

Ref: RDB/PM/BD/RP/19.04.16

5 May 2016

Councillors Bob Derbyshire & Ramesh Patel,  
County Hall,  
Atlantic Wharf,  
Cardiff,  
CF10 4UW.



Dear Councillors Derbyshire & Patel,

**Environmental Scrutiny Committee – 19 April 2016**

On behalf of the Environmental Scrutiny Committee I would like to thank both of you and the officers for attending the meeting on Tuesday 19 April 2016. As you are aware the meeting considered an item titled 'Draft Directorate Delivery Plan 2016 -2018: City Operations Directorate'. The relevant comments and observations made by Members following this item are set out in this letter.

Following a scrutiny meeting I would normally write to you both individually on the areas which relate to your portfolios of responsibility, however, as the majority of comments made in this letter reflect City Operations wide issues I have decided to issue a joint letter. The few comments and observations which relate to your individual portfolios have been included under the headings of 'Environment Portfolio' and 'Transport, Planning & Sustainability Portfolio' towards the end of the letter. I am happy to accept a joint reply to this letter.

**Draft Directorate Delivery Plan 2016 -2018: City Operations Directorate**

- It was noted during the meeting that the age profile ranges used in the proposed Draft Directorate Delivery Plan for 2016-18 were different to those used in the Directorate Delivery Plan for 2015-17, for example, the first age range used for 2015-17 was 16 to 19 while for 2016-18 it was 16 to 24. Members feel that measuring progress is easier if consistent figures are used from year to year. I would be grateful if you could provide an explanation for the change.

- The Draft Directorate Delivery Plan for 2016-18 states that there are only 36 staff in the City Operations Directorate between the ages of 16 and 24 (2.53%). At the same time the document states on page 9 that ‘we have 60 Trainee / Apprenticeships and work experience opportunities across a wide range of disciplines’. Members felt that the very low number of staff in the 16 to 24 years of age range was a concern, particularly as approximately 58% of staff are over the age of 45. While the high age profile supports a wealth of experience it is vital this knowledge isn’t lost because of the Council failing to pass the information down to a younger generation. The Director for City Operations explained that this issue had been identified and that it was being addressed in a development plan which the City Operations Directorate is currently creating. I would be grateful if you could confirm the actions currently being taken to better balance the age profile of the workforce and to ensure that vital skills aren’t lost, for example, what is happening to develop apprenticeships within the Directorate.
- The Draft Directorate Delivery Plan for 2016-18 identified that only 17 of the 1424 staff (1.2%) working for City Operations were defined as Welsh speakers with Welsh skills recorded on DigiGov. Members were concerned by this low level and would like assurance that sufficient resources are in place to meet the newly introduced Welsh language standards.
- During the meeting I asked about the bronze level Sustainable Food City status which Cardiff achieved during 2015/16. Members would like more information on this achievement and the implications it has for Cardiff in the future. It will be added to a list of potential Committee work programme ideas for the 2016/17 municipal year.
- Action P35 on page 58 of the Draft Directorate Delivery Plan for 2016-18 explains that City Operations will ‘Benchmark service performance with core cities, or relevant benchmark organisations, in order to drive better outcomes for citizens, businesses and visitors’. The ‘Directorate / Service

Commitments' description used and quarterly milestones applied in P35 are identical to those used against C059/Q38645 in the Directorate Delivery Plan 2015-17. Members felt that the description implies that the benchmarking process is starting this year when in actual fact it is an annual process. They have asked that the description and detail is revised to reflect that this is an annual exercise and would like you to provide the Committee with the results of all of the City Operations benchmarking work undertaken during 2015/16.

### **Environment Portfolio**

- During the meeting a Member expressed his concern that the Police Community Support Officers (PCSO's) no longer issue fixed penalty notices for littering offences. An officer explained that PCSO's still hold the powers to issue fixed penalty notices for litter offences, however, South Wales Police no longer considers issuing them to be a priority. The Committee were disappointed at this response and would like you to raise the issue with South Wales Police.

### **Transport, Planning & Sustainability Portfolio**

- Members were very impressed by the reduction in full time equivalent (FTE) sickness days in Highways during 2015/16. Reducing the figure from 12 FTE sickness days to 4 FTE sickness days is an outstanding achievement in a relatively short period of time. They would like to congratulate the City Operations officers involved with delivering this huge improvement and have asked you to provide them with detail on how this change was achieved.
- The Committee note the comments made on the Cardiff District Heat Project and the development work for the City Region Metro in 2016/17. These will be included as potential items for the Environmental Scrutiny Committee work programme for 2016/17.
- It was noted that an item on the Highways Asset Investment Strategy is due to be considered at the Cabinet meeting on the 16 June 2016. This

item was previously scrutinised by the Committee in September 2014, however, due to the length of time and changes to the strategy since that date they would like to revisit the topic at the next meeting on the 17 May.

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 style with a horizontal line underlining the name.

Councillor Paul Mitchell  
Chairperson Environmental Scrutiny Committee

Cc to:

Andrew Gregory, Director of City Operations  
Tara King, Assistant Director of City Operations  
Jane Cherrington, Operational Manager – Strategy & Enforcement  
Paul Keeping, Operational Manager, Scrutiny Services  
David Marr, Interim Monitoring Officer  
Members of the Environmental Scrutiny Committee