

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

Date: 27 April 2016

Councillor Phil Bale,
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Dear Councillor Bale,

Policy Review & Performance Scrutiny Committee: 12 April 2016

As Chair of Cardiff's Policy Review and Performance Scrutiny Committee thank you for the time you committed to facilitating scrutiny of the Economic Development Delivery Plan. The Committee feels you may find Members' observations, debated at the Way Forward, a useful outcome of the scrutiny. Therefore I set out below our key observations and concerns for your consideration.

The Committee feels it is remarkable that the Economic Development Directorate delivered so many achievements in 2015/16 with modest finances. Would you therefore pass on our congratulations to the officers concerned?

In respect of performance indicator ED018 and the target of reducing the maintenance backlog by £3.2m in 2016-17, the Committee notes while the Estate includes school buildings, there is a distinction between the Council's overarching strategy for school property, and its operational (facilities management) responsibility for schools maintenance, the latter of which officers indicate does not fall within the remit of the Economic Development Directorate. We agree it is vital to improve the quality of school buildings as they form the largest part of the Council's estate. Therefore we are seeking greater clarity on this split of property maintenance responsibilities, and the relationship between the Economic Development Directorate and the Resources Directorate.

Members have some concerns about workforce planning to maintain service levels in light of the age profile of this Directorate, noting that 67 employees are between the

ages of 55-64. The Directorate appears to have significant numbers of contract staff. We accept that a ring fencing agreement with the unions, introduced as part of budget negotiations in 2009 to ring fence recruitment to secure jobs internally, has impacted on the Council's ethnic and age profiles, but we maintain that the Council's workforce needs to fairly reflect its community. We will therefore monitor and feed into work programming discussions for 2016/17.

The Committee commends the Economic Development Directorate for having the lowest sickness target in the Council for 2015/16 at 6FTE. We also take on board that Culture & Events have moved into the Directorate, changing the work profile of the Directorate and resulting in higher sickness figures, and therefore for 2016/17 sickness targets will need to be more realistic.

Members will be pleased to have sight of the Corporate Asset Management Plan setting priorities in relation to supporting and investing in the Estate for pre decision scrutiny, and note it is likely to go to Cabinet in May 2016.

The Committee is interested in the apparent lack of investment in cultural property, namely St David's Hall and the New Theatre. We note your explanation that the ADM is on-going, a bidder has been identified, the scope of savings is being addressed, the two venues have received reduced subsidies this year, and savings have been realised. From a property perspective the Committee wishes to place on record it would like to drive value from cultural events, rather than take an ADM route.

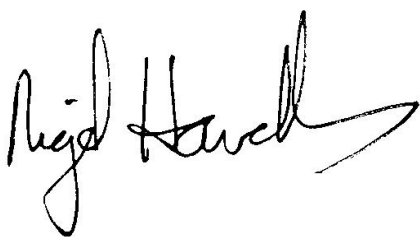
The Committee notes there are no aspirations for International Policy matters within the Delivery Plan, and feel the demise of Cardiff Business Council may have impacted upon the Council's International Policy. We note discussion now centres around opportunities for regional business arrangements, and that Twin City links are maintained more informally due to decreasing finances. We consider this to be a logical approach, however feel that the informality should be an opportunity for more twinning arrangements, particularly of an economic nature.

To recap, the Committee:

- is seeking greater clarity on the split of property maintenance responsibilities, and the relationship between the Economic Development Directorate and the Resources Directorate;
- maintains that the Council's workforce needs to fairly reflect its community, and will therefore monitor and feed this into its work programming discussions for 2016/17;
- will be pleased to have sight of the Corporate Asset Management Plan setting priorities in relation to supporting and investing in the Estate, for pre decision scrutiny;
- wishes to place on record that from a property perspective it would like to drive value from cultural events, rather than take an ADM route;
- considers that the informality of international policy and twinning arrangements should be an opportunity for more activity, particularly of an economic nature.

Many thanks once again for attending Committee on this matter. I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,



**COUNCILLOR NIGEL HOWELLS
CHAIR, POLICY REVIEW AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

cc

Members of the Policy Review & Performance Scrutiny Committee;
Councillor Graham Hinchey, Cabinet Member Corporate Resources and Performance;
Neil Hanratty, Director Economic Development;
Helen Jones, Strategic Estates Manager;
Gareth Newell, Head of the Cabinet Office;
Cheryl Cornelius, Cabinet Business Manager;