Joint Scrutiny Inquiry on Cardiff's Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP), prior to its presentation to Cabinet.

Background - Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP)

2. The RLDP is a crucial strategic document which will govern the future development and economic growth of Cardiff up to 2036. It will be a key driver of investment, competitiveness, growth and environmental protection in Cardiff and will have implications for the wider city region.
3. The next stage of the RLDP is the *Preferred Strategy*, which will set out the preferred level of housing and jobs growth for the plan and the spatial strategy to deliver this growth. It will also contain a number of draft strategic key policies – such as sustainable transport, protecting the environment and delivering quality new development – which will inform the preparation of a Deposit Plan.
4. Welsh Government guidance requires the Preferred Strategy to be founded on a robust and up to date evidence base; this is tested during the independent examination of the Deposit Plan.

The Scrutiny Inquiry Process

5. It is essential that the Preferred Strategy is subject to robust scrutiny prior to being finalised by Cabinet. Therefore, the Scrutiny Chairs agreed that a joint task and finish group be established, consisting of the Chairs of the five Scrutiny Committees and volunteers from each committee.

6. It is anticipated that the cross committee task and finish group will continue to meet periodically following approval of the Preferred Strategy, to undertake scrutiny of future stages of the RLDP.
7. At its meeting on 22 March 2023, Members considered the Scrutiny Chairs' request for expressions of interest to take part in a cross-committee scrutiny inquiry as part of the next stage of the RLDP. Cllrs Ash-Edwards, Henshaw, Hunt and Thomson expressed an interest in joining the Chair, Cllr Williams, in representing this committee.
8. The RDLP cross-committee group met on the 7th of July 2023 to discuss how it could most effectively scrutinise this issue, given its breadth. The group agreed that prioritising three topics of focus would be most effective; and that smaller sub-groups would be established to undertake this work.
9. The three priority topics agreed were:
 - Securing Planning Obligations/s106 – Chaired by Cllr Joel Williams;
 - Transport – Chaired by Cllr Owen Jones;
 - Local and District Centres – Chaired by Cllr Peter Wong.
10. The timescales all three sub-groups worked towards were:
 - Evidence Gathering – October 2023
 - Drafting of key findings, recommendations and report – November 2023
 - Submission to full committees – December 2023

Way Forward

11. The final draft Joint Report of the five scrutiny committees is attached at **Appendix 1**. It has been agreed by all members who participated in the three sub-groups and noted by all other scrutiny committees. Members of PRAP are invited to consider the final draft prior to its submission to Cabinet.
12. Chairs of the Economy & Culture and Environment Scrutiny Committees, Cllrs Owen Jones and Peter Wong respectively, will attend the meeting in their capacity of sub-group chairs, to support consideration of this item.

Legal Implications

13. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters, there are no direct legal implications. However, legal implications may arise when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet/Council will set out any legal implications arising from those recommendations. All decisions taken by or on behalf of the Council must (a) be within the legal powers of the Council; (b) comply with any procedural requirement imposed by law; (c) be within the powers of the body or person exercising powers on behalf of the Council; (d) be undertaken in accordance with the procedural requirements imposed by the Council e.g. Scrutiny Procedure Rules; (e) be fully and properly informed; (f) be properly motivated; (g) be taken having regard to the Council's fiduciary duty to its taxpayers; and (h) be reasonable and proper in all the circumstances.

Financial Implications

14. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters, there are no direct financial implications at this stage in relation to any of the work programme. However, financial implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet/Council will set out any financial implications arising from those recommendations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are recommended to:

- i. Approve the proposed Final Joint RLDP Inquiry report attached at **Appendix 1**.
- ii. Authorise the Chair of the Policy Review & Performance Scrutiny Committee to submit the report to the Cabinet on behalf of all five scrutiny committees.

LEANNE WESTON
Interim Deputy Monitoring Officer
7 December 2023



Craffu - Ymgysylltu heddiw, Llunio yfory - Scrutiny - Engaging today, Shaping tomorrow

An Inquiry Report of the:
Joint Scrutiny Committee

DRAFT

REPLACEMENT LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

December 2023



Cardiff Council

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FOREWORD

To be completed



Councillor Joel Williams
Chair, Policy Performance &
Review Scrutiny Committee.



Councillor Owen Jones
Chair, Environmental
Scrutiny Committee.



Councillor Peter Wong
Chair, Economy & Culture
Scrutiny Committee.

December 2023

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. To harness the power of Scrutiny Member voices and experience to add value and encourage ambition in the RLDP Preferred Strategy, focusing on district and local centres, securing planning obligations, and managing transport impacts, by:
 - a. Understanding national and local policy priorities.
 - b. Engaging expert and stakeholder voices.
 - c. Researching good practice examples, which are capable of being replicated in Cardiff.
 - d. Identifying policy 'hooks' needed in the Replacement Local Development Plan to deliver:
 - i. **Securing Planning Obligations**
 - A strengthened SP6 by:
 - Exploring how current policy and process in respect of planning obligations and section 106 agreements could be strengthened.
 - Exploring how communication and narrative on planning obligations could be simplified, more accessible and transparent.
 - Addressing issues in relation to carbon neutral and biodiversity requirements.
 - Making recommendations on how future/associated SPG could be framed.
 - ii. **Transport & Active Travel**
 - A strengthened T5 that ensures adequate travel infrastructure is proposed in new developments, which fully addresses the needs of communities and transport providers without negatively impacting on biodiversity and nature.
 - iii. **District and Local Centres**
 - Planning Retail Policies that promote and protect vibrant, viable, busy and relevant district and local centres.
 - Planning Retail Policies that enable and support strong SPG that promote and protect district and local centres.

2. To make evidence-based recommendations to shape the RLDP Preferred Strategy.

Output/ Outcomes:

- Gathering additional expert and stakeholder views and good practice evidence.
- Ensure the RLDP Preferred Strategy delivers in accordance with the Well Being of Future Generations Act requirements.
- Recommendations to the Cabinet that shape the RLDP Preferred Strategy.
- Deliver a unified voice across all Scrutiny Committees.

Members of the Task Groups:

Securing Planning Obligations

Councillor Joel Williams (Chair)

Councillor Saleh Ahmed

Councillor Jane Henshaw

Councillor Peter Jenkins

Councillor Margaret Lewis

Councillor Helen Lloyd-Jones

Councillor Peter Wong

Transport & Active Travel

Councillor Owen Jones (Chair)

Councillor Andrea Gibson

Councillor Peter Jenkins

Councillor John Lancaster

Councillor Margaret Lewis

Councillor Helen Lloyd Jones

Councillor Rhys Taylor

Councillor Peter Wong

District & Local Centres

Councillor Peter Wong (Chair)

Councillor Mike Ash-Edwards

Councillor Garry Hunt

Councillor Helen Lloyd Jones

CONTEXT FOR INQUIRY

The Cardiff Local Development Plan (LDP) is the Council's key land use planning document. It will set out policies and proposals for the future development and use of land in Cardiff up to 2036, in line with legislative requirements. When adopted it will replace the existing structure and local plans for the city and form the basis for decisions on individual planning applications.

The LDP Preferred Strategy Report was open for public consultation for a 10-week period from 27 July to 5 October 2023. This consultation is an important stage in the preparation of the plan and offers everyone with an interest in the future development of Cardiff an opportunity to influence the plan before the Council finalises its proposals. As well as an online 'Virtual Consultation Room', the Council arranged a series of public events throughout August and September both community based and drop-in sessions.

A cross-committee Task and Finish group was created under the auspices of PRAP to give a single response from Scrutiny on the LDP preferred strategy as part of the consultation process. Membership of the task group was invited from across the scrutiny committees, with the report going back to the Policy Review and Performance Scrutiny Committee for consideration.

The Preferred Strategy Report is not the full draft plan but sets out the key issues and options within the LDP and the Council's broad proposals for addressing these.

HEADLINE FINDINGS

- HF.1.** The findings and recommendations of the previous Supplementary Planning Guidance Inquiry (October 2022) are relevant to the RLDP Preferred Strategy, particularly:
- a. LDP policies need to be evidence-based, precisely written, detail the Council’s specific requirements, the rationale for these, and the criteria where the Council will make an exception and not apply the policy. They have to contain detailed definitions, thresholds, numbers, percentages, targets and measures as relevant, set out the impact seeking to avoid (harms) and consequences if not avoided.
 - b. SPGs cannot be used to make or amend policy – therefore the LDP policies have to contain wording necessary to ensure requirements met. SPG provide technical guidance to support LDP policy. They must be strongly worded and strongly linked to the LDP, stating which LDP policy and paragraph it is supplementing and that it is a material consideration. They should use positive, precise language, evidence and explain how thresholds, numbers, percentages, targets and measures are calculated, evidence and explain how the impact seeking to avoid is measured and how consequences of not avoiding harm, the harms arising, are measured, and provide details on exceptional circumstances and how these are worked out and applied.
- HF.2.** Local authorities need to conform to the Welsh Government framework and direction as otherwise their LDP will not pass Examination. Therefore, Cardiff Council needs to ensure the RLDP policies and associated SPG incorporate and reflect Welsh Government’s framework and direction.
- HF.3.** Crafting RLDP policies must focus on resisting harmful development and encouraging development that is in the best interests of the people who live and visit the area. Planning policies must ensure appropriate information is provided to planners and planning committee members to enable them to exercise judgement effectively.

KEY FINDINGS

SECURING PLANNING OBLIGATIONS

Existing Policy & Practice

- KF.1** The system of planning obligations is a sound one, delivering benefits for councils and communities. S106 agreements are legally binding, enforceable, fair and relevant to the planning proposal. Clarity of what the Council will seek through planning obligations from developments is set out in Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG). The SPG also provides detail of thresholds that will be sought for particular requirements, such as affordable housing or education contributions.
- KF.2** S106 agreements must address the impact of a development and not seek to enhance an area. There is a risk of s106 planning obligations becoming a wish list as the list of possibilities keeps growing. The more costs there are to delivering a scheme, the less money is available for affordable housing.
- KF.3** It is unclear which high level Council plans and strategies provide the context and priorities for determining planning obligations. The Cardiff Infrastructure Plan should be a clear, concise and focussed strategic document setting out the whole picture. However, it is difficult to locate, and experienced technical staff employed by developers have difficulty understanding the Councils' aspirations and priorities. The Planning Advisory Service has produced a self-evaluation tool that may prove useful to planners in reflecting on how Cardiff is performing in this area.
- KF.4** S106 contributions agreed with developers are not always index linked currently. It takes up to a year to secure a s106 agreement and therefore the Council should include a clause in all agreements that contribution values are index linked.
- KF.5** There is no interest paid on s106 monies held and no investment gain added to s106 projects. Any interest accrued on invested s106 monies improves the Council's capital financing position.
- KF.6** S106 monies can remain unspent for many years. It is difficult to justify why this is the case and the Council was recently exposed in the press as holding £23.2 million of unspent s106 funds. All s106 agreements have a clause for the developer to request monies back should the Council not use it. Some authorities charge a 5% monitoring fee to facilitate s106 spend.

