

**CABINET SUPPORT OFFICE  
SWYDDFA CYMORTH Y CABINET**



My Ref / Fy Ref: CM29730 / CM30738  
Your Ref / Eich Ref: T: Scrutiny/PRAP/  
Comm Papers/  
Correspondence

Date / Dyddiad: 18 May 2015

Councillor Nigel Howells  
Chair, Policy Review & Performance Scrutiny Committee  
Scrutiny Services  
Room 263  
County Hall  
Cardiff  
CF10 4UW

Dear Councillor Howells

**POLICY REVIEW AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
06 January 2015 & 31 March 2015**

I am writing in response to your previous letters dated 21 January 2015 and 02 April 2015, which set out the Committee's comments and recommendations in relation primarily to the Council's Organisational Development Programme. I should like to apologise for the delay in responding to these letters and will seek to ensure more timely replies are provided to the Committee in the future.

As you know, in response to the points raised previously by the Committee in January 2015, a progress report on the Organisational Development Programme (ODP) was provided to the Committee on 31 March 2015, which was also attended by Barry Quirk as one of the Peer Advisors on the Challenge Forum. Opposition Group Leaders were also invited to attend the most recent meeting of the Challenge Forum, which was held on 09 April 2015. This is consistent with our commitment to ensuring greater openness about the work of the Challenge Forum and to providing Members with timely and relevant information in relation to its work.

I welcome your comments on Barry Quirk's presentation at the meeting on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015 and agree that there is a critical need for speed in reframing local authorities, redesigning services, reprioritising and reallocating resources and revitalising staff. It is essential that the Council takes on board recommendations and learns from the expertise and critical friend approach of Peer Advisors, such as Barry Quirk, in order to reshape our approach to service delivery.

**PLEASE REPLY TO / ATEBWCH I:** Cabinet Support Office / Swyddfa Cymorth Y Cabinet,  
Room / Ystafell 514, County Hall / Neuadd y Sir,  
Atlantic Wharf / Glanfa'r Iwerydd, Cardiff / Caerdydd,  
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In response to the Committee's recommendations following the ODP Progress Report that was considered at the meeting on 31 March 2015, I have asked the Corporate Director (Resources) to address directly the financial position and resilience of the Council in our next progress report to the Committee. This will also include an overview of the planned new approach for the ODP.

I further welcome the opportunity to bring proposals for a refreshed ODP to a future meeting of the Committee in advance of formal consideration by Cabinet, which is expected to be in July 2015. Effective engagement with your Committee, as well as with the Challenge Forum and Members more widely, will form an essential part of our work to update the ODP.

At the last meeting, I listened to one Member's interesting proposal to establish a cross-party budget monitoring scrutiny panel, but would suggest that this is something that scrutiny chairs should discuss further and seek to take forward jointly.

As I have indicated previously, I would also welcome the opportunity to bring the Council's benchmarking strategy to a future meeting of the Committee and discuss further our approach in this area.

I want to assure the Committee that staff morale and the positive management of change remain high on the agenda for both the Cabinet and Chief Executive. We are committed to maintaining the momentum of engagement with staff and a continued programme of engagement has been put in place for 2015/16 which builds on the success of last year's Employee Engagement Roadshows that were led by the Chief Executive. This process has helped to ensure that the Senior Management Team has a good appreciation of the main issues faced by employees and those that are most important to them, as well as providing a mechanism for ensuring that key strategic issues are communicated effectively. The Council's Employee Survey is also due to commence during May 2015.

I trust that this information addresses the points that you raised and as always I look forward to continuing to work with the Committee to bring about improvements in the performance of the Council.

Yours sincerely,  
Yn gwyir,



**Councillor / Y Cynghorydd Graham Hinchey**  
**Cabinet Member for Corporate Services & Performance**  
**Aelod Cabinet dros Wasanaethau Corfforaethol a Perfformiad**

Cc Paul Orders  
Christine Salter  
Sarah McGill  
Martin Hamilton