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POLICY REVIEW & PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT  
2012-13

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**Reason for this Report**

1. To seek Committee's approval for the draft Annual Report 2012-13 prior to its consideration by full Council.

**Background**

2. The Cardiff County Council Constitution requires all Scrutiny Committees to *'report annually to the Council on their workings and make recommendations for future work programmes and amended working methods if appropriate.'*
3. A copy of the Policy Review & Performance Scrutiny Committee's draft Annual Report 2012 -13 is attached at **Appendix A**. This report lists all items considered from July 2012 to May 2013 and highlights those topics where the Committee has had greatest impact.

**Legal Implications**

4. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not to make 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 Cabinet/Council will set out any legal implications arising from those recommendations. All decisions taken by or on behalf 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 of 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**

5. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

The Committee is recommended to consider, if necessary amend, and approve the attached Policy Review & Performance Scrutiny Committee Annual Report 2012-13 for presentation to Council.

MIKE DAVIES  
Head of Service  
Scrutiny, Performance & Improvement

9 May 2013

**s c r u t i n y**



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**Policy Review and Performance  
Scrutiny Committee**

**Annual Report 2012–2013**

**May 2013**



**County Council of The City and County of Cardiff**

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## POLICY REVIEW & PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE



[Councillor Elizabeth Clark](#)

(Chairperson)



[Councillor Phil Bale](#)



[Councillor Garry Hunt](#)



[Councillor Keith Jones](#)



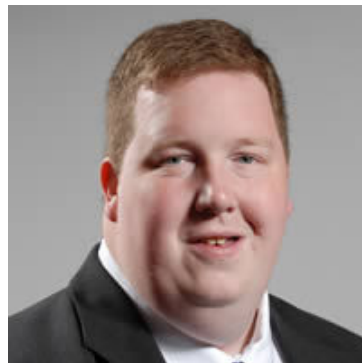
[Councillor Sam Knight](#)



[Councillor Kathryn Lloyd](#)



[Councillor Paul Mitchell](#)



[Councillor Adrian Robson](#)



[Councillor David Walker](#)

**Chair's foreword**

*[To be completed once report is agreed at Committee.]*

## Introduction

This Annual Report covers the work of the Committee between June 2012 and May 2013. *[The details of the May meeting will be added once this has taken place.]* The work programme has been varied and responsive to the Council's priorities throughout the year. Matters considered by the Committee are listed in the 'Programme Overview' below, whilst those areas of greatest impact are reported in 'Highlights of 2012/13' from page 11 onwards. The Policy Review and Performance Scrutiny Committee has a corporate policy and performance overview responsibility. In its examination of service performance and policy development across a range of corporate services, it forms a central part of the Council's governance arrangements. The Committee's terms of reference are:

- To scrutinise, monitor and review the overall operation of the Cardiff Programme for Improvement and the effectiveness of the general implementation of the Council's policies, aims and objectives;
- To scrutinise, monitor and review the effectiveness of the Council's systems of financial control and administration and use of human resources;
- To report to an appropriate Cabinet or Council meeting on its findings and to make recommendations on measures, which may enhance Council performance in this area.

The Terms of Reference allow for the Committee to consider specific areas of the organisation's current structure in depth. This largely comprises:

- **Corporate Services** including Finance; Estates & Land Strategy; Legal & Democratic Services; Scrutiny, Performance & Improvement; Commissioning & Procurement
- **Shared Services** including HR People Services; Internal Services; Customer Services; Central Transport Services and Communications.

The Committee's Terms of Reference also provide for it consider other areas including relations with the Voluntary Sector, Equalities and Citizen Engagement.

## Programme Overview

During the 2012/13 municipal year (the municipal year having started later than usual due to the local government elections) the Policy Review and Performance Scrutiny Committee held 12 meetings. This included 10 standard Committees, one Call-in meeting and one special meeting. This culminated in 15 letters to the Cabinet and Senior Management Team sharing the Committee's comments, concerns and recommendations following the scrutiny of items.

In addition to its regular full Committee meetings, Members have supported and published the findings of a task and finish inquiry into Public Engagement with Scrutiny and undertaken the first two stages of a joint scrutiny inquiry into the draft Cardiff Local Development Plan with members of the other four Scrutiny Committees.

In reviewing the year it is notable that the Committee has as far as possible concentrated its efforts on pre-decision scrutiny, but it has scrutinised a wide variety of areas, including:

**Call-In** – Where a Member invokes the Call-in procedure under the Council's constitution, to review a Cabinet decision prior to implementation. In 2012/13 there was one joint call-in, detailed below.

**Inquiries** – Where the Committee has undertaken an examination of a topic over a period of time, resulting in a formal report to the Cabinet. In 2012/13 this included:

- Public Engagement with Scrutiny (November 2012– April 2013).

**Joint Scrutiny Work** – Where the Committee has joined together with one or more scrutiny committees to examine a topic of a crosscutting nature to enable collective consideration of the issues or preparation for individual scrutiny. This has included:

- Local Development Plan draft Preferred Strategy task and finish inquiry (July – October 2012)



- Local Development Plan draft Masterplanning Principles task and finish inquiry (March – April 2013)
- Callaghan Square Call-In, in conjunction with the Economy & Culture Scrutiny Committee (November 2012).

**Policy Review** – Where the Committee has considered the implementation and impact of policies, providing the Cabinet with Scrutiny Members’ views about whether any changes are required. In 2012/13 the Committee considered the following subjects:

- Internal Services Strategy & Technology Framework 2012-15 (July 2012)
- Connect to Cardiff (November 2012)

**Policy Development** – Where the Committee has contributed to the Council’s policy development processes by considering draft policy documents. In 2012/13 these included:

- Budget Strategy 2013/14 (September 2012)
- Non-Operational Property Review (April 2013).

**Pre-Decision** – Where the Committee has evaluated and commented on policy proposals before they go to the Cabinet. In 2012/13 this included:

- Equal Pay Settlement (September 2012– special meeting)
- Living Wage (September 2012– special meeting)
- Proposed Senior Team Model (September 2012)
- Complaints Policy (November 2012)
- Draft Attendance & Wellbeing Policy (November 2012)
- Draft Corporate Plan 2013 -17 (February 2013)
- Budget Proposals 2013-14 (February 2013)
- Strategic Equalities Plan Annual Review (March 2013).

**Monitoring Progress**– Where the Committee has undertaken monitoring of the Council’s performance in implementing actions previously agreed. In 2012/13 this included:

- Performance Quarter 2 (October 2012) (*Q1 & Q3 information only*)

- Transformation Portfolio (October 2012)
- Budget Month 6 (January 2013) (*M3 and M8 information only*)
- Corporate Risk Register (January 2013).

**Briefing Information** - Where the Committee receives information on a specific subject which comes under its terms of reference. In 2012/13 this included:

- Wales Audit Office Improvement Study – Effectiveness of Scrutiny (October 2012)
- Welfare Reform (October 2012)
- Information Management (March 2013).

## Highlights of 2012/13

### Public Engagement with Scrutiny Inquiry

#### Context

The role of scrutiny is important in ensuring that the residents of Cardiff get the best possible services and support from their local Council. However, a recent research report found that only about 2% of the public in Cardiff knew and understood the purpose of scrutiny. The Local Government Measure (Wales) 2011 and its accompanying statutory guidance, published last year, set out a series of requirements and recommendations for local authorities to ensure the public could be as actively involved in local democracy as possible. In the light of this, the Committee undertook an inquiry into Public Engagement with Scrutiny to seek to understand the reasons why the public is largely disengaged from Scrutiny and to identify ways of actively and easily engaging with local residents.

The Inquiry terms of reference were to enable Public Engagement through the different functions and processes of Scrutiny to identify:

- the requirements of Public Engagement under statutory requirements such as The Local Government Measure (Wales) 2011
- best practice across the UK
- what can be adopted and adapted in Cardiff and how it can be resourced.