- KF.7** An alternative to s106 agreements is use of the Community Infrastructure Level (CIL). Some Welsh councils use CIL, as does Bristol City Council. CIL is applied per square metre of development; however, the point of collection does not determine how the money is spent. The Council does not currently apply CIL however Bristol considers it an important source of funding, allocating monies (per £) to strategic infrastructure (80p) local area committees (15p) and administration costs (5p).
- KF.8** There is a clear requirement for a dedicated staffing resource to lead on s106 agreements. S106 lead officers should be clearly identifiable and visible to all stakeholders. Cardiff has such a resource in place however there is an opportunity to raise the profile and co-ordination responsibilities of s106 lead officer(s) both internally and externally.
- KF.9** There is a role for a community engagement officer on large development sites, to ensure effective integration of new and existing communities. Funding for this role should be considered a legitimate s106 request.

Improving Policy & Processes

- KF.10** It appears that currently, Directorates work in silos. The RLDP presents an opportunity to improve round table representation in a joint effort to understand the priorities, particularly for larger developments. Currently no internal cross-cutting meetings take place. Where planning obligations are concerned, issues could be identified early for tackling planning obligation contributions. For example, are roads wide enough for waste removal collections? This also provides a chance for Directorates to develop internal agreements between departments on where the budget line sits.
- KF.11** Whilst individual developers and external witnesses stated that they had a good working relationship with Planning, they suggested that further work on building closer working relationships across developers and commercial agencies could be developed too.
- KF.12** The need for s106 discussions to start earlier in the planning process was highlighted across all witnesses. In trying to make a scheme work, it is important that all services are involved and there is complete transparency early on. There is a need for everyone being in a room together early. Early and positive engagement with officers is key to agreeing off-site alternatives/contributions in lieu.

- KF.13** The Council appears to have a lack of legal resources to draft s106 agreements in a timely manner. Developers would pay their own legal teams to draft the agreement if the Council agreed and thereby speed up the process.
- KF.14** In light of this, it was suggested that there is an opportunity for Cardiff to lead the way on developing a standard S106 template for S106 agreements. The s106 agreement could set out the timescales / phasing of the planning obligations in relation to the development itself. It would also present a clearer picture of what is required from the development, by both the Council and the developers. The section 106 template would also enable improved monitoring of the planned phasing and triggers to ensure the delivery is on track. If it fails to be delivered, planning enforcement can be used to enable delivery.
- KF.15** To improve the current process, there is a need for enhanced monitoring. A review of the annual monitoring report could have a much better monitoring framework within it – how much is being secured? Look at timeliness of spend - how much is the Council spending? Is the Council being negotiated down in certain areas? Where and what is the Council doing about that? Do our policies need reviewing in light of this?
- KF.16** In relation to “green issues” including biodiversity and carbon neutral initiatives, other local authorities stated that many councils were in the same position on this, and not much progress had been made. Further guidance and direction was awaited from Welsh Government on this issue. Stakeholders were generally supportive of the principle of green issues being part of any SPG, but with the caveat that, should the Council wish to adopt this as a priority, it should not simply be added to the list, but be part of any review into priorities – with the council being clear as to why this is now a priority, and what effect this would have on other priorities.

Supplementary Planning Guidance

- KF.17** Much work in this area has been addressed by the SPG Task & Finish Group report of 2022, which can be found in the link here - [Ref: RDB/SW/DB/10 \(modern.gov.co.uk\)](#).
- KF.18** There was clear support for the SPG in this area, with many witnesses stating the policy is robust. However, they suggested that the SPG could be enhanced further – particularly around viability.

- KF.19** Other local authorities' SPGs are a lot more concise, and stakeholders suggested that Cardiff could take the opportunity to revisit the size and length of the document. Stakeholders highlighted that the current SPG document includes a great deal of detail of national and local policy which is arguably beyond what would be expected to be in SPG on S106.
- KF.20** Bristol stated that a SPG document takes a year to secure agreement and therefore it is important to draft a policy as foolproof to change as possible. E.g., ensure it includes clauses to ensure contribution values are index linked.
- KF.21** The SPG should set out clear expectations of what is expected from developments and can deal with specific requirements where off-site mitigation would be more appropriate / feasible for particular sites.
- KF.22** It is critical that the SPG is clear, accurate and there is openness between the developer and the council. Developers will always push barriers and it is only 75% into a project that the developer is in profit.
- KF.23** The SPG can also provide detail of thresholds which will be sought for particular requirements such as affordable housing, or education contributions.
- KF.24** Formulae in the adopted SPG linked to number of dwellings (for things like on-site provision of public open space) can break down when dealing with high-density urban sites.

Viability

- KF.25** Planning obligations policy is robust, however should be enhanced further, particularly around viability. The viability report is a useful tool that provides more information with which the Council can negotiate with developers. Viability assessments allow planners to take a balanced view on s106 contributions, which is particularly important on brownfield sites.
- KF.26** There is a Welsh Government pre-application pack, that now requires greater viability assessment up front, and therefore there should be less challenge expected by developers. Housing officers are of the view the Council is not allowed to publish details of viability assessments.
- KF.27** There is currently no financial involvement of the Council's finance experts at the viability stage. Should there be?
- KF.28** Viability assessments take a very long time to be reviewed, adding more cost to the project and delaying the start of a development. Delays are one of the biggest

issues faced by developers because there are cost implications that need to be addressed.

- KF.29** The viability assessment may need to address a restricted time for the development to be delivered, with clear processes for dealing with the timescales for implementation.
- KF.30** The length of time taken to complete the viability assessment process needs to be reviewed. The Council may need to be more robust about who it appoints to undertake reviews on its behalf. Currently, viability assessments take a very long time to be reviewed as the District Valuer Service used by the Council is over subscribed. There can be conflict between who is writing the viability report on behalf of the developer and who the Council uses to verify the viability report.
- KF.31** There is an opportunity for greater scrutiny of viability assessment reports. Bristol City Council has adopted a full council resolution that viability appraisals be made public and available for scrutiny, and now schemes are always considered by committee.
- KF.32** Bristol City Council also publish its agreed viability assessments on the Council's website (within planning obligations dedicated pages).
- KF.33** The cost of viability assessments is a factor in the affordability of projects. Developers' agents report that care should be given to front-loading obligations that put an additional strain on viability, and a balance may need to be struck between timeliness and the overall cost of the obligations. Where s106 calculations are unrealistic smaller developers must pay for a viability assessment in order to demonstrate that the scheme cannot afford the calculation proposed by the Council. Note that Bristol City Council has its viability appraisals assessed by a third party, with costs charged to the applicant.
- KF.34** The process of viability reporting and assessment would benefit from streamlining. A good way forward would be the production of a standard viability model and template for use across Wales.

Affordable Housing

- KF.35** There is an overwhelming demand for affordable/social housing in Cardiff. This is not an unusual picture in Wales or across the UK and other local authorities are facing the same challenges in this area. There is a need to explore ways in which the Council could “unlock” other available options.

- KF.36** It is important that the Council has a separate, stand-alone affordable housing policy, as the rules change frequently. A stand-alone policy (or a review of this policy if already in place) needs to be regularly reviewed and redrafted as rules change.
- KF.37** Stakeholders highlighted that current policy is less robust on affordable housing and questioned whether S106 is the right vehicle to deliver - could the Council increase affordable housing levels rather than expect a range of S106?
- KF.38** Viability assessments result in affordable housing being challenged, particularly on brownfield sites. Witnesses stated that some small developers may design out affordable housing from their schemes, stating in the viability report that the scheme would pose a management issue. Affordable housing is watered down due to the viability argument put forward by the developer.
- KF.39** Cardiff's 2017 SPG sets out that the Council will pay £60,000 per affordable housing unit, and that this sum will be reviewed annually. However, it has only been reviewed once since 2017. Witnesses stated that this should be reviewed as a matter of priority, and that this be reviewed regularly in line with Council policy.
- KF.40** The use of discounted market rents as a form of affordable housing has been used in areas such as Manchester, Leeds and Birmingham, with a 20% discount to market rent, which is owned and managed by the private sector.
- KF.41** The RLDP provides the potential to revisit/review shared ownership schemes and other measures that allow people to afford to buy/rent properties. One witness suggested that if the affordable housing builds could be levelled up, it may encourage the development of more affordable housing on the same quality standards as a private home. It is acknowledged that WHQS applies to social housing.

Communications, Accessibility & Transparency

- KF.42** Key stakeholders have difficulty accessing information on s106 agreements. There is great public interest in s106 obligations and clarity of communication about what the Council will be seeking through planning obligations is important. Stakeholders must be able to find information easily. Such information needs to be available, publicly communicated and obvious. It is not clear where the public can have sight of Cardiff's s106 planning obligation register.

- KF.43** Members are currently seen as the route to communication with residents on s106 agreements, and it is assumed that members both drive and monitor s106 spend in their wards.
- KF.44** The Council’s website would benefit from a dedicated planning obligations/ s106 page. Evidence gathered suggests the following information is made accessible on these pages: overarching vision (high level Council plans; SPG etc); outcomes of viability assessments; an annual statement of new s106 contributions secured; what these contributions are; what has been spent so far; what the contributions have been spent on; in-year regular updates to include details of how and where s106 (and any other) monies are being spent on a development; details of what these are; what has been requested; a “flow of funds” showing outcomes of what the money has been spent on.
- KF.45** Public opinion would benefit from a better understanding of developer contributions. Developers consider there is little public visibility of which services have been paid for with s106 monies. Therefore, a clearer narrative is required explaining that development generates s106 monies from developers, which in turn pays for improved community services.
- KF.46** To improve community integration, and public understanding of developers funding of s106 agreements, the Council should ensure site boards are erected at an early stage following the granting of planning permission. These boards should state clearly that planning approval has been granted on the basis that the developer will provide X, Y & Z facilities/services (with sums allocated alongside), as set out in the s106 agreement.
- KF.47** Developers consider an online toolkit would be useful, as found in several other authorities. This could be used as an early reference point, to calculate what a developers s106 contributions per square foot might be. The toolkit could also set out the Council’s priorities.
- KF.48** It is acknowledged that in order to deliver improvements in this area, funding would need to be found. Therefore, exploring “other” funding to develop this work is key.

