

## ECONOMY & CULTURE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

4 JUNE 2015

Present: County Councillor McKerlich(Chairperson)  
County Councillors Dilwar Ali, Ralph Cook, Howells, Hyde,  
Javed, Stubbs, Weaver and Darren Williams

### 1 : APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRPERSON

Noted that at the Annual meeting of Council held on 21 May 2015, Councillor Rod McKerlich was appointed as Chairperson of this Committee.

### 2 : MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEE

Noted that at the Annual meeting of Council held on 21 May 2015, Councillors McKerlich (Chairperson), Dilwar Ali, Ralph Cook, Nigel Howells, Keith Hyde, Mohammed Javed, Ed Stubbs, Chris Weaver and Darren Williams were appointed as Members of this Committee.

### 3 : TERMS OF REFERENCE

RESOLVED: To agree the Terms of Reference for the Economy & Culture Scrutiny Committee.

### 4 : APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies were received.

### 5 : DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

### 6 : DIRECTORATE DELIVERY PLANS 2015 - 2017

The Chairperson welcomed Councillor Sarah Merry Cabinet Member Education and Skills, Councillor Peter Bradbury Cabinet Member Community Development, Co-operatives & Social Enterprise; Sarah McGill Director Communities, Housing & Customer Services and Isabelle Bignall Assistant Director Communities, Housing & Customer Services to the meeting.

The Chairperson requested abridged papers in future, with only matters relevant to the Committee included.

### **Draft Communities, Housing and Customer Service Directorate Delivery Plan 2015/16**

The Chairperson invited Councillor Sarah Merry Cabinet Member Education and Skills to make a statement in which she noted the important work done to date with learning for life work, she added that in the current climate this was particularly important and it kept people active and engaged in the communities. One day courses to generate income have been very popular and they also encourage people

to then attend longer courses, enabling further income generation and enabling people to find work. The Into Work Service was vital in delivering successful outcomes which impacts on disadvantaged people in Cardiff. Soft courses are invaluable and support enable people into work – they are provided in disadvantaged areas of the City.

Members were provided with a presentation on the Draft Communities, Housing and Customer Service Directorate Delivery Plan 2015/16 which included information on the Line of Sight; Directorate Responsibilities; Key Corporate Indicators; Areas for Scrutiny to Consider; Achievements and ambitions of the Draft Delivery Plan.

The Chairperson thanked officers for the presentation and invited questions and comments from Members.

- Members asked which section of the directorate had the highest sickness levels. Officers explained that the directorate had increased in diversity and now included community maintenance teams and caretakers etc. it was noted that sickness was higher with mobile workers but that change in the current climate also added stress. A breakdown of the sickness levels would be brought to a future committee meeting.
- Members noted the increasing age profile of the workforce, less recruitment taking place due to budget cuts and asked what was being done for succession planning. Officers explained that succession planning work was being undertaken, there were apprenticeships and traineeships across the directorate. It was added that the age profile doesn't follow the presumed trajectory that budget cuts mean the Council is left with older employees. the workforce plan would be provided to Members.
- Members noted the achievements of the Into Work Service had been excellent and that the KPI targets were advanced on what's been achieved this year which was positive. Members asked when the two tier fee structure for Adult Community Learning would be brought to Committee and were advised that officers would schedule it with the Principal Scrutiny Officer.
- Members were surprised by the high sickness levels and asked how much it cost the directorate in terms of overtime and agency spend. Officers explained that they did have this information but that it doesn't necessarily correlate to sickness; only critical services were covered. Members would be provided with the information on agency spend and overtime. The Cabinet Member added that the Directorate as a whole was financially sound with an underspend, although it was recognised that sickness absence needed to be looked at, it was important to understand pressures on staff who are under the stress of budget and job cuts. The Cabinet Member assured Members that the Directorate was doing all it could and the situation would be monitored.
- Members asked for further information on Apprenticeships, such as the number in the directorate, the length and whether college work was included. Officers explained that the length of the apprenticeships varied depending on activity, some in the Benefits section were 12 months whereby in Community Maintenance they could be 3 years. Day Release to college happened occasionally. The directorate were looking at opportunities for apprenticeships

across the directorate and to tie up with the Into Work service. The number of apprenticeships would be provided to Members.