Members heard from a number of key witnesses. On the value of Scrutiny, one of the witnesses stated that:

*“I enjoy the meetings despite their length. Scrutiny committees portray a better image of the council than the full council meeting. Discussions are more in depth, politics are left at the door and the level of debate is more informed. If more public could watch these meetings it would put political government in a good light.”*

## **Scrutiny Outcomes**

The Task and Finish group recommended:

- the development of a Communications Toolkit to set out to Members the various options for engaging with the public before, during and after a scrutiny investigation;
- that Scrutiny Committees receive an agreed level of support from the Council's Communications and Media team;
- that Cabinet forward plans are published in time to allow public engagement in scrutiny to be effectively planned;
- allowing public questions and co-option of members at Committee meetings, which would necessitate changes to the Council's Constitution.

## **Cabinet Response**

*The Public Engagement report was approved at the Committee's April 2013 meeting. A response is awaited from the Cabinet, but as part of all Committees' 2013/14 work programmes many of the issues and opportunities identified by the Inquiry will start to be addressed.*

## **Local Development Plan – Preferred Strategy Inquiry**

### **Context**

Following the deposit of Cardiff's Local Development Plan (LDP) in April 2009, it was submitted to the Welsh Assembly Government for examination in November 2009. In view of concerns raised by the Inspectors examining the Plan, and following agreement from the Welsh Assembly Government, the Council withdrew the LDP from the Examination in March 2010 and commenced work on preparing a new Plan.

Scrutiny has considered the Council's progress towards securing an LDP at each stage of the Plan's development, via a joint task and finish group comprising volunteers from all five scrutiny committees. In summer 2012, a newly-formed Inquiry group scrutinised the draft LDP Preferred Strategy, reporting formally to this Committee. The terms of reference for the inquiry were:

To scrutinise the Preferred Strategy for the preparation of the LDP against the ten tests of soundness.

### **Procedural Tests**

- Prepared in accordance with the Delivery Agreement including the Community Involvement scheme
- Plan and policies have been subjected to Sustainability Appraisal including Strategic Environmental Assessment

### **Consistency Tests**

- It is a land use plan that has regard to other relevant plans, policies and strategies relating to the area or adjoining areas
- It has regard to national policy
- It has regard to the Wales Spatial Plan
- It has regard to the Community strategy

### **Coherence and Effectiveness Tests**

- The plan sets out a coherent strategy from which its policies and allocations flow and, where cross boundary issues are relevant, it is compatible with the development plans prepared by neighbouring authorities
- The strategy, policies and allocations are realistic and appropriate having considered the relevant alternatives and are founded on a robust and credible evidence base
- There are clear mechanisms for implementation and monitoring
- It is reasonably flexible to enable it to deal with changing circumstances.

### **Scrutiny Outcomes**

The Task and Finish group recommended:

- careful monitoring of the levels of growth predicted in the Preferred Strategy to ensure that the projections continue to be valid;
- the necessity of being bold in planning transport infrastructure;

- making sure that infrastructure is in place prior to agreed development taking place;
- protecting desire lines for potential future transport routes;
- the creation of sustainable communities;
- the maintenance of the M4 as a boundary to limit development in the city; and
- undertaking full and open consultation with citizens.

### **Cabinet response**

*All of these Inquiry recommendations were accepted. The Cabinet agreed that the predicted growth levels would be carefully monitored, stating that full analysis would be undertaken of the implications of the revised-back series of Mid Year Estimates for each Local Authority from 2002-2010 using the 2011 Census as a baseline. This is prepared by the Office of National Statistics and anticipated to be issued in March 2013 ahead of the release of the Local Authority based household projections in the early Autumn 2013. The Cabinet agreed that desire lines for potential transport routes should be protected, stating that the Deposit LDP can include appropriate policies for doing so and that the Masterplanning process would help to identify potential routes and address delivery issues. The response also affirmed that detailed masterplanning would address issues around the creation of sustainable communities. Consultation on the LDP Preferred Strategy took place in late 2012, using a wide variety of methods. .*

## **Local Development Plan - Masterplanning General Principles Inquiry**

### **Context**

The next stage of the Local Development Plan (LDP) joint inquiry was the consideration of the draft Masterplanning General Principles in March to April 2013. The terms of reference for the Inquiry were to scrutinise the proposed Cardiff Local Development Plan Masterplanning General Principles in the context of best practice elsewhere in the UK. Evidence was gathered from a number of officers, developers, as well as the Design Commission for Wales. The Inquiry group also commissioned research from the Scrutiny Research team enabling a comparison of the content of the

proposed Cardiff Masterplanning Principles with those put into practice elsewhere in the country.

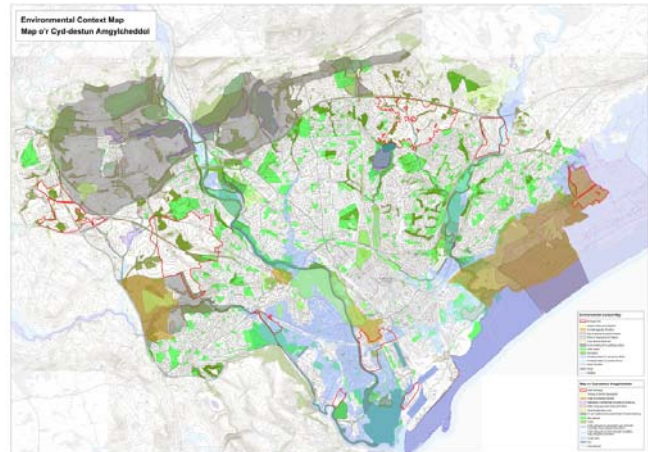
### **Scrutiny outcomes**

The Task and Finish group recommended:

- that the Cabinet approve the Principles subject to some amendments;
- ongoing consultation with residents;
- making sure that the Principles could be objectively measured;
- open and robust dialogue with developers
- ensuring that mistakes in previous developments are avoided in future, to create truly sustainable communities. .

### **Cabinet response**

*The Inquiry report will be presented to the May 2013 Cabinet meeting. The next stage of the joint scrutiny of the Local Development Plan will be to consider the draft Deposit LDP prior to its presentation to Full Council in September 2013.*

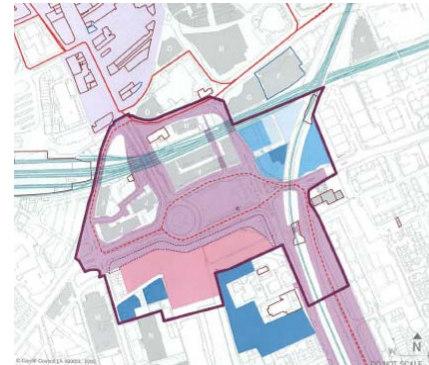


## **Callaghan Square Call-In – Cabinet Decision CAB/12/0037**

### **Context**

In November 2012, the Cabinet’s decision regarding the purchase of land at Callaghan Square, south of Cardiff Central train station, was ‘called in’. On 8 November 2012 Cabinet received a report requesting a decision to “allow the acquisition of a key site with a view to enabling a considerably greater return in terms of wider development and transport initiatives linked to the Enterprise Zone.” The report was agreed subject to specified delegation arrangements.

The call-in submission stated that the Cabinet report had not provided sufficient information to enable councillors to make an informed decision on the merits of acquiring the land within the proposed Cardiff Enterprise Zone, and that without certainty around the purpose of acquiring the land it was doubtful as to whether this was in the public interest. As the scrutiny of the Council's land and property falls within the terms of reference of this Committee, and the economic development agenda under those of the Economy & Culture Scrutiny Committee, the decision was scrutinised jointly by the two committees.



### **Scrutiny outcomes**

The Committee wrote to the Cabinet Member for Finance Business and the Local Economy to:

- confirm they had decided not to refer the decision back to the Cabinet;
- raise concerns that both committees were not alerted to the “Land at Callaghan Square” report before the report was issued to the Cabinet for decision;
- suggest that the Economic and Culture Scrutiny Committee consider the Cardiff Enterprise Zone and Cardiff's Economic Strategy closely in the future;
- ask that agenda items be included in the Cabinet's Forward Plan for the forthcoming meeting at the latest by the Cabinet Agenda Conference to allow effective scrutiny;
- Request a copy of the letter from the Welsh Government detailing the interest of a third party in purchasing the land at Callaghan Square.

