

COUNCIL: 29 NOVEMBER 2018

FINANCE, MODERNISATION & PERFORMANCE STATEMENT

Consultation on 2019/20 Budget Proposals

The consultation on the budget proposals for 2019/20 went live on 16th November 2018 and will run for six weeks until 2nd January 2019. Residents can take part in the consultation via the [online survey](#) on the Council's website. Hard copies of the consultation document will also be available at hubs, libraries and council buildings.

Living Wage Week

I was pleased to attend a number of events marking Living Wage Week, which ran from 5th to 10th November 2018. The new real Living Wage rate was also announced as £9 an hour outside London.

Cardiff Council has been an accredited Living Wage employer since November 2015. Since then, more than 2,200 full and part-time Council staff have benefited from a pay rise, mainly women working as breakfast club supervisors, cleaners, domestics, kitchen assistants and midday supervisors. Last year, the Council was named the Living Wage for Wales Champion for 2017-18 by the Living Wage Foundation in recognition of its 'outstanding contribution to the development of the Living Wage in Wales, above and beyond the requirements of accreditation.'

As part of Living Wage Week, I was pleased to attend a Living Wage foundation week launch with the First Minister at a business in the city centre, as well as meetings of the Living Wage for Wales Leadership Group and the 'Cardiff as a Living Wage City' Steering Group. Flags promoting the Living Wage were also flown from Cardiff Castle to mark Living Wage Week.

Website

Our citizens continue to connect with us digitally as demonstrated by the following web usage figures from October 2018:

- 203,350 people visited the Council's website, with nearly 60% of visitors accessing the site on a mobile device.
- Nearly 45,000 waste collection look ups were made online (mobile app and website) with the highest volume of looks ups in the Cathays and Plasnewydd wards.
- 80% of requests for more recycling bags and caddies were made online.
- 5,369 visits were made to the Council tax portal, which were up 35% on September 2018.

- Customer habits are changing with just over 50% of all fly-tipping reports being made via the website or the mobile app.
- The most popular web content included the Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) consultation, Welsh Government childcare offer, glass recycling collection pilot and secondary school admissions.
- The new Cardiff Commitment website was also launched last month: <https://cardiffcommitment.co.uk>

Wales Interpretation and Translation Service (WITS)

In October 2018, WITS was presented with 3,656 calls and achieved a 98.3% answer rate, which is a 5.3% increase (647 calls) compared to September 2018. Of the 3,656 calls, 2,938 resulted in an interpretation or translation booking, which is a 17.2% increase in bookings compared to September 2018. WITS received 5,944 emails in October 2018, which was an increase of 14.8% compared to September 2018. WITS also allocated 97.77% of assignments in October 2018.

WITS' largest partner, Cardiff and Vale University Health Board (UHB), has successfully trialled video interpretation with the support of WITS. The trial was conducted in five areas of the UHB and, due to its success, it has been introduced in a further four areas with scope to increase further. WITS continues to support and monitor its usage and works closely with the UHB. Cwm Taff UHB has also shown interest in using video interpretation and demonstrations are planned in the near future.

Health and Safety Support Service – Schools

The Health & Safety Schools Team commenced support at the beginning of September 2018. The team is made up of 11 officers supporting approximately 12 schools each. The first term of delivery has been successful with good feedback from Headteachers and Governors who have welcomed the initiative to improve health and safety standards in schools.

Asbestos Management

Responsibility for asbestos surveying has moved to the Health & Safety Team and three Asbestos Officers are currently being recruited to undertake all asbestos surveying requirements of council buildings. Interviews will take place this month and the team will start work in the New Year. The officers will respond to emergencies and support with specifications and monitoring of asbestos remediation projects. This vital in-house expertise will help to improve asbestos management across council premises and reduce the very high costs relating to asbestos and the reliance on external contractors. The Council will also develop in-house training courses on 'asbestos awareness' and 'work on non-licensed non-notifiable asbestos', which are currently provided by Caerphilly Council.

Councillor Chris Weaver
Cabinet Member for Finance, Modernisation & Performance
23 November 2018