

Date: 23 July 2018



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Neuadd y Sir
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Councillor Chris Weaver,
Cabinet Member Finance, Modernisation & Performance,
Cardiff Council,
County Hall,
Cardiff
CF10 4UW

Dear Councillor Weaver,

Policy Review & Performance Scrutiny Committee: 11 July 2018

On behalf of the Policy Review and Performance Scrutiny Committee thank you for attending Committee to update us on progress in respect of the Council's Digital Strategy. Members were delighted to welcome the new Chief Digital Officer, Isabelle Bignall, and would be grateful if you would pass on our appreciation for her presentation. We offer the following comments and observations for your consideration on taking the Digital Ambition forward.

The Committee welcomed the Digital Strategy as a long term plan central to delivering the Capital Ambition programme. This is evident from the priority given to digitalisation in the new senior management structure, and the recent appointment of a Chief Digital Officer. We note the key principles of the strategy, and will factor the action plan that follows, to deliver the principles, into our future work programme.

Resourcing & Savings

Members are keen to establish the implications for resources, and the savings that might unfold from greater digitalisation of Council services. We understand each digital project has associated savings identified through a business plan and an identified payback period. We note that three existing teams, Customer Services, ICT Services and the Capital Ambition Delivery Team are now working together reporting to the new Chief Digital Officer. We note also that the aim is to reduce the volume of low value queries handled by C2C staff. We therefore consider there is significant potential for the strategy to impact on staff.

Cardiff App

The Committee wishes to point out that whilst the recently launched App is good, the functions currently available from the App are limited. We note the intention that parking will be a future function accessible on the App, and urge that there should be an increase in the services available online, according to the impact it will have on our volume of transactions. We therefore wish to take up your offer of having sight of draft proposals for future proposed transactions.

Councillor support

Members wish to stress the importance of Councillors understanding how the App will support them in their representation of citizens. We need to know via the App that an issue we have reported is progressing. We wish to point to some technical glitches that need to be ironed out for Members. We are pleased to hear there will be a Connected Members workshop to consult with Councillors. One Member of our Committee, Councillor Ashley Lister, is keen to establish that the App will be compatible with a Blackberry, and we therefore welcome your offer to add Councillor Lister's name to the 'smart councillor' test group.

Serving All Citizens

The Committee is particularly keen that the Council does not confuse the elderly with artificial intelligence, and puts in place appropriate mechanisms to assist them manually. Members are pleased to hear that the digitally disadvantaged remain central to the Digital Strategy, that you have a good understanding of where these groups are, and are exploring where others exist before agreeing a service map. We consider there is a risk that the Council becomes absorbed with technology, and echo a note of caution that we must be able to deal with the demand that ease of access to Council services creates. We concur that it is important to see the Council through the lens of citizens, to ensure that we are offering what matters to the citizen, and therefore the principles of the strategy are key.

Once again, on behalf of the Committee, my sincere thanks for attending the PRAP Scrutiny Committee for consideration of the Digital Strategy. I would be grateful if you would relay our views to the Cabinet to inform discussion, and I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'David Walker'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name 'David' being more prominent than the last name 'Walker'.

COUNCILLOR DAVID WALKER
CHAIR, POLICY REVIEW AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

cc Members of the Policy Review & Performance Scrutiny Committee
Isabelle Bignall, Chief Digital Officer
Joanne Watkins, Cabinet Office Manager
Heather Warren, Cabinet Support Officer