

My Ref: T: Scrutiny/Correspondence/Cllr NH

Date: 20 February 2019



County Hall
Cardiff,
CF10 4UW
Tel: (029) 2087 2087

Neuadd y Sir
Caerdydd,
CF10 4UW
Ffôn: (029) 2087 2088

Councillor Weaver
Cabinet Member, Finance, Modernisation and Performance
Cardiff Council
County Hall
Cardiff
CF10 4UW

Dear Councillor Weaver,

Economy & Culture and Environmental Scrutiny Committee: 19 February 2019

On behalf of the Economy & Culture Scrutiny Committee, please accept Members' thanks for attending, along with Cabinet colleagues and officers, for our scrutiny of the draft Corporate Plan 2019-2022 and Budgetary Proposals. Members have asked that I pass on the following recommendations, comments and observations.

Corporate Plan 2019 – 2022

Overall, Members are content with the aims, priorities, measures and targets set out in the Corporate Plan. At the meeting, Members raised the fact that the step '*to develop a business plan to protect the city's historic assets*', which was in the Corporate Plan 2018-2021, is not included in this year's Plan. Whilst Members understand the points made at the meeting that the Plan cannot include all the work undertaken by the Council, Members feel that this particular piece of work is of great significance to the heritage and people of Cardiff and therefore we recommend that this step be included in the final version of the Corporate Plan presented to Council. This will demonstrate the commitment of the Council to continue with this work, give it visibility and help to retain focus on delivery.

In the way forward, Members discussed the step '*Develop a new vision and masterplan for Cardiff Bay by 2020, including taking forward delivery of the next phase of development for the International Sports Village by 2019*'. Members look forward to scrutinising detailed proposals when these are available and scrutiny is practicable.

Overall Budget

Members wish to thank Christine Salter for her clear presentation on the overall budgetary position. Members note the following points in particular:

- That the 'affordability envelope' outlined in the report to Cabinet sets affordability limits for the Indoor Arena costings and that, were these affordability limits to be not met, there would need to be a separate report to Council for discussion and approval
- That the capital financing costs are deemed to be prudent, sustainable and affordable both now and in the future; if further costs are proposed, these would need to be carefully assessed to ensure this position is not changed
- That 18% of the savings proposed are at a General Planning stage and that these savings will be subject to enhanced monitoring by finance officers and directors. This is an increase on the 10% last year and 5% the year before re savings with no detailed planning.

The above points are of particular interest to this Committee and we will make time to scrutinise progress on these, within our terms of reference.

With regard to the consultation undertaken to inform the budgetary proposals, Members can see that more efforts have been made this year to try to engage with seldom heard from groups and communities. It is disappointing that these efforts did not result in higher response levels and Members appreciate your frankness in acknowledging this and wanting to address it. Members welcome and appreciate your proposal to bring ideas to Scrutiny Chairs Liaison Forum for discussion with Scrutiny Chairs and all Scrutiny members and we look forward to being able to share and exchange ideas and practices to help make consultation in 2020 as inclusive as possible.

Members also wish to take this opportunity to pass on their sincere thanks and appreciation to Christine for all her work and tremendous commitment to Cardiff Council; we wish her well in her retirement.

Economic Directorate

Members wish to pass on their thanks to Councillor Thomas, Councillor Bradbury and officers for attending and engaging in discussion about the difficulties and

challenges of doing the same, or more, with less resource. Members can see that, overall, the Economic Directorate has put forward significant levels of savings, with 'employee costs' and 'other spend' savings equating to £8,555,000, offset by loss of income of £5,402,000 to make overall savings of £3,153,000 or 16% of the overall savings. This level of saving will indeed make it challenging to ensure continued service delivery and we explored some of these in more detail at the meeting.

Members raised their concerns about the impact of the savings relating to events, tourism, marketing and business events (Lines 1, 14, 18, 19 & 20), which are key to the future economic health of Cardiff. Members note the points made in response regarding the need to work in partnership, for example with Visit Wales, Cardiff Hoteliers Association and ICCW. Members agree with this but strike a note of caution in that many partner organisations will themselves be subject to budget reductions.

