

My Ref: T: Scrutiny/PRAP/Comm Papers/Correspondence

Date: 18 March 2016



Councillor Dan De'Ath,
Cabinet Member for Skills, Safety, Engagement and Democracy,
Cardiff Council,
County Hall
Cardiff
CF10 4UW

Dear Councillor De'Ath

Policy Review & Performance Scrutiny Committee: 8 March 2016

The Committee has asked me to thank you for attending its meeting on 8 March 2016 to facilitate consideration of the final draft of the Council's draft Strategic Equality Plan 2016-20. Please would you also pass on my thanks to the Equalities team, Paul Keeping and Caryle Alleyne for answering Members' questions.

This was the second opportunity the Committee has had to scrutinise the Strategic Equality Plan, the first policy development opportunity having engaged Members at the commencement of the public consultation. Consequently, as you might expect, I am passing on fewer Members' concerns following this final pre-decision scrutiny prior to Cabinet. The following Members' comments and observations were raised during discussion at the Way Forward for your reflection as you implement the Plan.

The Committee feels it is important to capture the lessons for the future that can be learned from the consultation process embarked upon this time. Members take on board that partners are well down their own equality routes and urge you to start working more strategically now, as suggested by officers, so that we are making best use of co-operating with partners by the next Strategic Equality Plan.

Members consider it very positive that equalities is to be mainstreamed within Directorate Delivery Plans, placing greater responsibility on Directorates to embrace equality objectives within delivery action plans. However this approach will necessitate maintaining strong links between the central equalities team consisting of

just three officers and Directorates. The Committee wishes to endorse your suggestion that Directorates report annually on equalities, to enable the central team to provide Members with a collective view of progress that enables the Committee to test how effectively the Council is delivering its Strategic Equality Plan.

Members recall Unison's concern, raised during scrutiny of the budget proposals in February this year, that a contracting workforce can compromise the community reflectiveness of the Council's workforce. We note that you plan to address this matter with Unison directly, but wish to explore the issue raised more fully ourselves, and re-iterate that we will factor this challenge into our future work programming. We also note that current ring fencing and redeployment policies are a challenge to the organisations ability to improve matters, but Members feel the Plan should be able to assist the Council to improve this equalities challenge. Therefore Members are keen to establish whether there is positive action that the Council can take to address the matter, within the parameters of equalities legislation. We note that the Council can be proactive in supporting minority groups to complete job applications; and can ensure that Cardiff Works and the new apprenticeship schemes are reflective of the community. We agree that the central equalities team has a facilitating role to play, and look forward to liaising with them to establish how best the Committee can have an impact on tackling the representativeness of the workforce.

Finally the Committee wishes to make a plea for the production of a simpler version of the Plan. They feel it would be useful to produce a concise one side A4 document for staff that summarises the 7 equalities objectives.

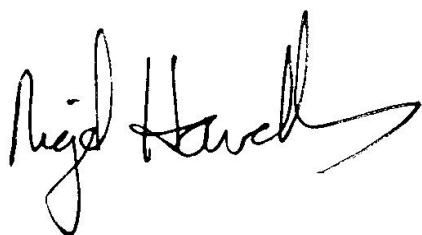
To recap, the Committee:

- urges you to start working more strategically with partners on equalities;
- encourages you to maintain strong links between the central equalities team and Directorates.
- encourages you to require Directorates to report annually on equalities, to enable the central equalities team to provide Members with an annual collective view of progress that enables the Committee to test how effectively the Council is delivering its Strategic Equality Plan.

- will factor into our future work programming a fuller exploration of the challenge of ensuring the Council's workforce reflects its community.
- feels it would be useful to produce a concise one side A4 document for staff that summarises the 7 equalities objectives.

Once again, thank you for engaging the Committee in both policy development and pre-decision scrutiny of the Strategic Development Plan 2016-20.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nigel Howells', with a stylized flourish at the end.

COUNCILLOR NIGEL HOWELLS
CHAIR, POLICY REVIEW AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

cc Members of the Policy Review & Performance Scrutiny Committee;
Paul Keeping, Operational Manager, Scrutiny & Equality;
Christine Salter, Corporate Director Resources;
Claire Deguara, Cabinet support office.