TRANSPORT & ACTIVE TRAVEL

Strategic Direction

- KF.49** Local and national policy has been strengthened to support the development of sustainable transport and active travel. However, the application of these policies in relation to new developments is variable and the local authority's enforcement of policies/legislation or any planning conditions needs to be strengthened.
- KF.50** Early consultation on design and master planning of new developments, must involve stakeholders and transport providers to ensure that provision/infrastructure meet the needs of the local community.

Location of New Developments

- KF.51** To increase active and sustainable travel uptake, there needs to be a careful planning when developing transport interchanges.
- KF.52** The Council's Active Travel Network map sets out the Council's long-term aspiration for a connected network and it must be taken into consideration when determining the location of new developments (with adequate contributions from the developers to construct those networks as appropriate).
- KF.53** There have been lost opportunities to restore historic travel corridors, with previous sites allowing developers to build houses over them e.g., Ferry Road.

Design Requirements

- KF.54** New developments must have local amenities provided as soon as possible; this will help reduce the need to travel.
- KF.55** Prioritisation of sustainable transport in new developments would be welcomed. This could be achieved through re-allocation of road space for active travel and public transport and bus gates.
- KF.56** Separate pavement and cycle ways are required to avoid conflict between different users and support public safety and confidence.
- KF.57** Secure by Design policy can hinder the opportunity for providing more active travel infrastructure.
- KF.58** New developments must have dedicated parking provisions for those with disabilities and include EV infrastructure.
- KF.59** The separation of walking and cycling means they are of significant width (at least rural road width) impacting on habitat connectivity and general loss of natural areas currently devoid of significant visible urban infrastructure.

KF.60 There is limited active travel information on new developments regarding active travel routes and distances times to key amenities.

Connectivity

KF.61 In line with local and national policy, the Replacement Local Development Plan needs to ensure connectivity between sustainable transport and active travel.

KF.62 Travel infrastructure in new developments must link to existing network infrastructure and community services.

Access to Parking

KF.63 Secure cycle storage is needed in the city centre and other key locations to address the fear of bike crime and encourage active travel from new developments.

Challenges in providing sustainable transport services

KF.64 There are inconsistencies in when transport infrastructure is considered within development planning. Providers highlight need for the Council to better engage with transport providers to identify and determine the types of transport infrastructure and services that will need to be provided or made available at new developments.

KF.65 There is a need to ensure planning conditions that meet the active travel and sustainable transport infrastructure needs of users and providers, are effectively negotiated, and enforced by the local authority.

KF.66 Section 106 monies from city centre developments are often used to support open spaces, which are very limited. These monies should be used to improve sustainable transport initiatives in the city centre instead.

KF.67 When designing transport infrastructure, ecological requirements, and any potential ecological implications, need to be included from the outset.

Improving take up of sustainable and active travel

KF.68 New developments present an opportunity for the local authority to stimulate behaviour change by improving the accessibility of sustainable and active travel, including the provision of discount / incentives to use public transport.

KF.69 Early provision, and communication, of sustainable transport/active travel and promised local amenities in new developments would potentially reduce private car use.

KF.70 Provision of uninterrupted bus lanes and buses having priority at junctions may improve travel time and therefore make bus services more reliable.

KF.71 The local authority must recognise that any changes to policies, which support a modal shift e.g., introduction of road user charging and increased car parking chargers, will likely result in public resistance.

Exploring biodiversity issues versus transport need

KF.72 There must be strong policy that reinforces the protection of green space and reduces the possibility of selling land to developers.

KF.73 Multiple schemes for active travel and transport can fall under “permitted development”, resulting in concern that relevant environmental considerations are not being made as they would in general planning applications.

KF.74 Continuous footpaths and cycleways could encourage active travel, they should also be supplemented with wide green verges that support biodiversity.

KF.75 Provision of lighting on active travel routes has a detrimental impact on ecology and dark corridors for wildlife. If possible active travel routes should not impact negatively on the environment.

KF.76 New developments when determining transport infrastructure, must fully consider the constraints imposed on existing vegetation and soil and must seek to minimise their loss and detrimental impacts on their functionality.

KF.77 Inclusion of generous and continuous soft landscape verges in new developments that help mitigate environmental losses and create a more user-friendly environment are preferred but this needs careful forward planning. Often in developments, verges are very narrow (2.0m or less) and not continuous (fragmented by access points and car-parking). Where the width and continuity of verges cannot be optimised due to overriding design considerations, specialised landscaping features can be used to help establish trees.

DISTRICT & LOCAL CENTRES

Retail Planning Policy Framework

KF.78 Welsh Government sets a clear framework and direction for retail planning policy, based on a Town Centres First policy, with the aim of ensuring centres are viable, vibrant, attractive and accessible by all modes of transport, including public and active travel. Post covid, Welsh Government has stressed the need for planning policy to enable centres to be social and economic hubs, with a range of retail and non-retail uses that serve local communities, including residential and co-working

spaces. Welsh Government has also worked with the Welsh Retail Consortium on a plan to support retail in centres, *Together for Retail*, which encourages the use of vacant units for worthwhile purposes to ensure centres are attractive and have footfall.

- KF.79** The *RLDP Vision, Issues and Objectives* acknowledges the need for greater flexibility in centres, post-covid. The *RLDP Preferred Strategy* reflects the Welsh Government framework, including Building Better Places, with district and local centres referenced in several objectives and strategic policies. It sets out objectives to protect and enhance centres and encourage flexibility. Importantly, it also sets out it is seeking to encourage investment and renewal of the physical fabric of centres.
- KF.80** Members heard from Tom Evans, Vice-Chair Planning Officers Society of Wales, that it is important Councils fully assess and identify within their RLDP those centres considered most appropriate to designate as social and economic hubs. This will assist the Council to focus investment into these chosen locations and will provide a framework to manage applications. Retail Planning Policies and associated SPG should be crafted to encourage vibrant, vital, attractive and accessible centres, enabling an appropriate retail/ non-retail balance and improving the quality of the centre environment.
- KF.81** Members heard that it is important the RLDP provides ‘teeth’ for policy needs across Council Directorates; planning alone cannot achieve everything but the RLDP is at the policy pinnacle and so sets the direction and tone for policies across the Council. Members note the Corporate Plan 2023-24 and Recovery & Renewal Strategy 2021 explicitly set out the Council’s support for district and local centres, with a District and Local Centres Strategy being developed.

Retail Landscape

- KF.82** Members note that there has been transformative change in the retail sector and landscape, with structural change arising due to changes in human behaviour over the last few years. Members heard from Cardiff Council officers that there has been less appetite from retailers for major stores, with a move towards medium-scale provision. Members welcome this, as enabling plurality of provision for local communities is both important and in line with the 15-minute city approach.

Retail Planning Policies

- KF.83** Members note the Council is intending to carry forward existing retail planning policies R1, R6 and R7, with existing retail planning policies R4, R5 and R8 carried forward with minor amendments to reflect updated evidence and revised policy wording. Members note the findings and recommendations of the Nexus Planning Retail and Leisure Study (January 2023), hereafter referred to as the Nexus Study, and that the Council agrees with the recommendations and will be amending retail planning policies accordingly.
- KF.84** Members heard from Tom Evans, Vice-Chair Planning Officers Society of Wales, that it is important Councils think about the proactive steps they can take to achieve vibrant, vital, attractive and accessible centres and craft planning policies that will encourage this – not just retail development but other development such as health facilities, community facilities, leisure uses and also residential, for example.

Retail Strategy

- KF.85** Members note the Nexus Study (January 2023) highlights the need to ensure the RLDP Retail Strategy wording reflects the greater flexibility required post-covid. Having reviewed other local authority LDP wording, Members offer the following examples for consideration for adaption for use in Cardiff:
- Bristol Council¹ - *'aims to support Bristol's network of centres and **secure the sustainable distribution of the diversity of town centre uses**'*

Policy text

Retail development, offices, leisure (including food and drink), entertainment and night-time uses, arts, culture and tourism uses will be primarily located within or, where appropriate, adjoining the centres in the identified network and hierarchy serving Bristol.

*Centres will also be **suitable locations for community uses** including surgeries and public service facilities.*

Light industrial or small-scale distribution uses may also be appropriate in centres where they would contribute to their function and diversity.

*Development will be expected to be of a **scale and intensity appropriate** to the position in the hierarchy and to the character of the centre.*

¹ [Bristol Local Plan Review: November 2022](#) Draft Policy SSE1 – Supporting Bristol's Centres – network and hierarchy

- b. Kingston Council² - *There is a need to ensure that the borough's town centres remain **resilient and adaptable** to challenges facing the high street. Whilst protecting both the retail and commercial function of the borough's town centres is crucial, we will seek to ensure that centres are able to **evolve and adapt** over time so that they continue to support the communities in which they are situated.*
- c. Vale of Glamorgan³ - *'the Council will adopt a **more flexible** approach to the application of Policies MG14 and 15 to give consideration to the **individual impacts** of the proposals and give weight to **the benefits** that can be secured from other non-A1 uses that can benefit the overall vitality and viability of our retail centres.... due to the current national context and the ongoing impacts of Covid-19 on the retail sector it is considered reasonable and appropriate for Development Management decisions to take a flexible approach to change of use proposals where it is considered the proposal would **benefit the centre** and contribute to the vitality, viability and attractiveness of the centre.'*

KF.86 Members highlighted that Swansea Council's LDP Review Report July 2023⁴ points out the need for local planning authorities to determine what constitutes a development of a '**significant scale**', given that Welsh Government's Future Wales strategy sets out that **significant** new retail facilities must be located within town centres. Members note the response from Cardiff Council officers that '*Significant new retail facilities are large scale retail developments and shopping centres and any new retail developments that because of their popularity/appeal are likely to attract large numbers of customers and have the potential to result in increased travel by unsustainable modes of transport. The first location for 'significant' new retail facilities is the central shopping area, which is at the head of the retail hierarchy, followed by lower order centres, and edge of centre, in line with the 'town centre first' approach.*'

R1- Retail Hierarchy

KF.87 Members reviewed the Nexus Study (January 2023) and agree with the majority of its findings, bar the statement, at point 10.9, that Cardiff is an urban authority. Members believe that Cardiff is a *predominantly* urban authority, which also has

² [Kingston's Local Plan 2023-2041 \(amazonaws.com\)](https://www.amazonaws.com) Point 8.30

³ [Retail Development SPG English - March 2023 \(valeofglamorgan.gov.uk\)](https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk)

⁴ [Swansea LDP Review Report July 2023.pdf](#) point 4.4.33

important communities in its rural areas, and that this should be acknowledged, with the planning approach taking this into account.

