

Ref: RDB/PM/RP/16.02.16

16<sup>th</sup> February 2016

Councillor Ramesh Patel,  
Cabinet Member for Transport, Planning & Sustainability,  
County Hall,  
Atlantic Wharf,  
Cardiff,  
CF10 4UW.



Dear Councillor Patel,

**Environmental Scrutiny Committee – 16<sup>th</sup> February 2016**

On behalf of the Environmental Scrutiny Committee I would like to thank you and the officers for attending the Committee meeting on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> February 2016. As you are aware the meeting considered the 'Draft Corporate Plan 2016 – 2018 & 2016/17 Draft Budget Proposals'. In reviewing these proposals the Committee used the following documents to set the context of the discussion:

- Draft Corporate Plan 2016-18;
- Post Consultation Changes – Includes a total summary of the post consultation changes (£14.095 million), a schedule of amended 2016/17 savings proposals, post consultation changes – financial resilience mechanisms & additional pressures;
- 2016/17 Proposals Overview – Includes an overview of the 2016/17 savings proposals, Council wide budget savings proposals 2016/17, Addressable Spend – budget savings proposals 2016/17;
- City Operations Directorate - Draft Budget Savings Proposals;
- City Operations Directorate – Financial Pressures;
- City Operations Directorate – Capital Programme;
- City Operations Directorate – Employee Implications;
- City Operations Directorate – Controllable Budget Analysis;
- 'Changes for Cardiff – Consultation Results & Feedback Report on the City of Cardiff Council's 2016/17 Budget Proposals – Executive Summary' & relevant sections from the report;

- City Operations Directorate – Equality Impact Assessments.

This letter contains the recommendations, observations and requests for information agreed by Members during the Way Forward at the end of the meeting, which we hope will be of assistance to you in considering and shaping the final budget recommendations. The proposals that are allocated against the City Operations Directorate and which fall within the scope of your portfolio are listed below:

### **Savings Line 15 - City Operations – Building Control – Improve Business Process Efficiency**

- Members were concerned about the £46,000 increase in income allocated against Building Control described as efficiencies. They feel that this is a service which struggles to meet current demand and that clearly needs additional funding. With this in mind I would be grateful if you could:
  - Consider reviewing the budget allocations to provide the service with some additional funding to help it meet the current demands;
  - Clarify how we currently deal with situations where building regulations are breached;
  - Confirm whether or not we issue fines against those who breach the regulations. If fines are not possible then can you outline what type action can be taken and how effective it is;
  - Confirm the total value of fines generated in past financial years for breaches of buildings regulations; how buildings regulations cases are managed by the courts and if / how we are able to recover Council costs, for example, the incurred legal and officer costs.

### **Financial Pressures – Line 3 – Supplementary Planning Guidance**

- Members welcomed the £75,000 of identified financial pressures support offered for the generation of updated Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) documents in the light of the recent LDP adoption. However, Members felt that this will only go a part of the way in addressing the Supplementary Planning Guidance requirements especially where public

consultation may be required. They were conscious that officer time and consultation for such work could be significant and, therefore, ask that a contingency be identified should this figure be exceeded – the Council could be open to a number of possible issues and legal challenges if the SPGs are incomplete or remain outdated.

### **Savings Line 19 – City Operations - Butetown Tunnel**

- A local Member explained that closing the Butetown Tunnel for maintenance at certain times of day caused significant traffic problems in the Butetown and Grangetown wards. You acknowledged and were sympathetic to the problem and agreed to look at what could be done to ensure that the tunnel is only closed for maintenance at off peak times to create the minimum possible transport congestion. I would be grateful if you could follow this up and provide the Committee with feedback on the whether the maintenance impacts can be reduced or not.

### **Savings Line 21 – City Operations – Increase Civil Parking Enforcement contribution to fund Transport / Environment improvements currently funded by base revenue budgets**

- Members noted the increase in income of £360,000 and an overall saving of £370,000 required against this budget line. They also welcomed your recent response to the letter following the 8<sup>th</sup> December 2015 which provided an income and expenditure summary of the Parking & Enforcement Account. The Committee will in the coming months review this response alongside the budget proposals and consider if further scrutiny on the matter is required.

### **Savings Line 37 – City Operations – Litter Enforcement – Increase enforcement powers to reduce Environmental Crime (Full Year Effect)**

- At the November 10<sup>th</sup> Environmental Scrutiny Committee meeting Members received an item titled ‘Litter Management & Enforcement in Cardiff’. This considered a draft Cabinet report titled ‘City Operations –

Broadening Enforcement Powers to Improve the Public Realm' which was later received by the Cabinet at its meeting on the 12<sup>th</sup> November 2015. The report referenced a series of proposed activities, some of which will be implemented in April 2016. With this in mind Members will look to include an update report on the Environmental Scrutiny Committee Work Programme for the autumn.

### **Financial Resilience Mechanism – Targeted Interventions for Potholes**

- Members welcome the additional £320,000 allocated for addressing potholes in 2016/17. They received assurances that such repairs are not simply 'pothole patches' and that instead the Council applies a 'permanent reinstatement' approach to fixing the problem – i.e. removing a larger area surrounding the recurring pothole and replacing that.

### **Damage to the Highway from Heavy Vehicles**

- During the way forward Members agreed that some parts of Cardiff have a problem with heavy vehicles damaging roads which are / should be subject to traffic regulation order that limits the use of the road to vehicles below a particular weight. The Committee appreciates that policing weight restrictions is almost impossible but asks that the Council reviews existing cases where such traffic regulations have been proposed and also does what it can to raise the profile of existing vehicle weight restricting traffic regulation orders (TROs).

I would be grateful if you would consider the above comments and provide a response to the requests made in this letter.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "P. D. Mitchell". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Councillor Paul Mitchell  
Chairperson Environmental Scrutiny Committee

Cc to:

Councillor Bob Derbyshire, Cabinet Member for the Environment

Councillor Graham Hinchey, Cabinet Member – Corporate Services & Performance

Andrew Gregory, Director for the City Operations Directorate

Tara King, Assistant Director for the City Operations Directorate

Matthew Wakelam, Operational Manager, Infrastructure & Operations

Christine Salter, Corporate Director Resources

Allan Evans, Operational Manager, Service Accountancy

Marie Rosenthal, Director for Governance & Legal Services

Paul Keeping, Operational Manager, Scrutiny Services

Claire Deguara, Cabinet Office Manager

Cheryl Cornelius, Cabinet Support Manager

Councillor Nigel Howells, Chair of the Policy Review & Performance Scrutiny Committee

Members of the Environmental Scrutiny Committee