
**DEVELOPMENT OF A CITY WIDE EMPLOYABILITY PROVISION & A NEW
APPROACH TO BUILDING RESILIENT COMMUNITIES: PRE-DECISION
SCRUTINY**

Purpose of the Report

1. To give Members background information to aid the scrutiny of the draft report to Cabinet entitled '*Development of a city wide employability provision & a new approach to building resilient communities.*' The full draft report is attached at **Appendix A** and has **four** appendices:
 - **Appendix 1** - Economy & Culture Scrutiny Committee Letter and Response
 - **Appendix 2** - Consultation Report
 - **Appendix 3** - Focus Groups Report
 - **Appendix 4** - Equality Impact Assessment.
2. The Cabinet is to consider the report and its recommendations regarding the future delivery of employment services, transitional arrangements and further investigation and consultation on the approach to building resilient communities at their meeting on 16 November 2017. At this committee meeting, Members will have the opportunity to hear from internal witnesses. Members will then be able to decide what comments, observations or recommendations they wish to pass on to the Cabinet.

Background

3. Following a review of its anti-poverty schemes, the Welsh Government Communities First programme is ending on 31 March 2018. Communities First

organisations¹ in Cardiff provide a range of programmes that work with residents, community organisations, business and other key agencies to focus on improving the wellbeing and resilience of communities. There are currently four Communities First areas in Cardiff. Each area or “Cluster” is managed by a third sector organisation.

4. With the cessation of Communities First, the Welsh Government is making the following funding available for Cardiff:
 - i) Employability Grant – estimated to be between £650,000 - £750,000 per annum from 1 April 2018
 - ii) Community Facilities Programme – third sector organisations can submit bids to Welsh Government for capital grant funding for facilities that contribute to the community²
 - iii) Legacy Funding – £563,361 per annum from 1 April 2018.

5. In addition, the European Support funded *Communities for Work* programme is funded until 2020, with an allocation of £583,610 per annum.

Issues identified in the Cabinet Report

6. The funding from the Welsh Government, outlined above, does not match the previous level of funding for Cardiff for the whole of the Communities First programme. For example, in 2016/17 Cardiff received £2.98 million Communities First funding, with £2.08 million received 2017/18³.

7. In order to prepare for the cessation of Communities First, Cardiff Council undertook a review of Employment Services in Cardiff and carried out consultation on proposals for future services. The Cabinet report states, at **point 13**:

¹ In Cardiff the four Communities First clusters are: ACE (Caerau, Ely, Pentrebance and parts of Fairwater), BRG (Butetown, Riverside and Grangetown), ECLP (East Cardiff, Rumney, Llanrumney and Pentwyn) and STAR (Splott, Tremorfa, Adamsdown and parts of Plasnewydd)

² There is £4 million available in the Community Facility Grant Programme, for use across Wales

³ Taken from Item 3 Communities First report to Cardiff Public Services Board 7 June 2017, available at: <https://www.cardiffpartnership.co.uk/cardiff-public-services-board/executive-public-services-board/papers/>

'The review made clear that there is a need to changes services in Cardiff to improve accessibility, link together the many existing services and ensure that help is available to everyone who needs it, across the city.'

8. The proposed new Employment Service is detailed at **points 15-25**, which highlight that the services will be directly provided by the Council employees and will be offered based on need.
9. At **points 22-25**, the Cabinet report sets out the approach that will be taken to engage with hard to reach individuals.
10. The Cabinet report provides an overview of consultation findings and emerging issues regarding building resilient communities, at **points 29- 41**, and states at **Point 39** that

'Further work is required to develop all three strands of the Building Resilient Programme.'

This aspect of the report falls under the remit of this Scrutiny Committee.

The Economy & Culture Scrutiny Committee is scheduled to carry out pre-decision scrutiny of Employment Services, as set out in paragraphs 7 and 8 above at its meeting on 9 November 2017.

Proposed Recommendations to Cabinet

11. The report to Cabinet contains the following recommendations:
 - i) *'Agree the approach to future delivery of Employment Services as set out in the report.'*
 - ii) *'Delegate authority to the Director of Housing, Communities and Customer Service to take the necessary actions to implement the new Employability Service and transitional arrangements.'*
 - iii) *Authorise officers to review the approach to Building Resilient Communities programme, including a public consultation exercise, to inform a proposed way forward for Cabinet consideration.'*

Consultation Undertaken

12. In September 2017, the Council commenced consultation on the proposed approach to future Employment Services and Building Resilient Communities, using a survey and focus groups. The survey was distributed online and via direct mail to Council address lists, with hard copies available in libraries and hubs. Five focus groups were held in Communities First cluster areas.

13. The results of the survey are detailed in the Consultation Report attached as **Appendix 2** to the Cabinet Report, which shows that 1,596 responses were received to the survey from across Cardiff. The findings from the five Focus Groups Report are detailed in **Appendix 3** to the Cabinet report, with 42 individuals taking part.

14. The Cabinet report states, at **point 27**, that

'82% of respondents to the public survey agreed with the proposal that the Council should directly provide and coordinate the services with only 6% disagreeing. 92% of respondents agreed with the proposal to introduce the simple gateway into services.'

Previous Scrutiny

15. The Economy & Culture Scrutiny Committee undertook policy development scrutiny of the Employment Services proposals at their meeting on 14 September 2017. A copy of the Chair's letter and the response received, is attached at **Appendix 1** of the report to Cabinet.

16. Overall, Members of the Committee were supportive of the proactive approach adopted to the cessation of Communities First funding. Members highlighted:

- i) the need to ensure marketing of the new gateway approach provides reassurance to potential service users re its independence and helpfulness;
- ii) the need to ensure systems are in place to engage potential service users who face difficulties accessing employment services;

17. Members also requested a progress report on mapping ESOL provision and accessing additional funding. Information on ESOL provision is included in **Appendix 4** to the Cabinet report, on **pages 24-25**.

Way Forward

18. Councillor Lynda Thorne (Cabinet Member – Housing and Communities) will be invited to make a statement. Sarah McGill (Director of Communities, Housing and Customer Services), Jane Thomas (Assistant Director, Communities and Housing) and Louise Bassett (Partnership Delivery Team Leader) will attend to give a presentation and answer Members' questions on the proposals for building resilient communities in Cardiff.

19. Pre-decision scrutiny aims to inform the Cabinet's decisions by making evidence based recommendations. Scrutiny Members are advised to:

- i) look at the information provided in the report to Cabinet to see if this is sufficient to enable the Cabinet to make an informed decision;
- ii) check the financial implications section of the Cabinet report to be aware of the advice given;
- iii) check the legal implications section of the Cabinet report to be aware of the advice given;
- iv) check the recommendations to Cabinet to see if these are appropriate.

20. Members will then be able to decide what comments, observations or recommendations they wish to pass on to the Cabinet for their consideration prior to making their decisions.

Legal Implications

21. 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

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 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 in this report, its appendices and the information presented at the meeting;
- ii) Determine whether they would like to make any comments, observations or recommendations to the Cabinet on this matter in time for its meeting on 16 November 2017; and
- iii) Decide the way forward for any future scrutiny of the issues discussed.

DAVINA FIORE

Director of Governance & Legal Services

8 November 2017