Regarding Events, Members note the intention to move from subvention towards supporting events to grow and become self-sustaining. This Committee has recently completed its Inquiry on Events in Cardiff and our report will be presented to Cabinet shortly for your consideration; we trust you find it of use.

With regard to Line 12, Members note the response that this will not have an impact on service delivery as the post is already vacant and the service has adjusted accordingly.

With regard to Line 15, City Centre Management, Members note that alternative arrangements are in place and that there is a positive relationship with For Cardiff, the Business Improvement District.

Members note the double-pronged approach being taken to the New Theatre, Line 7, seeking expressions of interest from private companies at the same time as tightly managing operations to control spend. Members are clear that they wish to scrutinise any new proposed operating model for the New Theatre and ask that officers liaise with scrutiny services to ensure that this happens at the appropriate time.

Regarding the Parks, Leisure and Sport areas, Members note the continued saving accruing from the new operating model for leisure centres, Line 6. Members are

pleased to see that £54,000, from the Financial Resilience Mechanism monies, has been put into play areas and trees maintenance and that work is on-going to confirm precisely where these monies will be spent. Members note the Corporate Plan step to work with 'Friends of' and volunteer groups re parks and green spaces and we re-iterate our long-standing desire to boost the number of park rangers, whose roles are critical in managing the interface with these groups and others, as well as in ensuring our parks are safe spaces for all. These roles are a clear example of 'invest to save'.

Members were interested to understand the latest position regarding the Welsh Government's review regarding the Cardiff Harbour Authority funding arrangements and note that the review is due to be completed by end of March 2019. Members are interested to understand the review and what it will mean for future arrangements. I ask that officers liaise with scrutiny services to ensure that we are able to scrutinise this at the appropriate time.

Finally, many of the Economic Directorate items in the Corporate Plan and budgetary proposals, including in the capital programme, are of interest to Members of this committee and we will be recommending to a future Committee that they pay close attention to these when setting their work programme for the 2019/2020 municipal year.

Communities & Housing

Members wish to thank Councillor Merry, Councillor Thorne and Jane Thomas for attending committee.

With regard to Adult Community Learning, Members thank Councillor Merry for highlighting that Learning for Life courses are on track to becoming self-sustaining and that Learning for Work courses, funded by Welsh Government, are expected to have a 50% cut in funding following the recent Wales-wide review of funding.

Members note that a service review is underway in anticipation of this and that a report will be brought for scrutiny consideration, prior to decision. Further to our comments at last year's scrutiny regarding working more with volunteers and cross-subsiding courses, Members note: volunteers in hubs are helping re digital inclusion courses; and that take-up of certain courses, such as pottery classes and theatre

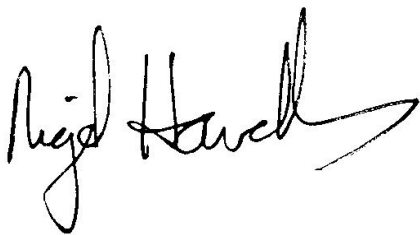
classes, has increased and it is hoped that this will enable subsidised places to be offered to increase access and inclusivity.

With regard to the continued changes to libraries and hubs, Members welcome the fact that plans are amended following local consultation events to ensure that services reflect local communities' preferences and needs. Members are keen to play a role in this, as local ward members, and are pleased to hear that officers ensure local ward members are made aware of consultation events in their areas.

With regard to Line 33, Members note that this saving accrues from the management costs that form part of available grants used re Into Work services in Cardiff.

Thank you once again for your attendance at Committee. I would be grateful if you would consider the above recommendations and comments and work with the relevant Cabinet portfolio holders to provide a response to this letter.

Yours sincerely,



COUNCILLOR NIGEL HOWELLS
CHAIR, ECONOMY & CULTURE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

cc Members of the Economy & Culture Scrutiny Committee
 Cllr Thomas Cllr Bradbury Cllr Merry Cllr Thorne
 Christine Salter Ian Allwood
 Ken Poole Jon Day Kathryn Richards Jon Maidment
 Jane Thomas Cllr Goodway Neil Hanratty Sarah McGill
 Cabinet Support Office Rita Rohman Liz Patterson Clair James