KF.88 In addition to the Nexus Study (January 2023) recommendations, Members heard there is a need for a vision statement for each centre that suits its geography, is realistic and sets out a compelling and fit for purpose approach. These should reflect the views of local stakeholders, as well as be intelligence-led. Members note this is the approach being adopted by Bristol Council⁵:

A vision statement about each of the identified centres will be included in the next version of the local plan. Your comments about the role of these centres will be taken into account in shaping those statements, along with the outputs of recent community engagement. Local communities, business organisations or neighbourhood plans may have already prepared visions for these locations which can form part of these statements.

KF.89 Members are clear that these vision statements need to be included in the RLDP to enable them to be borne in mind when considering planning applications; therefore, these would be in addition to the District and Local Centres Strategy, which Members were informed would sit below the RLDP, and so would not have the same weight as the RLDP when considering planning applications.

Sequential Approach/ Test

KF.90 This Inquiry's review of other local authorities has identified that it is possible to tighten Cardiff Council's existing sequential approach by strengthening wording, setting thresholds and clarifying that preference will be given to locations that are accessible and well connected to existing centres:

- a. Swansea Council⁶ – existing LDP states that developers must **review all potentially suitable sites, including conversion/ re-modelling, demonstrating flexibility** and that the **onus of proof** that sites within centres have been thoroughly assessed **rests with developer**
- b. Avison Young⁷ - their report reviews existing retail planning policies and recommends making sure planning policies are written to ensure the sequential test **applies to leisure** as well as retail, given interconnectedness of these nowadays, and that they clarify that

⁵ [Bristol Local Plan Review: November 2022](#) Draft Policy SSE1 – Point 9.5

⁶ [Swansea Local Development Plan 2010-2025.pdf](#) points 2.8.7 and 2.8.8

⁷ [eb34-retail-and-town-centre-planning-policy-advice_april-2021.pdf](#) (stroud.gov.uk)

assessment of edge-of-centre and/ or out-of-centre locations should **give preference to those which are accessible and well connected to town centres**

c. Bristol Council⁸ –

Policy text

The vitality and viability of the defined centres will be supported and enhanced. The network and hierarchy of centres as set out in this local plan will form the focal point for uses, services, and facilities serving the surrounding population.

*In order to safeguard and enhance the network and hierarchy of centres any proposals for additional main town centre uses outside the defined city, town, district and local centres will be **subject to the requirements of the sequential test and where applicable an impact assessment.***

Planning applications for 'main town centre uses' which are not in a defined centre or not in accordance with the policies of this plan will be subject to the following sequential approach to establish that there are no available or suitable sites or premises in sequentially preferable locations. The order of preference for such uses are as follows:

- i. Within designated centres ('in centre')*
- ii. In locations on the edge of designated centres ('edge of centre')*
- iii. **Accessible sites which are well connected to a designated centre***
- iv. **Other locations that are accessible by walking, cycling and public transport***
- v. Out of centre development of main town centre uses will only be acceptable where:*
 - a. It can be demonstrated that there are no available suitable sites or premises in sequentially preferable locations.*
 - b. The proposal is of a small scale (**floorspace no greater than 200m²**) and aimed at providing for local needs.*

The sequential approach applies to new floorspace, extensions to existing floorspace, changes of use and applications seeking to vary previously approved details.

The primary shopping areas as shown on the Policies Map, will continue to be the focus for new retail development.

*Proposals for main town centre uses outside the defined city, town, district or local centres will be subject to an **impact assessment** where the floorspace of the proposed development exceeds the following **thresholds**:*

- i. Outside Bristol city centre: greater than 500m² gross floorspace.*
- ii. Outside a town or district centre: greater than 300m² gross floorspace.*
- iii. Outside a local centre: greater than 200m² gross floorspace.*

The impact assessment thresholds above related to town, district and local centres will be applicable for proposals within 800 metres of the boundary of the relevant centres. Elsewhere the threshold of 500 metres applies.

⁸ [Bristol Local Plan Review: November 2022](#) Draft Policy SSE1 – Point 9.20

- KF.91** In addition, Swansea Council’s existing LDP makes it clear that ‘*A departure to the defined hierarchy will only be considered if convincing evidence is submitted in support of a proposal to demonstrate that such development is **justified as an exception**, and that there would be no material adverse impact caused by the development to the attractiveness, vitality or viability of any Centre defined in the Retail Hierarchy. The policy identifies a **number of specific exceptional circumstances** where, subject to a specific need being identified, an out of centre retail or leisure proposal may be appropriate.*’⁹
- KF.92** Members are aware from the previous SPG Inquiry (October 2022) that specifying exceptional circumstances strengthens planning policy. However, Members are alert to the need to very carefully craft policies to ensure only development that is of benefit is supported, in particular by ensuring that unacceptable harms are detailed, and that appropriate evidence is required; these factors are considered below.
- KF.93** Members sought the views of Cardiff Council planning officers on Swansea Council’s existing LDP wording and note their view that it could be possible to adapt and use parts of this policy, with additional criteria.

R4 – District Centres and R5 – Local Centres

- KF.94** In addition to the Nexus Study (January 2023) recommendations, Members explored how best to frame policies to promote flexibility, encourage beneficial development and resist harmful development to ensure viable, vibrant, attractive and accessible centres. Drawing on the work of the SPG Inquiry (October 2022), Members looked at the following key mechanisms, which enable a multi-pronged approach to appropriately managing development: use of thresholds; delineating unacceptable harms; and enhancing evidence levels required.

Thresholds

- KF.95** Members heard the current LDP R4 and R5 policies do not specify thresholds but the Food, Drink and Leisure Uses SPG (November 2017) specifies that ‘*within existing District and Local Centres, where the proportion of non-shopping uses exceeds 60%, an application for a change of use of an active A1 retail unit for food, drink and leisure uses will be less favourably considered*’ and that the LDP monitoring indicators include less than 40% A1 as a trigger.

⁹ [Swansea Local Development Plan 2010-2025.pdf](#) point 2.8.16

- KF.96** This Inquiry's review of other local authorities' retail planning policies has identified that some of these specify more detailed thresholds, for example delineating between use classes, primary and secondary frontages and/ or between ground floor and upper floors e.g.
- Swansea¹⁰ – A1 minimum 50% primary frontage, 35% secondary frontage.
 - Vale¹¹ – non-A1 ground floor – no more than 35% primary frontage, no more than 50% secondary frontage.
 - Pembrokeshire¹² – non-A1 – no more than a third Primary Frontage.
 - Bristol¹³ – promotes active ground floor uses.

KF.97 These examples are provided to illustrate the ways other local planning authorities have approached thresholds. Members believe this is an area that warrants consideration: the inclusion of appropriate thresholds in the RLDP, as opposed to solely in SPG, will strengthen the Council's ability to manage development, as a threshold in an SPG that is not also in an LDP does not carry weight. However considerable thought and evidence is required to ensure thresholds are set an appropriate level and in an appropriate way, to ensure the Council has a flexible approach, whilst managing adverse impacts. In addition, Members are clear that thresholds on their own will not achieve beneficial development and that it is important they are not seen as a target to aim for; there is a need to marry them with clear approaches to unacceptable harm and evidence requirements. However, Members believe that they are an essential component in a multi-pronged approach to managing development.

Unacceptable Harm

KF.98 Members are aware from the previous SPG Inquiry (October 2022) that it is essential that LDP policies set out the impact the policy is seeking to avoid (harms) *and* the consequences if these harms are not avoided, in order for the LDP policy to be as strong as possible. Members note relevant SPG should provide evidence and explain how the impact seeking to avoid is measured and how consequences of not avoiding harm, the harms arising, are measured.

¹⁰ [District Centres Local Centres and Community Facilities.pdf](#)

¹¹ [Retail Development SPG English - March 2023 \(valeofglamorgan.gov.uk\)](#)

¹² [Interim Advisory Note on Development in Town Centres - Pembrokeshire County Council](#) September 2022

¹³ [Bristol Local Plan Review: November 2022](#)

- KF.99** The current LDP and Food, Drink and Leisure Uses SPG (November 2017) set out amenity grounds, including noise, disturbance, anti-social behaviour, litter, fumes and smells, as well as unacceptable harms such as dead frontages, crime and fear of crime, overconcentration of similar uses, traffic, parking and access, opening hours and health and wellbeing.
- KF.100** Having considered the findings from the review of other local authorities' retail planning policies, Members believe there is scope to reflect on and tighten the wording on amenity considerations and unacceptable impacts in the RLDP policies and related SPG. Members note Swansea Council recognises that its criteria need to be reviewed considering the approaches to revitalise town centres set out in Welsh Government guidance, such as Building Better Places, and Members recognise this is also the case in Cardiff.
- KF.101** There is a need for clear and robust development management criteria to deal with important local implications of non-retail use. However, there is a need to ensure these criteria are nuanced to take into account the differing impact of proposals e.g., Members heard from Tom Evans, Vice Chair – Planning Officers Society Wales, that there is a need to think about the size of units and the impact of the proposed use on the centre – a smaller unit would have less impact from 'dead' frontage than a larger unit. This is particularly true for residential proposals, as set out later in these key findings.
- KF.102** Members also note that it is possible to have LDP policies that provide the overarching framework for the retail/ non-retail balance, with further detail provided in a related SPG that can set out in more detail how specific use classes will be viewed, as is currently the case in Swansea¹⁴ and proposed in Bristol¹⁵ and Kingston¹⁶.
- KF.103** Members reviewed the Vale of Glamorgan Council's recent Retail Development SPG and include their wording on unacceptable impact, in the hope this is of use when phrasing the RDLP policies and related SPG:

unacceptable impact¹⁷ - *In this regard considerations would include:*

¹⁴ [Swansea Local Development Plan 2010-2025.pdf](#) RC9 and [District Centres Local Centres and Community Facilities.pdf](#)

¹⁵ [Bristol Local Plan Review: November 2022](#) 9.23

¹⁶ [Kingston's Local Plan 2023-2041 \(amazonaws.com\)](#) Draft Policy KE5

¹⁷ [Retail Development SPG English - March 2023 \(valeofglamorgan.gov.uk\)](#)

- *Customer profile / use of the premises and whether it would increase footfall in the centre*
- *Hours of operation / use reflecting the wider function of the centre throughout the day / evening and weekend*
- *Shop frontage and advertising – proposals should have ‘active’ frontages that enhance the public realm of the centre*
- *External impacts – traffic, congestion, servicing vehicles, noise, pollution, anti-social behaviour*
- *Providing local employment or services*
- *Enabling the beneficial use of upper floors to the benefit of the wider retail centre*
- *Meeting an evidenced social need not currently met in the locality (e.g., childcare services, health care, leisure activities etc).*

Impacts - developments will need to satisfy other policy considerations such as design, impact on neighbouring amenity, environmental impacts, traffic, congestion and parking. Furthermore, consideration will need to be given to the context and current state of the retail centre to ensure that a proliferation of a particular use (such as A3 take-away food outlet) does not undermine the overall role and function of the retail centre.