### **Cabinet Response**

*The Cabinet member for Finance Business and the Local Economy wrote to the Committee, stating that many of the issues in the Chair's letter had been overtaken by events, the Welsh Government having secured the Callaghan Square site. He stated that the Cabinet would soon be publishing a Green Paper setting out the strategic issues facing the Cardiff's economy and that he would ensure that the Economy and Culture Scrutiny Committee's views were heard. Although he noted that this issue had*



*been a fast-moving one, he re-confirmed his commitment to maximising the role of scrutiny as fully as possible.*

## **Internal Services Strategy & Technology Framework 2012-15**

### **Context**

The Council's approach to Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is currently split into two parts: the operational side, delivered by Internal Services, and the strategic side, falling under the 'Enterprise Architecture' team. The Council has also entered into a strategic technology partnership with Tata Consultancy Services. Members considered the challenges facing the Internal Services team in providing ICT support to services across the Council, with the opportunity to consider the other parts of the Council's ICT at a later date. The Internal Services Strategy 2012-2015 sets out the challenges ahead in the form of social, technological, economic, political and legal considerations. The strategy indicates that challenges will be faced as the Council moves away from a traditional fixed ICT workforce model to a more fluid delivery of services involving mobile, home working and non-traditional devices. The key challenges included the available budget, training, access to information and remote working.

### **Scrutiny Outcomes**

The Committee wrote to the Leader to:

- advocate a move to more collaborative working and sharing of best practice;
- raise concerns that a Society of Information Technology Managers report in 2010 had found that Cardiff was not achieving as low prices for ICT purchasing as could be expected given the Council's size. Members requested that this be addressed;
- note that much of the Council's ICT budget was delegated to service areas, and asked for this to be assessed to ensure that the budget is being spent as effectively as possible;
- comment that as the objectives contained within the Strategy were quite high level, more measurable performance indicators would be valuable;

- comment on the accessibility of the Strategy; the need to avoid jargon and include a glossary; equality of access to information for customers; availability and security of information; and the appropriateness of the Council's website.

### **Cabinet response**

*The Leader responded that officers would follow up on sharing activities as appropriate. At that point a small sum was to be put forward in the budget to deal with critical issues, as well as a medium term financial pressure bid. She noted that ICT purchasing was being looked at by Procurement and Internal Services officers and that an improvement was expected soon. Delegated service area budgets were also being considered. She highlighted that a major project was underway to refresh the Council's website under the Customer Programme and that improvements should become visible to customer by the middle of 2013. She stated that the project would improve accessibility of information, allow better interaction with the Council and more online transactions, as well as improving information flows within the Council.*

## **Connect to Cardiff**

### **Context**



In November 2012, the Committee considered the operation of the Council's Connect to Cardiff service in terms of current performance, customer feedback and the challenges it faces. The Committee also toured the Connect to Cardiff call centre. The call centre offers a number of services to Cardiff citizens, including help with Council Tax enquiries, waste management requests, housing and parking, as well as a reporting line for highways issues (for example street lighting, drainage and highway defects).

The Committee were informed that the operation of Connect to Cardiff is as part of the wider Customer Management strategy, which will progress a 'channel shift' to promote web-access as the preferred method for contacting the Council. The Committee were reassured that this strategy would continue to allow customers to contact the Council via their method of choice, including face to face or by telephone if desired.

## **Scrutiny outcomes**

The Committee wrote to the Cabinet member for Communities Housing and Social Justice to:

- underline Members' strong feeling that the Council must avoid the creation of a 'two-tier' contact system which favours those who have easy access to the internet;
- request further details regarding customer satisfaction levels of those contacting C2C via webchat or email versus those who telephone;
- ask to be kept informed regarding further expansion of twenty-four hour and out of hours provision;
- note comments that some calls which C2C receives may result from difficulties or defects stemming from lack of clarity in communications sent out by other sections of the Council, and hoped that C2C will work with service areas to address these issues;
- request further information regarding the Service Improvement 'Rapid Improvement Event' which had been undertaken in the area, following comments that it is essential that change initiatives involve staff directly;
- query whether there were any opportunities to generate income via C2C and recommend that this should be investigated further;
- request a ward-by-ward and service area breakdown in terms of types of enquiry C2C receives.

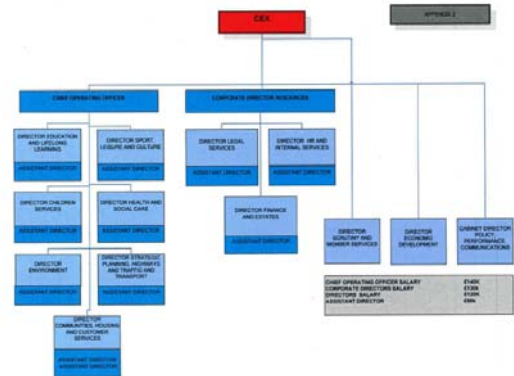
## **Cabinet response**

*The Cabinet member for Communities Housing and Social Justice replied that while the Council remains committed to promoting channel shift to web-based technology, it also fully supported other methods of communication, to ensure customers, particularly the vulnerable can seek support via methods such as Citizen Hubs. She also stated that part of the channel shift strategy was to ensure suitable out of hours service and that the Cabinet would be happy to brief the Committee as appropriate. She also stated that Connect to Cardiff prided itself on the good working relationship it had established with service areas and that they worked with them to improve customer communications.*

## Proposed Senior Team Model

### Context

The Committee scrutinised the proposals for a revised senior management structure to support the new Administration's vision for the city. It was stated that the model proposed would strengthen management support to facilitate the Member-led delivery of local services. The proposals would give the opportunity to appoint candidates with the necessary expertise to bring senior knowledge and experience to the Council, ensuring less dependency on external consultants. Savings from the reduction in consultant spend would be used to fund the £1.67 million differential cost of the new structure.



### Scrutiny outcomes

The Committee wrote to the Chief Executive to:

- set out a number of concerns regarding the new structure, stating that it would not necessarily lead to an improvement in public service;
- state that it risked the development of a silo approach to service delivery and would result in the appointment of generalist rather than specialist managers;
- state that Members were unconvinced that the evidence base for the proposal was sufficient, recommending that benchmarking with other similar local authorities should have been carried out. Members considered that the comparator local authorities used by Hay in its advice to the Council were not necessarily suitable (for example the reference to London Boroughs);
- say that there should be an analysis of how senior managers' pay linked to their performance;
- advocate a phased approach, feeling that a gradual review would be more appropriate and cause less disruption across the organisation;
- cite the need to strengthen arrangements in social services and education;

- say that the Council should invest further in Cardiff Council Academy support for senior managers to ensure that internal candidates were able to compete with external talent;
- With reference to the proposal to create a Director of Scrutiny and Member Services, comment that, while it considered Scrutiny to be under-resourced, it felt that this was an unnecessary investment;
- raise concerns over the timing of the consultation, over the summer, and had been disappointed that Members had not been written to directly with the consultation details.