### **Sport Leisure and Culture Directorate Delivery Plan 2015/16**

The Chairperson welcomed Councillor Peter Bradbury Cabinet Member Community Development, Co-operatives & Social Enterprise and Chris Hespe Director Sport Leisure and Culture to the Committee.

The Chairperson invited Councillor Peter Bradbury Cabinet Member Community Development, Co-operatives & Social Enterprise to make a statement in which he stated that the directorate provided discretionary services and it was important to find ways to keep these going in times of austerity. Delivering events such as the Rugby World Cup provided record numbers for income from leisure services, therefore driving up the income generated and not needing to decrease the services. The Cabinet Member thanked the Committee for the work undertaken to date which had been invaluable for how Scrutiny and Cabinet can function and develop Policy.

Members were provided with a presentation on the Sport Leisure and Culture Directorate Delivery Plan 2015/16 which included information on Key Achievements 2014/15; Net Budget 2015/16; Core Business Priorities and Planning for the Future. Members were also advised that there would be an invitation to visit Thornhill Crematorium in the near future.

The Chairperson thanked officers for the presentation and invited questions and comments from Members.

- Members were pleased to hear that there were 28 Apprenticeships in the Directorate. Members asked what work was being done with regards to Biodiversity to encourage Bee's; wildflower meadows, using land that won't be developed as part of the Local Development Plan for public use and diversity. The Cabinet Member stated that work was being undertaken to encourage the Bee population such as changes to grass cutting regimes. He supported the idea of land use and considered that officers would look into this. Officers added that they considered biodiversity hugely important, they had built a relationship with the RSPB which was very positive; land equating to 40 football fields had been allocated across the city as wildflower meadows and further opportunities would be sought out.
- Members noted that discussions were ongoing with the Muslim Community regarding next day burials.
- Members noted that the Community Asset Transfers took a long time to complete, The Cabinet Member agreed and stated that they were looking at leases rather than traditional asset transfers to try to speed things up. The Cabinet Member stated that a Strategy is being developed to inform the Councils process for asset transfers
- Members noted that Cardiff's park's were in the top 6 of the most improved parks in the UK and asked whether this would be put at risk with budget cuts. The Cabinet Member stated that they were always concerned that cuts effect

the quality of a service but there was good work being done with friends groups and volunteers.

- With regard to the Alternative Delivery Model, Members asked if the £400k saving in Quarter 1 could be achieved. Officers explained that it was a competitive dialogue; tender documents were due out in the next few weeks and would be brought to Committee. In December Cabinet would decide if Leisure Centres and Arts Venues would stay or go external, so currently officers are looking at enhancing the internal; if savings cant be achieved by Alternative Delivery Model then there would be opportunities to achieve them through different ways of working internally; enhancing the in-house position to meet challenges and pressures.
- Members noted that funeral charges had increased and asked if the surplus in budget was being kept for extra funeral spaces. Officers explained that the Cardiff Funeral Service is very competitive and they were keen to keep it at a reasonable cost. With regard to Bereavement Services Surplus, this is ring-fenced for Bereavement Services and can be Capital spend or other things such as future funeral space.

### **Draft Economic Development Directorate Delivery Plan 2015/16**

The Chairperson welcomed Councillor Phil Bale Leader, Neil Hanratty Director Economic Development Ken Poole Head of Economic Development and Roger Hopwood Arts & Theatres Manager to the Committee.

Members were provided with a presentation on the Sport Leisure and Culture Directorate Delivery Plan 2015/16 which included information Line of Sight; Directorate Responsibilities; Key Corporate Indicators; Key Context and Challenges; Other Business Priorities and Ambitions of the Draft Delivery Plan.

The Chairperson thanked officers for the presentation and invited questions and comments from Members.