Evidence Levels

KF.104 Members are aware from the previous SPG Inquiry (October 2022) that it is important relevant SPG set out the methodology used to ascertain thresholds, numbers, percentages, targets and measures and the evidence required for these, including for unacceptable harms and harms arising, and for exceptional circumstances. Swansea Council’s relevant SPG provides a useful example of this.¹⁸

KF.105 The other main area where evidence is required, in relation to District and Local Centres, is marketing information required when a change of use from A1 is proposed. Members believe there is scope to tighten the marketing wording in the RLDP policies and related SPG, with the Vale of Glamorgan wording providing a useful example of how this could be achieved:

Marketing¹⁹ - Applicants should submit a marketing report with such applications outlining the following:

- *Details the existing use or the previous use of the site / premises if vacant;*
- *The length of time the unit has been vacant for (if applicable);*
- *Details of the marketing strategy employed and its duration, including the type of use the unit was marketed for, the price / contract terms, any incentives offered, details of the site / premises particulars including its condition / state of repair, copies of advertisements placed;*
- *Details of the amount of interest in the unit during the marketing period – this should detail the number of queries, the type of uses sought by potential purchasers, and if known, the reason for not pursuing an initial enquiry.*

¹⁸ [District Centres Local Centres and Community Facilities.pdf](#)

¹⁹ [Retail Development SPG English - March 2023 \(valeofglamorgan.gov.uk\)](#)

To demonstrate the marketing strategy was meaningful and realistic as a minimum the marketing strategy followed should:

- *Have been undertaken for a 12-month continuous marketing period;*
- *Have a sale / rental price that reflects the market conditions for the current use and condition of the site / premises. If the building or site requires extensive conversion/repairs, the price should be based on the unconverted state unless the works are to be undertaken prior to completion. The price should not include any potential residential or other non-A1 use values.*
- *Have 'active' marketing on site, be listed on appropriate marketing websites, use a local / regional property agent to market the site, including direct mailing to targeted businesses, and advertised in appropriate marketing literature.*
- *Applicants should be prepared to offer the property or site on both a leasehold and freehold basis in order to widen appeal and help ascertain the level of interest.*

KF.106 Members sought Cardiff Council planning officers' views on the above marketing wording and note their view that this approach is useful in the Cardiff context.

Residential

KF.107 Members recognise the desire to increase densification and footfall in centres and the need to meet housing demand, and that providing homes at or near centres constitutes the most sustainable forms of development, providing access and good connectivity to facilities and services for recreation and meeting day to day needs.

KF.108 There is a need to think about what sort of residential the Council wishes to encourage in centres, as some residential can be appropriate but the juxtaposition of residential and centres' uses needs to be carefully balanced, with amenity considerations.

KF.109 Members heard from Tom Evans, Vice-Chair, Planning Officers Society Wales, that it is very important Councils undertake analysis to reach a position where there is clarity in regard to where residential use can be tolerated within centres. This would include understanding the form and number of units needed to maintain the vibrancy and vitality of a centre. There can be significant variation in this regard, and it is therefore important to look at the characteristics of each centre and to have an analysis of each centre to understand appropriate scale for residential and of conversion of retail to residential.

KF.110 Members heard that, whilst residential is typically on upper floors, there may be opportunities for ground floor uses to co-exist in a retail centre, but this will require a clear policy framework and understanding of the specific character and form of the relevant retail and commercial centre, as there is potential for ground floor

residential to cause harm in some locations whilst in other locations, it may be beneficial.

KF.111 Members heard that key issues to consider with regard to residential use are loss and dilution of active frontage, contribution to vitality, viability and attractiveness of centres, compatibility with other uses in the same building as well as neighbouring properties, as well as unacceptable harms and amenity considerations, as detailed in the section above.

KF.112 Members considered the approach to residential use in the following local authorities: Swansea Council, Pembrokeshire Council, Flintshire Council, Wrexham Council, and Bristol Council, and note Cardiff Council planning officers' view that the Bristol Council approach to residential uses in centres is the most appropriate to Cardiff and a practice that has policy support in the current LDP.

Residential Uses ²⁰

New residential development which makes positive use of upper floors of properties and on underused and vacant space away from commercial frontages will be encouraged within centres.

Residential development

Within the primary shopping areas, changes of use of ground floor frontages to residential development (that require planning permission) will not be appropriate.

In wider centre boundaries, changes of use to ground floor residential development in centre boundaries may be acceptable where:

- *It has been demonstrated after a suitable period of appropriate marketing that there is no realistic prospect of securing an active use in the unit; and*
- *where this would not, individually or cumulatively, detrimentally impact the vitality and viability of existing commercial and retail uses through fragmentation of the commercial function.*

Major development proposals will be expected to contribute to environmental enhancement and public realm improvements within the city centre, and town, district and local centres and parades.

Other Non-Retail Uses

KF.113 Members were particularly struck by the work underway by Bristol Council to include the following in their retail planning policies:

- a. Support for the Evening and Night Time Economy²¹.
- b. Support for temporary, meanwhile uses²².
- c. Inclusion of Agent of Change principle²³.

²⁰ [Bristol Local Plan Review: November 2022](#)

²¹ [Bristol Local Plan Review: November 2022](#) Draft Policy SSE3

²² [Bristol Local Plan Review: November 2022](#) Draft Policy SSE5

²³ [file \(bristol.gov.uk\)](http://file.bristol.gov.uk) [Bristol Local Plan Review: November 2022](#)

KF.114 Members were interested to understand Cardiff Council planning officers' views on the above and note their response that Cardiff's centres could benefit from the approach set out by Bristol Council, ensuring the vitality of centres extends through the daytime into the evening and night time and increasing viability and diversity of centres.

KF.115 Members were also interested in Wrexham Council's policy on loss of local services, which has recently been through Examination:

Policy R7: Loss of Local Services²⁴ *Outside of Wrexham Town Centre, District, Local, Village and Neighbourhood Centres proposals that entail the loss of a community facility, including shops, commercial facilities and public houses and/or non-commercial facilities, including libraries and village halls/community centres ~~shopping, commercial facility or public house~~ will only be supported where:*

○ *The use is no longer viable and all reasonable attempts to sell or let the business have proved unsuccessful; or*

○ *A similar service is available within reasonable walking distance; or*

It can be demonstrated that the existing provision is surplus to the needs of the community. 6.156 It is important that the daily needs of communities both commercial (e.g., shopping and public house) and non-commercial (e.g., library and village hall/community centre) are reasonably met in their locality. Provision of these services locally will reduce the need to travel and help sustain local communities.

KF.116 Members sought the views from internal witnesses and note their response that existing LDP policies (C2 and R5) protect existing community facilities and local shopping facilities, but that Wrexham Council extends this definition to include shops, commercial facilities and public houses and provides criteria that need to be addressed which must be met to support the loss. Members note officers continue that *'It can prove extremely difficult to compel such uses to be retained in some cases e.g., business in single ownership difficult where the local shopkeeper/owner or publican chooses to retire and repurposes the use for their own living accommodation'*. However, Members believe this example would not form the majority of instances and so there is merit in exploring how to make the RLDP wording on loss of local services as robust as possible.

²⁴ [Wrexham County Borough Council - Latest News \(objective.co.uk\)](https://www.objective.co.uk/news/wrexham-county-borough-council-latest-news) underline is Inspector's addition; strikethrough is their deletions.

- KF.117** Members note that Public Health Wales has developed a template²⁵ for local authority planners to use to develop effective development management approaches to hot food takeaways.
- KF.118** Members note that Kingston Council has a policy²⁶ restricting the oversaturation of betting shops.
- KF.119** Members asked Adrian Powis and Shelly Lynch, Co-Operative Funeral Services, for their views on how the changing nature of centres affects their services, for example the increase in cafes and restaurants and note their view that these changes have a positive impact with the increasing footfall helping to increase awareness that the Co-Operative Funeral Services is located in the centre and that people remember this when these services are needed.

R6 Out of Centre

- KF.120** In addition to the Nexus Study (January 2023) recommendations, and this Inquiry's findings on the Sequential Test, set out above, Members explored how best to manage out of centre developments and avoid the loss of needed industrial land and businesses areas. Members heard from Tom Evans, Vice-Chair, Planning Officers Society Wales, that:
- a. it is important to understand that out-of-centre has a role and a function.
 - b. LDPs need to address this and set out the role and function so there is a framework for development.
 - c. It is very important to have an up-to-date evidence base on existing landbanks of industrial and business areas and future demand for this, to understand whether there is a surplus.
 - d. If there is a surplus, it is important that the planning system ensures the effective utilisation of land that could otherwise remain vacant.
 - e. If evidence shows there is a need for specific alternative uses such as residential or certain commercial uses, it is important that policies are clear that the surplus land is being protected for these alternative uses.
 - f. If evidence demonstrates that certain existing business and industrial land provides an important role for economic growth (for investment by

²⁵ [Microsoft Word - Wales HWHW SPG Template_v4.docx \(nhs.wales\)](#)

²⁶ [Kingston's Local Plan 2023-2041 \(amazonaws.com\)](#) Draft Policy KE9

new business as well as allowing extension of existing enterprises)
policies must be clear to protect these areas for existing uses

- g. Where there is no clear evidence available, policies will need to be sufficiently flexible in their approach to the re-use of surplus land, to avoid under-utilisation of land.