### **Cabinet response**

*A final senior management structure was presented to Cabinet in October 2012 and discussed by the Employment Conditions Committee in November 2012. The latter report stated that the new organisational structure presented significant people implications which would be managed in accordance with the recommended legal principles and the employment legislative framework. There would also be ongoing dialogue with Trade Union colleagues to minimise disruption to the organisation. The post of Director of Scrutiny & Member Services was not included in the final structure which went out to advert. Instead, a director-level post of County Clerk and Monitoring Officer (Democratic Services) had been added to the structure.*

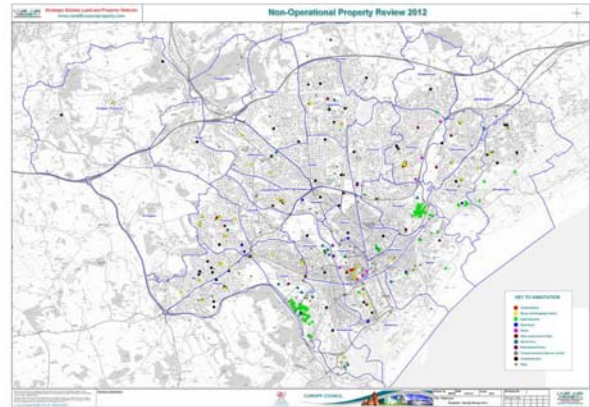
## **Non-Operational Property Review**

### **Context**

The Committee considered the Council's non-operational estate in April 2013. Non-operational property is defined as property and land owned by the Council but not used to operate from or to deliver services. Often the Council lets these properties for commercial return or to promote local employment, small businesses and the economic regeneration of local areas. This followed on from a Wales Audit Office report published in 2010 which noted a number of issues with the management of the public sector property estate across Wales, including the often poor condition of the estate; lack of accurate maintenance information; inconsistent land and property

strategies; and insufficient emphasis being placed on the non-financial (for example the sustainability and social impact) benefits of this estate.

The Committee considered the results of an officer review of the non-operational estate, which included early officer proposals for the management and rationalisation of this estate. In the 2010/11 financial year the percentage net yield achieved from these properties varied from 3.7% to 8.4%, with an average of 6.4%. Total annual gross rental income at that point was c. £3.9 million. The estate also had an estimated maintenance backlog of £1.4 million.



### **Scrutiny Outcomes**

The Cabinet Member for Finance, Business and the Local Economy had been unable to attend the meeting. The Committee wrote to him:

- requesting that he return in the very near future with the draft Cabinet Report in order to allow comprehensive pre-decision scrutiny of any proposals put before the Cabinet in terms of any rationalisation of the Council's non-operational estate;
- setting out Members' concerns that there seemed to be no rationale or strategic vision behind the future management or disposal of the estate; and
- emphasising the importance of non-financial considerations in any future plan for the estate, for example the potential social, community and economic advantages of the use of the estate.

### **Cabinet response**

*The Committee is awaiting a response from the Cabinet Member.*

## Equal Pay Settlement

### Context

In 2008 the Council agreed an Equal Pay settlement which led to offers being made directly to over 3,000 employees in cleaning, catering and caring jobs. However, the Council still had over 1500 outstanding equal pay claims lodged against it at tribunal in 2012 (a separate issue to the Single Status agreement concluded in August 2012). Following negotiations between Trade Unions and the Council, a draft Memorandum of Understanding was developed and the Committee undertook pre-decision scrutiny of the settlement, prior to its consideration by the Cabinet.

### Scrutiny outcomes

The Committee wrote to the Cabinet Member for Finance, Business and the Local Economy to:

- state that they were largely satisfied with the approach that had been set out;
- counsel that senior managers should ensure that appropriate advice was available to staff members making that decision, upon hearing that the experience of other local authorities was that officers tend to opt out of making additional pension contributions; and
- request details of the costs of the legal advice which the Council had commissioned in this area.

### Cabinet response

*The Cabinet later confirmed that the Council had spent £640,765 on external legal advice associated with the Equal Pay Settlement since the 2007/08 financial year.*

## Complaints Policy

### Context

In November 2012, the Committee considered the draft revised Complaint Policy Guidance Notes prior to their presentation to the Cabinet for approval. Members also looked at the Annual Complaints Report for 2011-12. To date the Council has had a Complaints Policy and Procedure that requires all service areas to report on a monthly

basis the numbers of complaints about service received and processed. A review of the Council's Complaints Policy and Procedure had been undertaken and improvements recommended to ensure that the Council's policy fully reflects guidance from the Welsh Government Model Policy and Guidance Paper for Handling Complaints, as well as guidance received from the Public Service Ombudsman for Wales.

### **Scrutiny outcomes**

The Committee wrote to the Cabinet member for Communities Housing and Social Justice to:

- agree with the proposal to reduce the timescales for acknowledging complaints;
- noted that the Policy adopted an 'investigate once, investigate well' approach, removing the independent review stage of the former policy, as proposed by the Public Ombudsman for Wales;
- state that Members were concerned that there is currently some variation across service areas in terms of handling complaints;
- emphasise the need for the Council to publicise the Policy on a regular basis so that members of the public know how to raise a complaint; and
- suggest the Policy might merge into a more general 'feedback' policy to give citizens a clearer route to contact the Council with complaints or compliments.

### **Cabinet response**

*The Cabinet Member for Communities, Housing and Social Justice responded that the Complaints Policy and Guidance notes would be re-branded to ensure that it promotes the Council's desire to capture complaint, comments and compliments. She also reassured the Committee that the Corporate Complaints team would continue to work with service areas to ensure that officers have a full understanding of the changes included in the policy. Updates to the Council's Complaints Policy were presented to Cabinet in March 2013. The Policy has been re-named the Comments, Complaints and Compliments Policy to inform customers that the Council 'welcomes their comments and want to hear about the positive experiences they have had'. However, the Policy itself makes very little reference to how Compliments or Comments should*



*be submitted. The Policy Guidance notes state that the Policy will be available on the Council's website that bilingual leaflets will be placed in Council buildings.*

## **Draft Attendance and Wellbeing Policy**

### **Context**

The previous Committee membership took a long-standing interest in the Council's policies regarding the management of attendance and sickness absence. Task and Finish inquiries into sickness absence had been carried out in 2005 and late 2011. The latter Inquiry report was presented to the then Executive in January 2012. Following indications that management of sickness absence would be a key consideration for the new Administration, the Committee considered a consultation draft of the Attendance and Wellbeing Policy in November. This draft Policy was intended to replace the Council's existing Sickness Absence policy, as well as including an updated Special Leave Scheme and critical illness policy.

### **Scrutiny outcomes**

The Committee wrote to the Cabinet member for Finance, Business and the Local Economy to:

- state its unanimous opposition to the proposal contained within the draft Policy to withdraw pay for the first three days of any sickness absence, feeling that it would unfairly penalise genuinely ill staff and in particular would affect the Council's lowest-paid officers;
- state that Members were unconvinced by the evidence available to support the implementation of such a suggestion;
- make known its dismay that Council employees may have become aware of the proposal to remove payment via media reports following the publication of committee papers and the accompanying draft policy;
- praise some of the more positive approaches contained within the draft Policy, particularly in terms of earlier referral to the Occupational Health Service; the increase in preventative initiatives; and work around mental health issues;
- urge the extension of Employee Counselling Service if possible;

- urge the Cabinet to ensure that the Corporate Plan set a target of an average of 9 FTE days of sickness for 2013/14 and a target of 8.5 days for 2014/15, as per the original Inquiry recommendations;
- state that the Committee was interested in monitoring the effects of the Policy's implementation once finalised and would recommend that the Committee's 2013/14 work programme should include a progress update;
- state that Members wished to consider the results of the Policy's Equality Impact Assessment, as well as the effectiveness and implementation of the training which is available for line managers, the effectiveness of changes in triggers/stages at this juncture.

### **Cabinet response**

*The revised Attendance and Wellbeing Policy was approved by the Cabinet in April 2013. The proposal to withdraw payment for the first three days of sickness had been removed, following the Committee's comments. The Cabinet report stated that the Equality Impact Assessment had recommended Policy should be monitored. The Corporate Plan for 2013-17 sets targets of 10 FTE days for 2013/14 and 9 FTE days for 2014/15.*

## **2012/13 Performance Monitoring**

### **Context**

The Committee examined the delivery of the Administration's vision for the city through consideration of quarterly performance reports to the Cabinet. To ensure appropriate levels of monitoring, the Committee agreed to consider performance in depth every six months, receiving the interim reports for information only. Following the election of the new Administration, the structure and content of the performance reports have been under review and the Committee took an active role in contributing to that discussion. The Council has developed a report format which concentrates on delivery of the Administration's Year One document, 'Leading Cardiff, Building Communities' as well as the revised Corporate Plan for 2012-14. The report is structured around Cabinet portfolios to show a direct line of accountability for delivery

of actions contained within the Corporate Plan. A number of relevant performance indicators have also been selected for regular review in each portfolio section.