- Members asked if Officers considered that Transport was key for economic growth in a city. Officers stated that it was a key aspect, but that other factors such as workforce skills and properties were also vital.
- With reference to the Multi Purpose Arena, Members asked whether plans had now had to be changed due to the announcement of a convention centre at the Celtic Manor. Officers explained that Cardiff still needs a Conference Facility, whether the scale of that would now change would be a different matter; the facility at the Celtic Manor would be 3.5k capacity and Cardiff had wanted 1200/1400 capacity. It was added that the Arena would be publically funded so may now be more difficult to move forward. The Arena would host different events as well as conferences and conventions and Cardiff are committed to taking the project forward.
- Members discussed the Cardiff Business Council. Officers stated that there would be a review in a few weeks time with a number of objectives; the funding is due to expire on 31/3/2016 so it needs to be looked at in terms of sustainability; the opportunity to move forward with the City region/City Deal if

it is fit for this purpose and any other issues identified at the review stage. The Leader added that Professor Tim Williams was involved in the work and he has extensive knowledge of the business community in South Wales. The results of the review would be brought to committee.

- Members discussed the Skills Gap and officers stated that there was work being done across various sectors in South East Wales to address this issue, to meet the new and emerging needs of Industry. It was important to highlight the emerging opportunities in Cardiff to schools, to circulate to careers advisors and head teachers; the importance of having a clear view of the needs of the economy to plan careers with focus; there was still work to be done on this but it is happening. The Leader added that lots of work was being done with colleges and universities and links to the City Deal meant that Cardiff could bid for UK funding for skills and transport etc.
- Members asked how regional priorities for the City Deal would be progressed. The Leader stated that it was early stages and they were looking at regional council's to join Cardiff, waiting for Cabinet Reports go through approving their involvement, this would happen in the next few weeks. The Leader stated he was hopeful all nine surrounding local authorities would give their support to the Cardiff City Deal. Priorities will be established as part of each business case that is submitted to the UK Government. Members will be involved in this process.
- Members discussed building a local skills base and recruiting from outside the City. Officers explained that it was important to build core key skills at a local level but if needed, recruiting expertise from outside wasn't necessarily a weakness, people come to Cardiff for work, love it and stay here. The Leader reiterated this with the examples of Panasonic's success in Cardiff and the Student population's contribution.
- With reference to the Tourist Information Centre, Members asked if there would be one in the centre of Cardiff. The Leader stated that they had planned for a centre in Central Square in the next few years; there was also discussion with St David's 2; Welsh Government were funding £400k to a Welsh Cultural Centre too so there would not only be one facility in Cardiff Bay, the offer would be expanded with satellite points, free Wi-Fi and improved digitalisation.

The Chairperson thanked the Cabinet Members and Officers for attending the meeting, giving their presentations/views and for answering Members questions

AGREED – That the Chairperson writes on the Committee's behalf to the Cabinet Member to convey their comments and observations (see attached).

## 7 : CABINET RESPONSE TO 'CARDIFF CENTRAL MARKET AND HISTORIC ARCADES' INQUIRY

The Chairperson welcomed Councillor Phil Bale Leader, Neil Hanratty Director Economic Development and Charles Coats to the meeting.

Members were provided with a presentation entitled 'Cabinet Response to the Report by the Economy and Culture Scrutiny Committee into Cardiff Central market and historic Arcades – Update', which included information on Market Strategy and Management; Market Management and the Business Improvement District/Tourism Strategy.

Members were advised that work had been with the Tenants Association which had resolved many historic issues, the Council had offered free arbitration and things were moving forward.

The Chairperson thanked Mr Coats for the presentation and invited questions and comments from Members:

- Members asked for more information on business rates for market stall holders. Officers advised that there was a new regime across the UK now whereby rates are levied direct against the individual stall holders rather than the Council/Landlord as it had previously been. As a result many stalls had seen a significant discount or were rate free.
- Members asked what could be done to bring the standards up to European Market standards. Officers advised that Cardiff Central Market was an iconic building in a great location with the potential of being a tourism attraction; these characteristics needed to be exploited. There was already diversity in the market, 63 stall holders with 50 different offers. It had been important to first resolve the legacy of issues and have a platform to move forward. Last year the market had joined NAMBA and had a health check from them; there is now a small market sub group which meets and stall holders can learn from good and bad practice; the local markets initiative was rising the profile of the market and it was important to work in partnership with the tenants going forward.