- KF.121** Members note Cardiff Council officers recognise the need for planning policies to be slightly firmer and more proactive, with plans for existing business and industrial land, setting out acceptable uses, to ensure these sites are protected and are developed in line with the Council's overall aims.
- KF.122** Members note that Swansea Council's existing LDP²⁷ contains a section on managing development proposals for established out of centre retail developments, which may be of use to Cardiff Council planners when drafting the RDLP policies.
- KF.123** Members note that it is possible to estimate the impact different types of retail stores will have on existing stores. Members found this interesting, that it is possible to differentiate the impact by clientele and distance from existing provision, and pondered whether the methodology would be of assistance to the Council in estimating the impact of proposed out-of-centre provision.
- KF.124** Members highlighted that some existing out-of-centre developments have become integral hubs for their local communities, such as the Pugh's Garden Centre complex in Morganstown. As such, Members wondered whether there is scope for a review of categorisation, to check whether these centres should now be categorised as a local or district centre.

R7 Strategic Sites

- KF.125** In addition to the Nexus Study (January 2023) recommendations, Members note that, going forward, the Council can continue to use its placemaking role to assist in ensuring that new centres are appropriate, e.g., not enabling a large car park, working to promote local character and distinctiveness. Members note that the existing LDP has ensured retail provision is master planned for the strategic sites, with planning agreements capturing the Council's requirements e.g., NE Cardiff planning agreements specify retail floor space of 1,500 sq. metres, which is smaller than large supermarkets, and non-food retail floor space of 1,000 sq. metres.

²⁷ [Swansea Local Development Plan 2010-2025.pdf](#)

KF.126 Members heard the Council is not receiving applications for big box retail parks; instead, it is receiving applications for medium-sized sites. However, Members are mindful that the RLDP runs to 2036 and that the market may shift again; Members therefore believe that it is prudent to phrase retail planning policy to ensure it can deal appropriately with a range of site sizes.

Relevant Supplementary Planning Guidance

KF.127 Having reviewed the existing Food, Drink and Leisure Uses SPG (November 2017) and taking into consideration the other findings of this Inquiry, it is clear to Members that the existing SPG will need to be significantly amended, in light of

- a. Welsh Government's more recent relevant publications
- b. the findings of the SPG Inquiry (October 2022) and
- c. any changes made to retail planning policies.

KF.128 In particular, Members note the following are required:

- a. Citation of all relevant LDP policies and paragraphs
- b. More precise and positive language and phraseology, as detailed in the SPG Inquiry (October 2022)
- c. Setting out thresholds and the methodology for calculating these
- d. Consistency in terminology for unacceptable harms and clarity about how these are assessed and/ or measured.
- e. Setting out exceptional circumstances and how these are worked out and applied.

Use of Planning Conditions

KF.129 Members note that planning conditions can be used to prevent future, unwanted, changes of use, including sub-division, unification, and restricting types of use to protect existing provision. Members note the current LDP and related SPG highlights planning conditions may be used and Cardiff Council planning officers' response that they have been used to control the types of uses, goods sold, size of unit, operating hours and to prevent sub-division.

Use of Local Development Orders

KF.130 Members are aware that the Welsh Government’s Technical Advice Note 4²⁸ sets out that ‘*local authorities are encouraged to consider how Local Development Orders (LDOs) can assist in the regeneration of retail and commercial centres*’.

Members sought witnesses’ views on this and note:

- a. Swansea Council does not currently use these but will look at their potential as part of preparing its RLDP; Tom Evans stated that his initial thoughts are that there are concerns with them as they remove the ability of planners and Members to reach a judgement on proposals, as proposals no longer need to go through the Planning Committee route.
- b. Cardiff Council planning officers’ view that, whilst LDO’s are useful in particular circumstances, there is a reluctance to adopt LDOs due to concerns about loss of control, loss of planning fees, delay, and complication.

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²⁸ [Technical advice note \(TAN\) 4: retail and commercial development | GOV.WALES](#)

RECOMMENDATIONS

Having considered the evidence presented to this Inquiry, the Joint Scrutiny Committee makes the following recommendations to Cabinet:

R1. Utilise the recommendations of the Environmental Scrutiny Committee's Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) Inquiry (October 2022) when drafting RLDP policies and related SPG.

(HFs 1 – 3)

SECURING PLANNING OBLIGATIONS

R2. Develop/invigorate internal processes to co-ordinate s106 activities across the authority.

This should include:

- A review of the Council's aspirations and priorities in relation to planning obligations and s106 to ensure that priorities are focussed, clear and understood by all. It is important that affordable housing is included as part of this review, and that "wish lists" are minimised – what does the Council NEED in terms of developments? **(KFs2 & 34)**.
- Review and streamline the viability process to speed up this process, which was highlighted as a particular challenge for all **(KF25 - 34)**.
- An appraisal of s106 contributions held by the authority to ensure that they are index linked **(KFs 4 & 5)**; and are spent in a timely manner **(KF6)**.
- Develop and embed a process where s106 discussions can start earlier in the planning process. This was highlighted across all witnesses and across other sub-groups **(KF12)**
- Establish an internal cross-cutting working group to improve round table representation. **(KF10)**
- Ensure that Finance are included in discussions with the internal group and that they are included as experts at the viability stage **(KF27)**.
- Establish a working group with developers and commercial agents to further improve working relationships and dialogue. **(KF11)**
- Consider the development and use of standardised s106 agreements with a view to simplifying the viability process, enable improved monitoring, enforcement etc. **(KF14)**

- Review current monitoring of planning obligations/s106. This includes tightening up of the annual monitoring report framework **(KF15)**

R3. The Council ensures dedicated and identifiable s106 officers are visible and accessible to stakeholders and ensure there is timely periodical monitoring to ensure s106 legal agreements are adhered to. This role should include:

- These officers being clearly identifiable and visible to all stakeholders **(KF8)**.
- Explore whether this officer could act as a community engagement officer on large development sites, to ensure effective integration of new and existing communities. **(KF9)**.
- Be responsible for developing, implementing and monitoring the work highlighted in this report.

R4. The Council revisit Supplementary Planning Guidance to ensure it is concise, robust and evidence based to ensure a seamless planning process. This should include:

- Further enhancements to the SPG, particularly around viability **(KFs 17, 18, 30 – 34)**.
- Revisit the size and length of the current document, with a view to making it more concise; clear, accurate and transparent **(KFs 19 & 22)**.
- Review the document to ensure that it includes clauses to ensure contribution values are index linked **(KF 20)**.
- Set out clear expectations of what is expected from developments **(KFs 21 & 30)**
- Provide detail of thresholds which will be sought for developments **(KFs 23 & 24)**.

R5. The Council continues to explore the delivery of affordable housing but commits to exploring additional avenues for meeting housing needs. This may include:

- Exploring ways in which the council could unlock other options available to it in relation to affordable housing **(KFs 35, 36, 38 - 41)**.
- Ensure that any affordable housing policy is regularly reviewed **(KF 36)**.
- Review whether s106 is the right vehicle for delivering affordable housing **(KF 37)**.
- Review the current status of affordable housing priority (with a view to giving it a higher status) and adjust the policy accordingly. Review the viability process

in relation to affordable housing, with the aim to minimise the “designing out” of affordable housing by developers at this stage **(KF 38)**.

- Undertake a review of the value of affordable housing unit, and adjust the policy accordingly, with regular reviews set out clearly in the monitoring framework **(KF 39)**. This review should take place as a matter of priority, and assurances given that this is reviewed regularly and line with Council policy.

R6. The Council reviews and improves accessibility and transparency of s106 agreements in Cardiff. This should include:

- Easy to find key documents, plans, information on developments and details of s106 commitments and spend **(KFs 3 & 42)**.
- Better access to information for Members and the public, to include a Protocol for communicating with Members, developers etc. **(KFs 43 & 45)**.
- Build on current mechanisms in place to develop further active community involvement and integration **(KF 46)**.
- The Cardiff LDP Website have dedicated planning obligations/ s106 pages **(KF 44)**. Additional funding for this may need to be explored **(KF48)**.

Contents could include.

- Overarching vision (High level plans; SPGs etc).
- Annual statement of new contributions secured; what these contributions are; what has been spent so far; what the contributions have been spent on.
- In-year regular updates to include details of how and where s106 (and any other) moneys are being spent on a development; details of what these are - what has been requested; what has been contributed; what has been spent.
- A “flow of funds” – showing outcomes of what the money has been spent on.
- A “ward search” function be included to enable Members, public and stakeholders to look for what is happening at this level. This should include the data/information available within the “in-year” updates highlighted above. Bristol City Council has an example of this for reference.
- Viability assessments be published on this part of the website **(KF32)**.

- Tools for assisting developers – set out planned phasing and triggers; what the priorities are; greater clarity on/ability to calculate these amounts **(KF 47)**.

TRANSPORT & ACTIVE TRAVEL

R7. The Replacement Local Development Plan's SP5 (Securing New Infrastructure) has specific provisions to ensure that new developments, irrespective of their size, location, or land use, make appropriate provision for infrastructure. In line with recommendations made on the Shaping Cardiff Post Pandemic Recovery Inquiry, SP5 must include clear, concrete conditions negotiated with developers that adequate transport infrastructure i.e., bus stops, turning circle etc, must be in place on developments as soon as they are publicly occupied, to encourage uptake of sustainable transport and active travel routes.

(KFs 49,50, 52, 54, 62, 65, 68 & 69)

R8. The Replacement Local Development Plan's SP3 (Ensuring a Master Planning Approach) must clearly specify that when new developments are agreed, developers must engage and consult with transport providers, and relevant community groups (as directed by the Council) during the master planning stage. This early and consistent consultation will ensure proposals for development sites meets both provider and user needs' and assist the council in delivering the transport modal shift, and ensure any new development is linked to, and contributes to the improvement of, existing developments and infrastructure.

(KFs 49, 50, 52, 54, 61, 62 & 64)

R9. In line with transport legislation and policy in Wales, more emphasis must be put on s106 monies allocated to city centre developments being utilised for improvements to sustainable and active travel corridors, when possible.

