

Fy Nghyf / My Ref: NRS/RM/SM/04.06.15

Dyddiad / Date: 29 June 2015

Councillor Sarah Merry  
Cabinet Member for Education and Skills  
City of Cardiff Council  
County Hall  
Cardiff  
CF10 4UW



Dear Councillor Merry

### **ECONOMY AND CULTURE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 4 June 2015**

Thank you for attending the June meeting of the Economy and Culture Scrutiny Committee, where we considered the elements of the Communities, Housing & Customer Services Directorate Delivery Plan that are relevant to this Committee's terms of reference. I will be grateful if you could also pass on the thanks of the Committee to Sarah McGill and Isabelle Bignall for their presentation and for addressing the questions that arose during the meeting. The Committee had a few comments and observations following the meeting, which are set out below.

I am conscious that there are proposed changes to Cabinet Member portfolios, and as such will ensure a copy of this letter is sent to Cllr De'Ath who is due to take on responsibility for this area of work.

### **Communities, Housing and Customer Services Directorate Delivery Plan**

As outlined in the 'Key Achievements from 2014/15' section of the Delivery Plan, Members wish to take the opportunity to praise the approach and direction being taken for Into Work Services in Cardiff, following a redesign of Local Training and Enterprise. We note the successes that have been achieved in relation to hosting job fairs, guaranteed interview events and volunteer recruitment, and are pleased that the Council is playing a crucial role in supporting individuals to find paid employment. We hope that these successes will be built upon for the 2015/16 municipal year.

In the letter following the May Committee meeting, Members of this Committee noted their intention to scrutinise the review of concessionary rates for non-priority adult community learning, and this is a point we wish to reemphasise as we look to set our work programme for 2015/16. Please could you liaise with the Principal Scrutiny Officer for the Committee in order to schedule this item?

Our remaining comments relate to the Communities, Housing and Customer Services Directorate as a whole, and as such we will be writing to Cllr Bradbury to raise the same points.

During the meeting Members explored the sickness absence figures for the Directorate. We aware that the areas of the directorate with high sickness are not those that fall under the Committees terms of reference, nevertheless we would like to request a breakdown on the sickness in this directorate by age profile and by job categories / service provision for Members to review and make comments to the relevant scrutiny Committee should it be deemed necessary.

In relation to these levels of sickness, we are mindful that this will have had a knock on effect on the levels of overtime and agency spend for the directorate. Please could you also provide us with figures on this area of spend, again split by job categories / service provision?

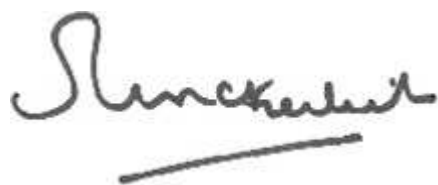
Members were pleased to hear that plans are in place to address an ageing workforce in many of the services within this directorate and in particular that apprenticeships are offered in a number of services, and with a range of durations. Please could you provide us with the relevant figures for apprenticeships provided, the services they apply to, and their duration? Members would also be interested in information on how many of these apprenticeships translate into more permanent roles within the Council, if this analysis is available.

To re-cap for ease, the Committee asks that the following points are addressed:

- Review of concessionary rates for non-priority adult community learning to be scheduled into 2015/16 work programme.
- Request a breakdown on the sickness in this directorate by age profile and by job categories / service provision.
- Request figures for agency and overtime spend split by job categories / service provision.
- Request information on apprenticeships in the directorate, including total number, the services they are within, their duration, and how many translate into permanent employment.

I would be grateful if you would consider the above comments, observations and recommendations, and look forward to receiving your feedback.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Roderick McKerlich', with a horizontal line underneath it.

**Councillor Roderick McKerlich**  
**Chairperson, Economy and Culture Scrutiny Committee**

cc Cllr De'Ath – Cabinet Member, Skills, Safety & Engagement  
Sarah McGill – Director, Communities, Housing and Customer Services  
Cheryl Cornelius and Jo Watkins, Cabinet Office  
Members of the Economy and Culture Scrutiny Committee