### **Scrutiny outcomes**

Across its various considerations of Corporate Performance, the Committee wrote to the Leader to:

- advocate clear trend analysis in performance reports;
- comment that there was a need for comprehensive analysis regarding the trends;
- state that too few targets were included within the performance reports, with little explanation of how those included were arrived at and no information regarding the process to ensure that the targets were sufficiently challenging;
- request greater comparative data to allow evaluation of Cardiff's performance against appropriate comparator cities if possible, and with other Welsh local authorities;
- state its concerns that the Corporate Risk Register and performance reports were not sufficiently aligned. Members felt that the performance reports should enable the monitoring of the delivery of actions mitigating the most serious risks to the Council;
- linking to the Committee's ongoing interest in sickness absence, state Members' concern that the quarterly reports did not contain sufficient information regarding service areas' varying sickness absence rates; and
- request further data regarding Freedom of Information requests.

### **Cabinet response**

*During its considerations of performance, the Committee was assured that the ongoing Performance and Information project was reviewing the structures and approaches supporting performance management across the Council. It was stated by officers that this would improve the consistency of performance management by early 2014. The Committee was also assured that the selection of performance indicators under each portfolio would remain relatively static over the lifetime of the Administration, enabling trend analysis. Officers agreed to investigate whether it was possible to include further past data in the reports in future.*

*Members were also advised that officers were investigating how the synergy between the Corporate Risk Register and performance reports could be improved and that suggestions as to how to take this forward would be brought forward as part of 2012/13 quarter 4 data in summer 2013. Service area data regarding sickness absence levels was included with quarter three data. The Leader had also asked for the inclusion of Freedom of Information data. In terms of comparative data, the Leader assured the Committee that initial work had been undertaken to identify useful comparative data. This work will recommence once more resources are in place through the implementation of the Performance and Information project. With regards to further information around target-setting, the Leader replied that it was not appropriate to include this in the performance reports but that these could be discussed directly with officers when the Committee considered performance in future.*

## **Draft Corporate Plan 2013-17**

### **Context**

The Committee considered the draft Corporate Plan, as well as the draft Budget proposals at its February 2013 meeting.

### **Scrutiny outcomes**

The Committee wrote to the Leader to:

- state that, having placed some importance on performance monitoring throughout the year, Members had a number of comments about the draft Plan, particularly in terms of its measurability;
- make clear its concern that the linkages between the overarching Integrated Partnership Strategy and the Corporate Plan were not clear;
- welcome the portfolio-based structure of the Plan and its readability;
- comment that many of the milestones included in the Delivery Plan were intangible, inconsistent, difficult to measure and that many needed to be more clearly defined;
- say that insufficient attention had been paid to the results of the Ask Cardiff survey in terms of addressing the priorities which Cardiff citizens had identified.

## **Cabinet response**

*The Leader responded that she welcomed the Committee's positive comments about the Plan's structure and readability. She stated that the Delivery Plan was very much a live document, so its content would develop to take on board the comments of both Scrutiny and the Wales Audit Office. She also stated that the Committee's comments regarding the Ask Cardiff survey would be taken on Board during next year's corporate planning process.*

Cardiff Council  
Corporate Plan 2013 -17



## **2013/14 Budget Strategy & Draft Budget Proposals**

### **Context**

The Committee considered the Administration's budget strategy for 2013/2014 at its September meeting. The Budget Strategy set out that the gap between expenditure and financing that it was anticipated will need to be found from service area savings and use of reserves was £18.4million for 2013/14. There was potentially for this to increase to £21million, dependent on Welsh Government funding. Service areas had therefore been asked to identify savings totalling 14.6% of their controllable budgets.

Members were presented with the draft Budget proposals regarding savings, financial pressures, the Capital programme and proposals regarding reductions in grants in February 2013. For the first time this year, the draft proposals had been released for public consultation.

### **Scrutiny outcomes**

The Committee wrote to the Leader to:

- state that it had a number of concerns about the consultation process as well as about the proposals concerned within the papers;
- comment that the papers seemed to have been drafted with an officer and Cabinet member audience in mind and therefore the phrasing of some of the

proposals had caused confusion and concern among those who would be affected by the proposals if implemented;

- comment that statements in the media from some Cabinet members in terms of alternatives to the proposals, which seemed to pre-empt the formal budget process, had equally caused some concern;
- state that there were a number of ways in which the online budget survey could have been improved and that, while a step forward, it missed an opportunity to fully explore the public's views regarding the budget proposals;
- say that the survey's reliance on free text responses would make analysis more difficult;
- comment that engagement and consultation with officers affected by the proposals had not been sufficient and ask for this process to be tightened up in future years;
- recommend improvements to engagement with the voluntary sector, in order to allow adequate time for groups to prepare contingency plans;
- note Members' concerns regarding the information which had been made available to Scrutiny to enable consideration the budget proposals;
- comment that in future years they would expect to receive a greater range of information, similar to that which the Cabinet receives;
- indicate that it wishes to establish a working group in 2013/14 to ensure a longer-term scrutiny engagement with the budget setting process;
- state that it wishes to understand the assessments which proposals undergo in terms of risk and equality impact, as well as the selection of proposals to be progressed, and which budgets had not been affected by savings proposals.

### **Cabinet response**

*The Leader responded to the Committee's comments, stating that she believed that the budget setting process had been significantly more open and transparent this year. She noted the Committee's concerns regarding the publication of the proposals and the worry that this may have caused in those affected by their implementation. She stated that this would be considered ahead of the following year's budget process. She also stated that engagement with officers and teams affected would be more robust in future. In terms of engagement with the voluntary sector, she stated*

*that it was appropriate to treat the third sector as Council service areas have been treated, but that the communication process would be reviewed prior to next year's process. She welcomed the Committee's intention to seek to gain a greater understanding of the budget process in 2013/14.*

## **Transformation Portfolio**

### **Context**

The former Committee membership took a strong interest in the Council's 'Transformation' portfolio of change projects. This Portfolio was targeted to achieve £8.713m of savings in the 2011/12 financial year and a saving of £10.847 in 2012/13. The Committee had established a regime of six-monthly updates to monitor progress in achieving these targets, the value of engaging with Scrutiny Members having been recognised by the Transformation portfolio. In October 2012 the Committee received an update. Members were informed that the 2011/12 target had been missed by £175k and that it was predicted at Month 3 that the 2012/13 target would be missed by £2.289m. The Committee were also told that, the number of external consultants supporting the projects having significantly reduced, there would be adjustments to how the projects would be managed, in terms of embedding change into the organisation and ensuring that service areas engaged with it more effectively.

### **Scrutiny outcomes**

The Committee wrote to the Cabinet member for Finance Business and the Local Economy to:

- request further information with regards to the 'Wave 2' projects which had been previously identified, in order to establish the reasons why these projects would or would not proceed under the new administration.

### **Cabinet response**

*The Committee is awaiting a response from the Cabinet Member for Finance, Business and the Local Economy on these matters. An update on the delivery of the 2012/13 savings target is recommended for summer 2013. Other Scrutiny Committee*

*have considered updates on former Transformation Portfolio projects, including Cardiff Outdoors, Citizen Hubs and Adult Social Care.*

## **Corporate Risk Register**

In January 2013, the Committee considered the Corporate Risk Register which is identified under the Council's Risk Management Policy and Strategy<sup>1</sup> as the key record of 'strategic risks which have an impact beyond any one service area and/or are of such significance that they need to be highlighted corporately'. The Register is currently updated and presented to the Senior Leadership Team on a quarterly basis and to Cabinet six monthly.