(KFs 49, 52, 61, 62, 65, 66, 68 & 69)

R10. The Replacement Local Development Plan's SP19 (Protecting, Compensating and Enhancing Green and Blue Infrastructure and Biodiversity), must ensure that any roads, cycleways and pavements will take into account any existing areas of biodiversity, including how maintenance and management of the areas that remain will be undertaken.

However, the Strategic Policy must remain flexible to local issues and must stipulate that when this work is managed, close working partnership is required with local.

(KFs 57, 67, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76 & 77)

R11. In line with local and national strategic direction, the Replacement Local Development Plan's SP4 (Securing Good Quality & Sustainable Design) must specify that developments must include the following features which any relevant SPG²⁹ will provide further details of :

- Provision of sufficient community EV charging points.
- Active travel signs/way markers, which provide route and distance information to nearest amenities.
- Quality, secure cycle storage at home (particularly for new flats & HMOs) and at local amenities.
- Sufficient road space to accommodate buses passing on main/arterial routes through new developments.
- Protection of historic travel corridors; whether in use or not, to allow their reinstatement at a later date if necessary.

(KFs 50, 58, 60, 62, 63 & 64)

R12. The Replacement Local Development Plan must ensure that cycle solutions on new developments:

- include secure cycle storage that incorporates usability standards, e.g. excluding the use of upright cycling or in hall storage in new flats and HMOs, and is compliant with Shared Regulatory Service guidance.
- have minimum standards on secure cycle storage which need to be absolute in the LDP and not just the SPG and should not be impacted by the proximity of other sustainable or active travel modes but should support connectivity.

²⁹ In line with the Welsh Government's LDP Development Manual and Cabinet accepted recommendations from the SPG Task and Finish Inquiry in 2022, the finalised transport policies in the RLDP should provide a clear and strong substantive policy hook to a relevant SPG that will provide specific details on the application of the policy. It is expected that the SPG will specify or cite the specific LDP policy or paragraph that it links (hooks) to and will be expanding on. A strong SPG should specify minimum standards, thresholds, numbers, percentages targets and measures, how these are worked out, and evidence why these are chosen or required. Furthermore, the relevant SPG should provide evidence on the impact that the policy is seeking to avoid and details of harms it will bring if what is required is not followed. A detailed outline checklist on what is required to ensure a relevant SPG that is strongly linked to the RLDP policies is currently being finalised as part of the accepted T&F recommendation.

- follow Sustrans policy on active travel gates, when possible and not ‘secure by design’ which can exclude some users e.g. wheelchair users and those with pushchairs.

(KFs 49, 57, 61, 65 & 68)

DISTRICT & LOCAL CENTRES

R13. Accept and implement the recommendations of the Nexus Planning Retail and Commercial Leisure Study (January 2023), as set out in Section 10 of their report, when drafting the RLDP retail planning policies, in particular, but not limited to:

- Nexus’s suggestions to amend the clause in R4 and R5 to resist continuous stretches of 3 or more units to ‘non-retail, leisure or community centre uses’ and, in centres where this is a particular concern, to add a specific clause resisting runs of 3 or more residential units,
- Nexus’s recommendation to reference in R6 the 2,500 sq m (gross) threshold for requiring retail impact assessment (Paragraph 4.3.26 of PPW11, 2021).

(KFs 83, 85, 87, 88, 94, 111, 120 & 125)

R14. Review existing out-of-centre developments to see whether it would be more appropriate for some of these to be categorised as district or local centres, as set out in the Retail Hierarchy, given how some of these have developed over time.

(KF 124)

R15. Use the examples cited in this report’s Key Findings of retail planning policies in other local authorities to robustly word RLDP retail planning policies, including:

- Enabling non-retail uses that achieve similar things for centres that A1 usage does e.g., footfall, active frontage/ window display, vibrancy.
- strengthening the wording of the retail strategy and sequential test.
- setting an appropriate threshold for retail/ non-retail use in centres, as part of a multi-pronged approach to managing development.
- drawing on the Vale of Glamorgan Council’s ‘unacceptable harms’ wording and its’ ‘marketing’ wording.
- framing residential use policy in terms of ‘tolerating’ residential use at appropriate locations if proposal is of an appropriate size and scale and not detrimental to the vitality, viability, attractiveness or accessibility of a centre

- *exploring use of the Public Health Wales template for developing effective development management approaches to hot food takeaways.*

(KFs 78, 81, 85, 86, 90 – 103, 105, - 112, 117 & 119)

R16. Consider whether to include reference to the following areas in the RLDP retail planning policies and, if so, consider the examples of retail planning policies in other local authorities highlighted in this report's Key Findings:

- Evening & Night Time Economy Uses.
- Temporary Uses.
- Agent of Change, and
- Loss of Local Services.

(KFs 113 – 116)

R17. Use the examples cited in this report's Key Findings of retail planning evidence requirements in other local authorities to strengthen the evidence base required, including:

- developing a Vision Statement for each centre, which will be included in the RLDP, that is intelligence-led and includes stakeholder engagement.
- in the RLDP, delineating and evidencing the impact on centres and local communities if unacceptable harms are not avoided, with further technical details and methodology to be contained in relevant SPG.
- undertaking analysis to determine what level and type of residential use is tolerable in centres, to ensure evidence is available to support development control.
- as a minimum, in the RLDP, adopt the Vale of Glamorgan Council's evidence requirements regarding the marketing required when a change of use from A1 is proposed.
- undertaking an analysis of demand for industrial land and business areas and, where this evidence shows there is a surplus, develop plans setting out specific alternative uses to ensure the identified surplus land is protected for these alternative uses and not available for speculative development.

(KFs 88, 89, 98 – 106, 109 & 120)

BACKGROUND CONTEXT

1. The Welsh Government (WG)³⁰ requires all councils to have a Local Development Plan (LDP). The document is the Council's key land use planning document, which sets out policies and proposals for future development and use of land in Cardiff between 2006 - 2026, in line with legislative requirements. Once adopted the LDP will replace the existing structure and local plans for the city and will form the basis for decisions on individual planning applications.
2. The LDP is a statutory requirement which identifies opportunities for investment and regeneration including the provision of new homes, jobs, community facilities and transport infrastructure. The Plan also identifies land that requires protection for its conservation importance and measures necessary for safeguarding our environment. It needs to balance sustainable development and conservation, whilst delivering the community's vision for the future of Cardiff.
3. In preparing the LDP, the Council must take account of a wide range of legislation, policies and other initiatives at European, national and local levels of government, including:
 - The Wales Spatial Plan
 - South East Wales Transport Alliance (SEWTA) Regional Transport Plan
 - South East Wales Regional Waste Plan
 - South East Wales Regional Technical Statement for Aggregates.
4. The LDP is tasked with:
 - Delivering sustainable development
 - Reflecting local aspirations for the city, based on a vision agreed by the local community and other stakeholders.
 - Providing a basis for rational and consistent development control decisions
 - Guiding growth and change, while protecting local diversity, character and sensitive environments
 - Showing how and where change will occur over the plan period.

³⁰ The Planning & Compulsory Order Act 2004

5. The Preferred Strategy therefore aims to give a broad outline of the intended level of growth in Cardiff and how it can be sustainably delivered. The strategy is a result of carefully considering a number of different factors including:
- The national and regional policy framework;
 - A sound understanding of the local context- identifying key data and issues which the plan must take account of from the evidence base;
 - The Council’s Community Strategy and LDP vision and objectives;
 - Considering the merits of different growth options; and
 - Considering the merits of different spatial options- where the best places are to accommodate new development needs.
6. The Scrutiny inquiry final report will be considered by the Policy Review and Performance Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 13 December 2023 and offered for Cabinet consideration on 14 December 2023. Subject to Council approval, work will continue on developing the Deposit Local Development Plan. The revised timetable is as follows:
- a. Consultation on Deposit Plan – July to September 2024
 - b. Examination – May 2025 to October 2025
 - c. Adoption – November 2025
7. The Local Development Plan regulations require the Council to publish its pre-deposit proposals for public inspection and comment.

APPROACH TAKEN

In March 2023 the Chairs of the five Scrutiny Committees agreed that a cross committee Joint Task & Finish group should be established to scrutinise the Preferred Strategy. Nominations were sought from all committees. In April a session was held between the nominated members and Planners, to ensure everyone's understanding was the same of the process to date and the proposed timeframe going forward. The group next met again in early July after the Preferred Strategy had been agreed by Cabinet in June Council in June 2023, to agree the focus of the work of the Task and Finish Group. At the workshop in July round table discussions were held and the top three issues to consider on more detail being statutory obligations, transport and district and local centers. Councillors were also asked which task group/s they wished to participate in. Following the summer break in September the three subgroups consulted with members regarding the terms of reference for each of the groups and stake holder workshops, evidence gathering, and desktop reviews took place during October. Some of this work was frustrated by the calling of continuous strike action throughout September, October, and November, which impacted on the meetings that were able to be held in a face-to-face context initially. The report was written in November to be agreed by the overarching Task & Finish Group and then by each Scrutiny Committee in December before being presented to Cabinet in December, to allow time for recommendations to be considered for inclusion in the Deposit Plan. Therefore, there was limited time to consider the issues in detail and the work of the task groups needed to be focused.

The **Planning Obligations** task group examined how current policy and process could be strengthened; how communication and narrative on planning obligations could be simplified, more accessible and transparent; and how carbon neutral and biodiversity requirements might need to be addressed. The broad range of external and internal witnesses highlighted many positives about the Council's planning service and how it currently approaches s106 agreements. The evidence has been informed by witnesses' experience of working with many local authorities, both in Wales and England. There were also many observations as to how Cardiff Council could improve policy and process as it moves into the detailed phase of developing the replacement Local Development Plan for deposit.

The **Transport** task group reviewed how transport and active travel infrastructure on new developments (LDP policy T5 Managing Transport Impacts) could be improved without negatively impacting on nature and biodiversity. Witnesses from both transport providers and

community groups were invited to attend focus groups and commented on the lack of engagement and communication from an early, master planning stage to ensure the needs of both groups were considered at the earliest opportunity and to encourage take up of sustainable and active travel opportunities. A desktop review of the policy gaps was also undertaken to support the development of recommendations.