The Chairperson thanked the Cabinet Member and Officers for attending the meeting, giving their presentations/views and for answering Members questions.

AGREED – That the Chairperson writes on the Committee's behalf to the Cabinet Member to convey their comments and observations (see attached).

## 8 : GREAT WESTERN CITIES

The Chairperson welcomed Councillor Phil Bale Leader, Neil Hanratty Director Economic Development and Jonathan Day Economic Policy Manager to the meeting.

The Leader provided Members with a presentation on Great Western Cities which included information on the Shift in UK Policy; How UK cities have responded; Great Western Cities in Context; Key Facts; Economic Issues; UK and International Comparators; Shared Priorities and Next Steps.

The Chairperson thanked the Leader for his presentation and invited questions and comments from Members:

- Members considered there may be conflicting issues and a split of resources between South East Wales and Bristol and cited the competing airports as an

example. The Leader stated that he has spoken to every Council in the region and the business community and all had been very positive; he added that the partnership was not necessarily about competition although there would be some competing for funding at the same time. With reference to the airports, the Leader stated that he would urge the owners of Bristol airport to work with Cardiff and the Welsh Government to increase the air offer for the South West to compete with the rest of the UK. He stated that it was important to look at the value in the West of Britain as it is a very attractive and competitive region. He assured Members that the City Region was the primary focus and the Great Western Region sits alongside that.

- Responding to further questions on Cardiff Airport the Leader stated that it was a critical asset and had Welsh Government support; FlyBe being based there was a positive addition; further work with the Vale of Glamorgan Council on Investment and Connectivity was needed and this was very much on the agenda and supported by Welsh Government.
- Members considered that Cardiff was a competitive city and wondered if a joint marketing programme could dilute Cardiff's offer. The Leader stated that Bristol was a Green City and there were lessons that could be learnt from them as well as working together as a region and marketing collectively. Officers added that in order to achieve 'scale' in international competition Cardiff should be part of a wider region. The Leader assured Members that it would not dilute the 'Team Wales' offer.
- Members asked why Swansea wasn't part of the Great Western Cities partnership. The Leader stated that inclusion was not exclusive; Newport was involved and the Leader there was very supportive. Officers added that Swindon and Bath were also important for connectivity.
- Members noted that in terms of marketing it was difficult to push the South East Wales agenda when the Welsh Government had its own view; it was important to ensure that Cardiff was part of the Welsh Government message of investing here. The Leader stated that to be ambitious it was important to work with different partners to encourage inward investment; links with the Valleys needed to be strengthened too.

The Chairperson thanked the Cabinet Member and Officers for attending the meeting, giving their presentations/views and for answering Members questions.

AGREED – That the Chairperson writes on the Committee's behalf to the Cabinet Member to convey their comments and observations (see attached).

9 : ANNUAL REPORT 2014/15

RESOLVED: to approve the Economy & Culture Scrutiny Committee draft Annual Report 2014/15 for presentation to Council.

## 10 : WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2015/16

The Constitution states that each Scrutiny Committee will set its own work programme for the forthcoming year (Scrutiny Procedure Rule 7). The Committee is tasked with constructing a work programme for the year ahead that ensures the time available to the Committee is used most effectively, by considering items in a timely fashion that maximise the impact of scrutiny.

Members were invited to consider the approach they would like to take to setting the work programme for the municipal year 2015-16.

Members discussed the ways in which this had previously been done; and the ways in which other Committees undertake this task.

### RESOLVED:

- I. That the principal scrutiny officer ask all Members and Directors for potential topics, compile a list of potential topics and circulate to Committee Members;
- II. That a meeting is arranged with Directors to discuss potential topics.

## 11 : CORRESPONDENCE

RESOLVED: to note the report.

## 12 : DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Economy & Culture Scrutiny Committee is scheduled to take place on Thursday 9 July 2015 at 4.30pm in CR4 County Hall.

The meeting terminated at 7.20 pm