
**CABINET RESPONSE – COMMUNITY & ADULT SERVICES SCRUTINY REPORT
TITLED ‘CARDIFF COUNCIL’S SUPPORT TO RESIDENTS WITH THE COST OF
LIVING’**

Purpose of the Report

1. To consider the Cabinet’s response to the recommendations made by this Committee’s Task & Finish inquiry report titled, ‘Cardiff Council’s Support to Residents with the Cost-of-Living’.

Structure of the Papers

2. To facilitate discussion at the meeting, attached to this Cover Report are the following appendices:

Appendix A – Cabinet’s response to the Inquiry’s Recommendations

Appendix B – Cabinet’s response to the Inquiry’s Recommendations – *exact detail.*

Appendix C – draft Advice Services Cabinet Report (to follow).

The draft Cabinet Report also contains, ‘Appendix 1: Single Impact Assessment’.

Scope of Scrutiny

3. The inquiry report was presented to Cabinet on the 2 March 2023. A full response was agreed by Cabinet on the 13th July 2023; a copy of the full response is attached at **Appendix A and B**. The full copy of the committee’s inquiry report is available [here](#).

4. This agenda item will begin with each Cabinet Member being offered the opportunity to provide a brief opening statement (should they wish). Following any opening statements provided by the Cabinet Members, the Committee will then have the opportunity to explore the Cabinet's response to the inquiry's recommendations.
5. During this scrutiny, Members will have the opportunity to:
 - explore the Cabinet's response to the Task & Finish inquiry's recommendations and;
 - the subsequent progress made.
 - Committee Members may also wish to explore how the service plans to offer support to residents during the forthcoming winter months.
6. Committee Members will also note, attached to this Cover Report for Members information is a draft Cabinet Report, which is due to be considered by the Cabinet in their November meeting. Due to the current Advice Partner contract expiring on 31st March 2024, the Cabinet Report seeks Cabinet agreement to initiate a procurement process to re-establish current arrangements in the Advice Service; re-establishing an 'Advice Partner' model to offer a complementary service to the Council's in-house Advice Services team; with no changes to the council's ongoing cost.

Background

7. At the 2022 Community and Adult Services Scrutiny Committee Work Programme Forum, Members agreed to undertake an Inquiry exploring Cardiff Council's support for residents with the cost-of-living. Remaining mindful of the nature of the issue, Members concurred on the need for the Inquiry to provide, timely, focused assistance to the Council in its review of services

8. The terms of reference for the inquiry were agreed as follows:

To assist the council in its response to the cost-of-living crisis, this Inquiry will:

- *Review issue-related council services and proposed action on offer to Cardiff residents.*
- *Examine the scope, remit, demand, capacity and join up of services on offer.*
- *Assess, in consultation with key stakeholders, community awareness and accessibility of services and schemes available.*

9. The inquiry was informed by evidence and advice from the following:

- Councillor Peter Bradbury- Cabinet Member for Tackling Poverty & Supporting Young People
- Councillor Lynda Thorne – Cabinet Member for Housing & Communities
- Helen Evans – Assistant Director, Housing & Communities
- Hayley Beynon – Operational Manager – Advice
- Sam Gane – District Hub Manager
- Khalid Osman – Into Work, Co-ordinator
- Emma Dennett – Benefit Assessment Manager
- Frontline Advice Services Staff
- Cardiff & Vale Credit Union
- Cardiff Foodbank
- Community Housing Cymru
- Welsh Women’s Aid
- Diverse Cymru
- Gypsy & Traveller Wales
- Riverside Advice
- Welsh Government

10. All recommendations proposed in this Inquiry were based on the evidence received and valued perspectives of all stakeholders involved. Inquiry Members presented the recommendations to Cabinet in a bid to supplement the service area’s ethos of

providing the best possible support to *all* Cardiff residents', regardless of their individual circumstance.

11. When conducting the Inquiry, Members remained mindful to the financial pressures placed on local authorities and the current context on which this Inquiry was based, and so, the recommendations made, centred largely around maximising current resource, strengthening external support and allowing greater flexibility in service provision.
12. Inquiry Members were firmly of the view, that front line officers and executive personnel involved in this work hold a strong passion and commitment toward providing the best possible support and assistance to Cardiff residents. Members regarded the work they do as invaluable and, given the likelihood of demand remaining, or even increasing, strongly championed the Advice Services team being protected and grown wherever possible

Cabinet Response to Recommendations

13. The inquiry report made a series of key findings and 10 recommendations. Of the 10 recommendations made, the Cabinet accepted 8; with 2 recommendations being partially accepted.
14. Full details of the response and are contained in **Appendix A & B** of this report.

Legal Implications

The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not making policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters there are no direct legal implications. However, legal implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to the Cabinet/Council will set out any legal implications arising from those recommendations. All decisions taken by or on behalf of the Council must (a) be within the legal powers of the Council; (b) comply with any procedural requirement imposed by law; (c) be within the powers of the body or person exercising powers on behalf of the Council; (d) be undertaken in accordance with the procedural requirements imposed by the Council e.g. Scrutiny Procedure Rules; (e) be fully and properly informed; (f) be properly motivated; (g) be taken having regard to the Council's fiduciary duty to its taxpayers; and (h) be reasonable and proper in all the circumstances.

Financial Implications

The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not making policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters there are no direct financial implications at this stage in relation to any of the work programme. However, financial implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet/Council will set out any financial implications arising from those recommendations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is recommended to consider the information contained in this report, its appendices and the information presented at the meeting to provide the executive with any comments, concerns or recommendations.

Leanne Weston

Interim, Deputy Monitoring Officer

14 November 2023