To inform the Inquiry, Members of the **District & Local Centre's** task group were provided with information on the policy framework for retail planning policies in Cardiff, including the policy context from Welsh Government, the existing LDP policies and relevant SPG, the review of the existing LDP and Annual Monitoring Reports, the RLDP Vision, Objectives and Issues, the RLDP Preferred Strategy (consultation draft), the Nexus Retail and Commercial Leisure Study (January 2023), the Corporate Plan 2023-24 and the Cardiff Recovery and Renewal Strategy (2021). Members also considered pertinent findings from the previous Planning Inspectorate Examination of Cardiff's proposed Deposit Plan, 2015. Also, Members were provided with a summary of relevant findings from the recent *Shaping Cardiff's Post Pandemic Economic Recovery Inquiry* (January 2023), which included findings on high streets and district and local centres post-covid, and the previous *Supplementary Planning Guidance Inquiry* (October 2022), which included findings on how to ensure tight LDP policies and strong SPG. In addition, desk-based research was undertaken to identify examples of retail planning policies post-covid from other cities in the UK that meet the Welsh Government's policy direction. A gap analysis was undertaken comparing these examples with the existing LDP retail planning policies, to identify where existing policies could be strengthened and amended in the new RLDP, to meet Welsh Government and Cardiff Council's RLDP policy direction. Members also considered publications from the Welsh Retail Consortium, the Association of Convenience Stores, and the Local Government Association, regarding the role of local authorities in assisting high streets and ensuring access to local services.

The key findings from task group activities have been used to inform the development of the recommendations that have been submitted in this report.

Further details and the evidence gathered during October by the three task groups is available on request.

WITNESSES TO THE INQUIRY

Statutory Obligations Subgroup

External:

- Jim Cliffe, Planning Obligations Manager, Bristol City Council
- Mark Harris, Policy Advisor, House Builders Federation
- Jo Curson, Director of Development, Wales & West Housing Association
- Prof Neil Harris, School of Geography and Planning, Cardiff University
- Andrew Woods, Director, Expedite and Urban Centric
- Tom Evans, Head of Planning, Swansea City Council and Chair of Planning Officers Society Wales

Internal:

- Simon Gilbert, Head of Planning
- Alison Draper, Development & Regeneration Team Leader, Housing
- Brett Andrewartha, School Organisation Planning Manager, E&LL
- Anil Hirani, Operational Manager - Capital, Corporate & Treasury, Financial Services
- Vesna Cole, Solicitor, Governance & Legal Services

Written Responses:

- Caroline Jones and Andrew Weeks, Savills
- Chris Spiteri, Director, Property Index
- Dr Roisin Willmott, Director, Royal Town Planning Institute

Transport Subgroup

External:

- Gareth Stevens – Cardiff Bus
- Alex Corsi – Adventure Travel
- Christian Reed – Stagecoach Bus
- Ryland Jones – Sustrans
- Chris Roberts - Cardiff Cycle City
- Kirsty James – RNIB
- Dan Thomas – RNIB
- Ceri Cryer – Age Cymru
- Mike Jones Pritchard – Tongwynlais Community Council

Internal:

- Jenn Griffiths – Access Forum

Written Responses:

- Kelsey Barcenilla – Transport for Wales
- Justin Groves – County Ecologist
- Ed Baker – County Tree Officer

District & Local Centre's Subgroup

External:

- Carrie McCambridge – Operations Manager, South Wales, Co-Operative Food
- Adrian Powis – Operations Manager, Cardiff, Co-Operative Funeral Services
- Shelly Lewis – Regional Manager, South Wales, Co-Operative Funeral Services
- Tom Evans – Vice-Chair, Planning Officers Society Wales

Internal:

- Cllr De'Ath – Cabinet Member, Transport and Strategic Planning
- Simon Gilbert – Head of Planning
- Stuart Williams - Group Leader – Strategic Policy
- Caren Richards – Team Leader – Strategic Policy
- Jon Day – OM Tourism and Investment

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FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review, and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters there are no direct financial implications at this stage in relation to any of the work programme. However, financial implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review, and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters there are no direct legal implications. However, legal implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without modification. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet / Council will set out any legal implications arising from those recommendations. All decisions taken by or on behalf of the Council must (a) be within the legal power of the Council; (b) comply with any procedural requirement imposed by law; (c) be within the powers of the body or person exercising powers on behalf of the Council; (d) be undertaken in accordance with the procedural requirements imposed by the Council e.g. standing orders and financial regulations; (e) be fully and properly informed; (f) be properly motivated; (g) be taken having regard to the Council's fiduciary duty to its taxpayers; and (h) be reasonable and proper in all the circumstances.

COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

The role of the Policy Review & Performance Committee is to scrutinise, monitor and review the overall operation of the Cardiff Programme for Improvement and the effectiveness of the general implementation of the Council's policies, aims and objectives, including:

- Council Business Management and Constitutional Issues
- Cardiff Council Corporate Plan
- Strategic Policy Development
- Strategic Programmes
- Community Planning & Vision Forum
- Voluntary Sector Relations
- Citizen Engagement & Consultation
- Corporate Communications
- International Policy
- Cardiff Local Development Plan
- Equalities
- Finance and Corporate Grants
- Organisational Development
- Cardiff Efficiencies Programme
- E-Government
- Information and Communication Technology
- Council Property
- Commissioning and Procurement
- Carbon Management
- Contact Centre Services and Service Access
- Legal Services
- Public Services Board

To scrutinise, monitor and review the effectiveness of the Council's systems of financial control and administration and use of human resources.

To assess the impact of partnerships with and resources and services provided by external organisations including the Welsh Government, joint local government services, Welsh

Government Sponsored Public Bodies and quasi-departmental non-government bodies on the effectiveness of Council service delivery.

To report to an appropriate Cabinet or Council meeting on its findings and to make recommendations on measures which may enhance Council performance and service delivery in this area.

Policy Review & Performance Scrutiny Committee Membership



Councillor Joel Williams
(Chairperson)



Councillor Mike Ash-Edwards



Councillor Bernie Bowen-Thomson



Councillor Joe Carter



Councillor Jasmin Chowdhury



Councillor Jane Henshaw



Councillor Graham Hinchey



Councillor Garry Hunt



Councillor Leonora Thomson

DRAFT

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**CYNGOR CAERDYDD
CARDIFF COUNCIL**

**POLICY REVIEW & PERFORMANCE
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

13 December 2023

COMMITTEE BUSINESS REPORT

Correspondence – Committee dates 2024

Purpose of this Report

1. This report advises Members of:
 - a. Correspondence arising from Policy Review & Performance (PRAP) Scrutiny Committee meetings May-November 2023.
 - b. Committee dates in January and February 2024

Correspondence

2. Following each Scrutiny Committee meeting, the Chair writes on behalf of all Members, to the relevant Cabinet Member and senior officer, summing up the Committee's comments, concerns and recommendations regarding the issues considered during that meeting. All Committee Members are routinely copied into the letters when they are forwarded to the Cabinet Member. Depending on the issues highlighted, the letter may request a response from the Cabinet Member to any recommendations made, and sometimes requests further information.
3. All letters that follow the public scrutiny of substantive items are published on the PRAP scrutiny pages of the Council's website; except for those items deemed necessary to be considered in closed session due to their confidential nature.
4. For Members information, the table below includes links to all copies of correspondence following PRAP committees since May 2023. The Cabinet responses received to date are attached to this report as appendices.

5. Where responses are marked *outstanding* the support officer continues to follow up on the Committee's behalf, particularly where the Committee has made a formal recommendation for monitoring as part of the new database in place to capture the impact of scrutiny and support the Council's new performance framework. There are occasions, however, that the Committee does not formally request a response, and these are marked *response not required*.

Committee	Scrutiny	Link to Letter	Response
22 Nov 2023	Public Services Board Partnership Scrutiny	2023-22-11 CPSB Scrutiny	<i>Outstanding</i>
	Budget Monitoring month 6	2023-22-11 Budget Monitoring month 6.	<i>Outstanding</i>
18 Oct 2023	Annual Complaints Report	2023-18-10 Annual Complaints Report 2022-23.	<i>Outstanding</i>
	C2C - Customer Services	2023-18-10 C2C- Customer Service.	Response 18 Oct 2023
20 Sept 2023	Organisational Resilience	2023-09-20 Organisational Resilience.	<i>Outstanding</i>
	Budget Monitoring month 4 2023/24	2023-20-09 Budget Monitoring month 4.	<i>Outstanding</i>
12 July 2023	Annual Well-being Report	2023-12-07 Annual Well-being Report 2022-23.	Response 12 July 2023
	Annual Property Plan	2023-12-07 Annual Property Plan 2023-24.	<i>Response not required</i>
	Agency provision	2023-12-07 Agency Provision.	<i>Response not required</i>
20 June 2023	Legal Services	2023-06-20 Legal Services.	Response 20 June 2023
	Core Office Strategy	2023-20-07 Core Office Strategy.	<i>Response not required</i>
16 May 2023	Workforce Strategy	2022-16-05 Workforce Strategy.pdf	Response 16 May 2023

	Hybrid working	2022-16-05 Hybrid Working Policy.pdf	Response 16 May 2023
	Customer Services	2022-16-05 Customer & Digital Services.pdf	Response 16 May 2023

Committee Dates 2024

6. Members will note there are no confirmed dates for PRAP meetings in the Council calendar. The following dates can now be confirmed, with dates for March-May 2024 to be confirmed early in the new year.
- Wednesday 10 January 2024 4pm
 - Wednesday 28 February 2024 10am
7. Members are asked to note that the January meeting will commence at the earlier time of 4pm due to a full agenda, and the February meeting will focus solely on the budget for 2024/25, and is the only meeting during the year to commence at 10am.

Legal Implications

8. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters, there are no direct legal implications. However, legal implications may arise when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet/Council will set out any legal implications arising from those recommendations. All decisions taken by or on behalf of the Council must (a) be within the legal powers of the Council; (b) comply with any procedural requirement imposed by law; (c) be within the powers of the body or person exercising powers on behalf of the Council; (d) be undertaken in accordance with the procedural requirements imposed by the Council e.g. Scrutiny Procedure Rules; (e) be fully and properly informed; (f) be properly motivated; (g) be taken having regard to the Council's fiduciary duty to its taxpayers; and (h) be reasonable and proper in all the circumstances.

Financial Implications

9. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters, there are no direct financial implications at this stage in relation to any of the work programme. However, financial implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet/Council will set out any financial implications arising from those recommendations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are recommended to:

- a. note correspondence between the Committee and the Cabinet between May and November 2023.
- b. note the dates of the January and February 2024 meetings of PRAP.

LEANNE WESTON

Interim Deputy Monitoring Officer

7 December 2023