### **Scrutiny outcomes**

The Committee wrote to the Cabinet Member for Sport, Leisure and Culture, who acts as Member Risk Champion, to:

- state that the Committee considered that the system of regular reporting to both senior managers and the Cabinet should help to ensure that appropriate mitigating actions are taken;
- note a number of specific risk areas which Members would be interested in considering in more depth, including the Council's ICT platforms becoming outdated and information governance (which the Committee looked at in its March meeting);
- ask for specific thought to be given to additional mitigating actions to be put into place to help Ward Members respond to constituents' queries regarding Welfare Reform, which was identified as a significant current risk;
- set out its concern that there was insufficient synergy between the Risk Register and the Corporate Performance reporting process, and recommend that this should be given further thought to ensure that Corporate Risks are given sufficient prominence in the Delivery & Performance Report;

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<sup>1</sup> Available on the Council's website at:  
[http://www.cardiff.gov.uk/content.asp?nav=2872,3385,3391&parent\\_directory\\_id=2865&id=290&d1p1=1](http://www.cardiff.gov.uk/content.asp?nav=2872,3385,3391&parent_directory_id=2865&id=290&d1p1=1)



- state that Members were interested to hear that an ‘opportunity register’ will be created to sit alongside the risk register, in order to record potential initiatives for the Council to pursue.

### **Cabinet response**

*The Committee is awaiting a formal response to its comments.*

## **Strategic Equalities Plan Annual Review**

### **Context**

Cardiff Council’s Strategic Equality Plan was published on 2 April 2012. The 2010 Equality Act created a new public sector equality duty, tasking all public bodies with preparing and publishing a Strategic Equality Plan every four years that covers all ‘protected characteristics’. These are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.



There is also a requirement in Wales to report annually on progress in delivering the Strategic Equality Plan. Specifically, the report must set out:

- the steps taken to identify and collect relevant information;
- how the authority has used that information to comply with its equality duties;
- reasons for not collecting any relevant information it has identified but does not hold;
- the progress that the authority has made in order to fulfill each of its equality objectives; and
- a statement of the effectiveness of:
  - its arrangements for identifying and collecting relevant information;

- the steps it has taken in order to fulfill each of its equality objectives.

In March 2013, the Committee considered Cardiff's first Strategic Equalities Plan Progress Report prior to its presentation to the Cabinet for approval.

### **Scrutiny outcomes**

The Committee wrote to the Cabinet member for Communities Housing and Social Justice to:

- state that Members were appreciative of the efforts which the Council has put in to meet its equalities duties;
- note that the Council has aimed to 'mainstream' these duties within service areas;
- note that considerable work has been put in to improving the Equalities Impact Assessment process and that this effort will continue in the coming year;
- state that Members were very concerned that some of the staff monitoring data required to be published was missing from the Progress Report and urge that this omission should be rectified;
- indicate that they would like to build an in-depth consideration of the Equality Impact Assessment process into the Committee's anticipated working group to look at the 2014/15 budget setting process.

### **Cabinet response**

*The Cabinet Member for Communities, Housing and Social Justice responded that she would welcome the Committee's support in embedding the Equality Impact Assessment process. The Cabinet Member also replied that there had been a number of issues with the collection and inclusion of staff monitoring data. Changes to the relevant ICT system had meant the Council did not have the continuity of consistent information that it would like. The Council also needs to work with its officers in order to ensure that they feel confident enough to disclose their information. Finally, the timescale for producing this information had been tight, as staff had not been in post and Guidance from the Equality and Human Rights Commission had been published late. The Cabinet Member stated that this situation would improve by the time of the next Annual Progress Report.*

## Information Management

### **Context**

In March 2013, the Committee considered the Council's policies and procedures for the management of information. This scrutiny followed on from the Committee's mid-year review of the Corporate Risk Register which highlighted Information Governance as posing a significant risk to the Council.

Information management covers a considerable area, including information requests (for example under Freedom of Information legislation); data protection and information security; records management (both physical and electronic) and information sharing. The Council faces reputational risks or financial penalties from the Information Commissioner. Members heard that whereas in 2008 the Council received around three hundred information requests, this figure has increased to the extent that the Council now receives around 1500 requests a year. This has posed a sizeable challenge to the Council in terms of fulfilling and resourcing these requests. While a small central team is in place to coordinate responses to Information Requests, there has historically been some inconsistency in terms of how staff councilwide have been deployed to do so. The service also faces issues in terms of records management, particularly during recent office accommodation changes.

### **Scrutiny outcomes**

Following this briefing, Members recommended that a task and finish inquiry should be considered as part of the 2013/14 work programme.

### **Cabinet response**

*The Cabinet Member and senior officers were keen to continue to work with the Committee in this area.*

## **Future work programme opportunities for 2013/14**

The Committee receives regular work programme updates at which Members have the opportunity to consider items received from members of the public, young people, organisations, Council Members and other Scrutiny Committees, for inclusion on the work programme. Committee Members can also suggest any new issues which may be of interest to the Committee. Presently the following issues are being considered for inclusion in the coming year's work programme:

- Cardiff Council website
- Capital Times and its advertising revenue
- Attendance & Wellbeing Policy Implementation
- Annual Governance Statement
- Wales Audit Office Annual Improvement Report
- An update on successor to Transformation Portfolio and 2012/13 savings.

The following items have been suggested for consideration as issues which may be suitable for a Task & Finish Inquiry:

- Information Management
- Development of 2014/15 budget proposals.

The Committee will also complete the next stage of its joint Inquiry into the Cardiff Local Development Plan, considering the Deposit LDP in July 2013, in order to report to Committee in September 2013.

It is suggested that the Committee continues to receive the regular progress and performance reports on:

- Corporate Performance Monitoring
- Budget Monitoring

In addition to these items, some have been referred for the Committee's consideration by other Scrutiny Committees. These include:

- The Council's relations with the voluntary sector.

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**Policy Review and Performance  
Scrutiny Committee**

# **Annual Report 2012–2013**

**May 2013**



**County Council of The City and County of Cardiff**

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## POLICY REVIEW & PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE



[Councillor Elizabeth Clark](#)

(Chairperson)



[Councillor Phil Bale](#)



[Councillor Garry Hunt](#)



[Councillor Keith Jones](#)



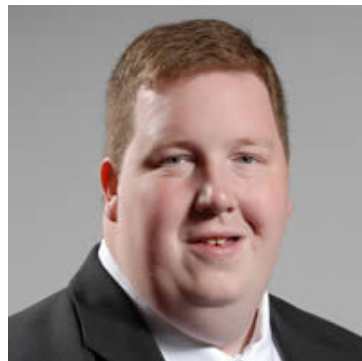
[Councillor Sam Knight](#)



[Councillor Kathryn Lloyd](#)



[Councillor Paul Mitchell](#)



[Councillor Adrian Robson](#)



[Councillor David Walker](#)

**Chair's foreword**



*[To be completed once report is agreed at Committee.]*

## Introduction

This Annual Report covers the work of the Committee between June 2012 and May 2013. *[The details of the May meeting will be added once this has taken place.]* The work programme has been varied and responsive to the Council's priorities throughout the year. Matters considered by the Committee are listed in the 'Programme Overview' below, whilst those areas of greatest impact are reported in 'Highlights of 2012/13' from page 11 onwards. The Policy Review and Performance Scrutiny Committee has a corporate policy and performance overview responsibility. In its examination of service performance and policy development across a range of corporate services, it forms a central part of the Council's governance arrangements. The Committee's terms of reference are:

- To scrutinise, monitor and review the overall operation of the Cardiff Programme for Improvement and the effectiveness of the general implementation of the Council's policies, aims and objectives;
- To scrutinise, monitor and review the effectiveness of the Council's systems of financial control and administration and use of human resources;
- To report to an appropriate Cabinet or Council meeting on its findings and to make recommendations on measures, which may enhance Council performance in this area.

The Terms of Reference allow for the Committee to consider specific areas of the organisation's current structure in depth. This largely comprises:

- **Corporate Services** including Finance; Estates & Land Strategy; Legal & Democratic Services; Scrutiny, Performance & Improvement; Commissioning & Procurement
- **Shared Services** including HR People Services; Internal Services; Customer Services; Central Transport Services and Communications.

