

My Ref: T: Scrutiny/PRAP/Comm Papers/Correspondence

Date: 07 June 2019



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Councillor Chris Weaver,
Cabinet Member Finance, Modernisation & Performance,
Cardiff Council,
County Hall,
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Dear Chris,

Policy Review & Performance Scrutiny Committee: 8 May 2019

As Chair of the Policy Review and Performance Scrutiny Committee, I would like to thank you for attending Committee to update Members on the view of the arrangements to support the Capital Ambition Delivery Programme undertaken by the Wales Audit Office (WAO).

At the meeting it was explained that in 2017, Cabinet approved 'Capital Ambition', the administration's 5 year policy programme for the Council and the identified priorities which had been translated into the Council's Corporate Plan called Delivering Capital Ambition. Between September 2018 and March 2019 the WAO undertook a review of the development and implementation of the Capital Ambition Delivery Programme and to observe the governance arrangements in practice

Members would also like to thank Ian Phillips and Samantha Clements from the WAO, Chris Lee, Corporate Director Resources, Dean Thomas, Portfolio Manager, Capital Ambition Delivery Programme to provide an opportunity to clarify some of the details included in the WAO report. We offer the following comments and observations for your consideration in respect of the arrangements to support the Capital Ambition Delivery Programme.

Overall the WAO confirmed that that the Council has sound programme management arrangements in place for its Capital Ambition Delivery Programme but made three recommendations which related to strengthening engagement with scrutiny, reviewing the associated management arrangements which support delivery of the

Corporate Plan such as the Directorate Delivery Plans and make links to the medium term financial plan to ensure that the savings targets are realised.

The Committee requested clarification regarding the proposal for programme P1 and the strengthening of the role of scrutiny in engaging with, and challenging the delivery and impact of the programme to increase accountability and help provide momentum. It was acknowledged that the report did not reflect the work that had been undertaken in the last few months which would have enabled the Committee to gain an initial understanding of the Capital Ambition Delivery Programme with the intention to effectively scrutinise the programme in the near future. There is a case to improve coordination between Scrutiny Committees in the development of their forward work programmes and the identification of topics associated with the Capital Ambition Delivery Plan. This coordination should be undertaken with the Scrutiny Chairs.

The Programme Manager was also invited to attend a meeting with the Chairperson of the committee and the scrutiny officer to clarify the progress being made with projects and to identify those which are ready for detailed scrutiny.

The Corporate Director Resources confirmed that the programme had already provided beneficial outcomes and that the proposals for improvement linked to the medium term financial strategy were critical to ensure that the delivery plan met the desired outcomes for making significant savings.

Members also sought clarification of the process to ensure that project costs were achieving the expected outcomes in respect of budget savings and transformational benefits. It was explained that following the governance meetings of the Investment Review Board project area leads have been requested to attend a subsequent meeting to ensure that costs would not exceed any benefits and to confirm that the desired project outcomes had been achieved.

Members reinforced the importance of clear financial cost and savings goals in scoping projects so that the achievement of both can be assessed. This will clearly include invest to save projects where the financial case would have even greater depth.

The committee was pleased to be briefed on the Capital Ambition Delivery Programme and will expect scrutiny to make a contribution to optimising its outcomes. It may also warn of any shortcomings in terms of progress ,costs and potential benefits

Finally, as Councillors, Members have considerable experience of accessing the Council's frontline services, and we urge you to engage with all Members and utilise their expertise to assist in the development of services.

Once again, on behalf of the Committee, my sincere thanks for attending the PRAP Scrutiny Committee. The proposals for improvement for the Capital Ambition Delivery Programme will be considered during the scrutiny chairs meetings and in the development of the Forward Work Programmes of the Scrutiny Committees.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Walker". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

COUNCILLOR DAVID WALKER
CHAIR, POLICY REVIEW AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Cc: Members of the Policy Review & Performance Scrutiny Committee.
Samantha Clements, Wales Audit Office
Ian Phillips, Wales Audit Office
Dean Thomas, Programme Manager Capital Ambition Delivery Programme.
Cabinet Support Team