The Committee's Terms of Reference also provide for it consider other areas including relations with the Voluntary Sector, Equalities and Citizen Engagement.

## Programme Overview

During the 2012/13 municipal year (the municipal year having started later than usual due to the local government elections) the Policy Review and Performance Scrutiny Committee held 12 meetings. This included 10 standard Committees, one Call-in meeting and one special meeting. This culminated in 15 letters to the Cabinet and Senior Management Team sharing the Committee's comments, concerns and recommendations following the scrutiny of items.

In addition to its regular full Committee meetings, Members have supported and published the findings of a task and finish inquiry into Public Engagement with Scrutiny and undertaken the first two stages of a joint scrutiny inquiry into the draft Cardiff Local Development Plan with members of the other four Scrutiny Committees.

In reviewing the year it is notable that the Committee has as far as possible concentrated its efforts on pre-decision scrutiny, but it has scrutinised a wide variety of areas, including:

**Call-In** – Where a Member invokes the Call-in procedure under the Council's constitution, to review a Cabinet decision prior to implementation. In 2012/13 there was one joint call-in, detailed below.

**Inquiries** – Where the Committee has undertaken an examination of a topic over a period of time, resulting in a formal report to the Cabinet. In 2012/13 this included:

- Public Engagement with Scrutiny (November 2012– April 2013).

**Joint Scrutiny Work** – Where the Committee has joined together with one or more scrutiny committees to examine a topic of a crosscutting nature to enable collective consideration of the issues or preparation for individual scrutiny. This has included:

- Local Development Plan draft Preferred Strategy task and finish inquiry (July – October 2012)

- Local Development Plan draft Masterplanning Principles task and finish inquiry (March – April 2013)
- Callaghan Square Call-In, in conjunction with the Economy & Culture Scrutiny Committee (November 2012).

**Policy Review** – Where the Committee has considered the implementation and impact of policies, providing the Cabinet with Scrutiny Members’ views about whether any changes are required. In 2012/13 the Committee considered the following subjects:

- Internal Services Strategy & Technology Framework 2012-15 (July 2012)
- Connect to Cardiff (November 2012)

**Policy Development** – Where the Committee has contributed to the Council’s policy development processes by considering draft policy documents. In 2012/13 these included:

- Budget Strategy 2013/14 (September 2012)
- Non-Operational Property Review (April 2013).

**Pre-Decision** – Where the Committee has evaluated and commented on policy proposals before they go to the Cabinet. In 2012/13 this included:

- Equal Pay Settlement (September 2012– special meeting)
- Living Wage (September 2012– special meeting)
- Proposed Senior Team Model (September 2012)
- Complaints Policy (November 2012)
- Draft Attendance & Wellbeing Policy (November 2012)
- Draft Corporate Plan 2013 -17 (February 2013)
- Budget Proposals 2013-14 (February 2013)
- Strategic Equalities Plan Annual Review (March 2013).

**Monitoring Progress**– Where the Committee has undertaken monitoring of the Council’s performance in implementing actions previously agreed. In 2012/13 this included:

- Performance Quarter 2 (October 2012) (*Q1 & Q3 information only*)

- Transformation Portfolio (October 2012)
- Budget Month 6 (January 2013) (*M3 and M8 information only*)
- Corporate Risk Register (January 2013).

**Briefing Information** - Where the Committee receives information on a specific subject which comes under its terms of reference. In 2012/13 this included:

- Wales Audit Office Improvement Study – Effectiveness of Scrutiny (October 2012)
- Welfare Reform (October 2012)
- Information Management (March 2013).

## Highlights of 2012/13

### Public Engagement with Scrutiny Inquiry

#### Context

The role of scrutiny is important in ensuring that the residents of Cardiff get the best possible services and support from their local Council. However, a recent research report found that only about 2% of the public in Cardiff knew and understood the purpose of scrutiny. The Local Government Measure (Wales) 2011 and its accompanying statutory guidance, published last year, set out a series of requirements and recommendations for local authorities to ensure the public could be as actively involved in local democracy as possible. In the light of this, the Committee undertook an inquiry into Public Engagement with Scrutiny to seek to understand the reasons why the public is largely disengaged from Scrutiny and to identify ways of actively and easily engaging with local residents.

The Inquiry terms of reference were to enable Public Engagement through the different functions and processes of Scrutiny to identify:

- the requirements of Public Engagement under statutory requirements such as The Local Government Measure (Wales) 2011
- best practice across the UK
- what can be adopted and adapted in Cardiff and how it can be resourced.

Members heard from a number of key witnesses. On the value of Scrutiny, one of the witnesses stated that:

*“I enjoy the meetings despite their length. Scrutiny committees portray a better image of the council than the full council meeting. Discussions are more in depth, politics are left at the door and the level of debate is more informed. If more public could watch these meetings it would put political government in a good light.”*

## **Scrutiny Outcomes**

The Task and Finish group recommended:

- the development of a Communications Toolkit to set out to Members the various options for engaging with the public before, during and after a scrutiny investigation;
- that Scrutiny Committees receive an agreed level of support from the Council's Communications and Media team;
- that Cabinet forward plans are published in time to allow public engagement in scrutiny to be effectively planned;
- allowing public questions and co-option of members at Committee meetings, which would necessitate changes to the Council's Constitution.

## **Cabinet Response**

*The Public Engagement report was approved at the Committee's April 2013 meeting. A response is awaited from the Cabinet, but as part of all Committees' 2013/14 work programmes many of the issues and opportunities identified by the Inquiry will start to be addressed.*

## **Local Development Plan – Preferred Strategy Inquiry**

### **Context**

Following the deposit of Cardiff's Local Development Plan (LDP) in April 2009, it was submitted to the Welsh Assembly Government for examination in November 2009. In view of concerns raised by the Inspectors examining the Plan, and following agreement from the Welsh Assembly Government, the Council withdrew the LDP from the Examination in March 2010 and commenced work on preparing a new Plan.

Scrutiny has considered the Council's progress towards securing an LDP at each stage of the Plan's development, via a joint task and finish group comprising volunteers from all five scrutiny committees. In summer 2012, a newly-formed Inquiry group scrutinised the draft LDP Preferred Strategy, reporting formally to this Committee. The terms of reference for the inquiry were:

To scrutinise the Preferred Strategy for the preparation of the LDP against the ten tests of soundness.

### **Procedural Tests**

- Prepared in accordance with the Delivery Agreement including the Community Involvement scheme
- Plan and policies have been subjected to Sustainability Appraisal including Strategic Environmental Assessment

### **Consistency Tests**

- It is a land use plan that has regard to other relevant plans, policies and strategies relating to the area or adjoining areas
- It has regard to national policy
- It has regard to the Wales Spatial Plan
- It has regard to the Community strategy

### **Coherence and Effectiveness Tests**

- The plan sets out a coherent strategy from which its policies and allocations flow and, where cross boundary issues are relevant, it is compatible with the development plans prepared by neighbouring authorities
- The strategy, policies and allocations are realistic and appropriate having considered the relevant alternatives and are founded on a robust and credible evidence base
- There are clear mechanisms for implementation and monitoring
- It is reasonably flexible to enable it to deal with changing circumstances.

### **Scrutiny Outcomes**

The Task and Finish group recommended:

- careful monitoring of the levels of growth predicted in the Preferred Strategy to ensure that the projections continue to be valid;
- the necessity of being bold in planning transport infrastructure;



- making sure that infrastructure is in place prior to agreed development taking place;
- protecting desire lines for potential future transport routes;
- the creation of sustainable communities;
- the maintenance of the M4 as a boundary to limit development in the city; and
- undertaking full and open consultation with citizens.

### **Cabinet response**

*All of these Inquiry recommendations were accepted. The Cabinet agreed that the predicted growth levels would be carefully monitored, stating that full analysis would be undertaken of the implications of the revised-back series of Mid Year Estimates for each Local Authority from 2002-2010 using the 2011 Census as a baseline. This is prepared by the Office of National Statistics and anticipated to be issued in March 2013 ahead of the release of the Local Authority based household projections in the early Autumn 2013. The Cabinet agreed that desire lines for potential transport routes should be protected, stating that the Deposit LDP can include appropriate policies for doing so and that the Masterplanning process would help to identify potential routes and address delivery issues. The response also affirmed that detailed masterplanning would address issues around the creation of sustainable communities. Consultation on the LDP Preferred Strategy took place in late 2012, using a wide variety of methods. .*

## **Local Development Plan - Masterplanning General Principles Inquiry**

### **Context**

The next stage of the Local Development Plan (LDP) joint inquiry was the consideration of the draft Masterplanning General Principles in March to April 2013. The terms of reference for the Inquiry were to scrutinise the proposed Cardiff Local Development Plan Masterplanning General Principles in the context of best practice elsewhere in the UK. Evidence was gathered from a number of officers, developers, as well as the Design Commission for Wales. The Inquiry group also commissioned research from the Scrutiny Research team enabling a comparison of the content of the

proposed Cardiff Masterplanning Principles with those put into practice elsewhere in the country.

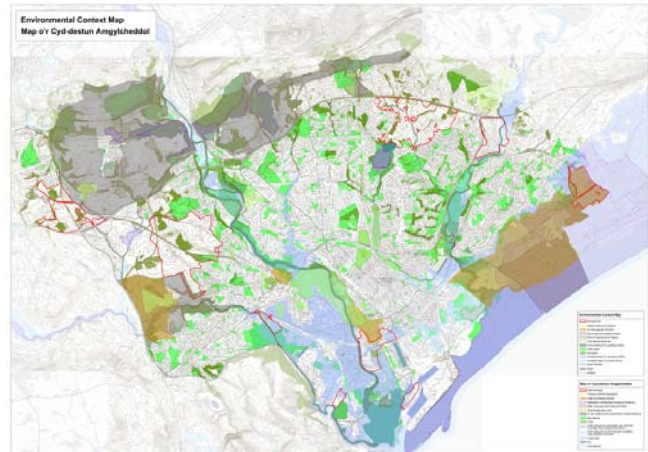
### **Scrutiny outcomes**

The Task and Finish group recommended:

- that the Cabinet approve the Principles subject to some amendments;
- ongoing consultation with residents;
- making sure that the Principles could be objectively measured;
- open and robust dialogue with developers
- ensuring that mistakes in previous developments are avoided in future, to create truly sustainable communities. .

### **Cabinet response**

*The Inquiry report will be presented to the May 2013 Cabinet meeting. The next stage of the joint scrutiny of the Local Development Plan will be to consider the draft Deposit LDP prior to its presentation to Full Council in September 2013.*

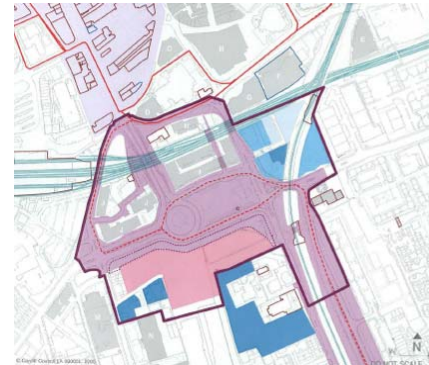


## **Callaghan Square Call-In – Cabinet Decision CAB/12/0037**

### **Context**

In November 2012, the Cabinet's decision regarding the purchase of land at Callaghan Square, south of Cardiff Central train station, was 'called in'. On 8 November 2012 Cabinet received a report requesting a decision to "allow the acquisition of a key site with a view to enabling a considerably greater return in terms of wider development and transport initiatives linked to the Enterprise Zone." The report was agreed subject to specified delegation arrangements.

The call-in submission stated that the Cabinet report had not provided sufficient information to enable councillors to make an informed decision on the merits of acquiring the land within the proposed Cardiff Enterprise Zone, and that without certainty around the purpose of acquiring the land it was doubtful as to whether this was in the public interest. As the scrutiny of the Council's land and property falls within the terms of reference of this Committee, and the economic development agenda under those of the Economy & Culture Scrutiny Committee, the decision was scrutinised jointly by the two committees.



### **Scrutiny outcomes**

The Committee wrote to the Cabinet Member for Finance Business and the Local Economy to:

- confirm they had decided not to refer the decision back to the Cabinet;
- raise concerns that both committees were not alerted to the “Land at Callaghan Square” report before the report was issued to the Cabinet for decision;
- suggest that the Economic and Culture Scrutiny Committee consider the Cardiff Enterprise Zone and Cardiff's Economic Strategy closely in the future;
- ask that agenda items be included in the Cabinet's Forward Plan for the forthcoming meeting at the latest by the Cabinet Agenda Conference to allow effective scrutiny;
- Request a copy of the letter from the Welsh Government detailing the interest of a third party in purchasing the land at Callaghan Square.

### **Cabinet Response**

*The Cabinet member for Finance Business and the Local Economy wrote to the Committee, stating that many of the issues in the Chair's letter had been overtaken by events, the Welsh Government having secured the Callaghan Square site. He stated that the Cabinet would soon be publishing a Green Paper setting out the strategic issues facing the Cardiff's economy and that he would ensure that the Economy and Culture Scrutiny Committee's views were heard. Although he noted that this issue had*

*been a fast-moving one, he re-confirmed his commitment to maximising the role of scrutiny as fully as possible.*

## **Internal Services Strategy & Technology Framework 2012-15**

### **Context**

The Council's approach to Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is currently split into two parts: the operational side, delivered by Internal Services, and the strategic side, falling under the 'Enterprise Architecture' team. The Council has also entered into a strategic technology partnership with Tata Consultancy Services. Members considered the challenges facing the Internal Services team in providing ICT support to services across the Council, with the opportunity to consider the other parts of the Council's ICT at a later date. The Internal Services Strategy 2012-2015 sets out the challenges ahead in the form of social, technological, economic, political and legal considerations. The strategy indicates that challenges will be faced as the Council moves away from a traditional fixed ICT workforce model to a more fluid delivery of services involving mobile, home working and non-traditional devices. The key challenges included the available budget, training, access to information and remote working.

### **Scrutiny Outcomes**

The Committee wrote to the Leader to:

- advocate a move to more collaborative working and sharing of best practice;
- raise concerns that a Society of Information Technology Managers report in 2010 had found that Cardiff was not achieving as low prices for ICT purchasing as could be expected given the Council's size. Members requested that this be addressed;
- note that much of the Council's ICT budget was delegated to service areas, and asked for this to be assessed to ensure that the budget is being spent as effectively as possible;
- comment that as the objectives contained within the Strategy were quite high level, more measurable performance indicators would be valuable;

- comment on the accessibility of the Strategy; the need to avoid jargon and include a glossary; equality of access to information for customers; availability and security of information; and the appropriateness of the Council's website.

### **Cabinet response**

*The Leader responded that officers would follow up on sharing activities as appropriate. At that point a small sum was to be put forward in the budget to deal with critical issues, as well as a medium term financial pressure bid. She noted that ICT purchasing was being looked at by Procurement and Internal Services officers and that an improvement was expected soon. Delegated service area budgets were also being considered. She highlighted that a major project was underway to refresh the Council's website under the Customer Programme and that improvements should become visible to customer by the middle of 2013. She stated that the project would improve accessibility of information, allow better interaction with the Council and more online transactions, as well as improving information flows within the Council.*

## **Connect to Cardiff**

### **Context**



In November 2012, the Committee considered the operation of the Council's Connect to Cardiff service in terms of current performance, customer feedback and the challenges it faces. The Committee also toured the Connect to Cardiff call centre. The call centre offers a number of services to Cardiff citizens, including help with Council Tax enquiries, waste management requests, housing and parking, as well as a reporting line for highways issues (for example street lighting, drainage and highway defects).

The Committee were informed that the operation of Connect to Cardiff is as part of the wider Customer Management strategy, which will progress a 'channel shift' to promote web-access as the preferred method for contacting the Council. The Committee were reassured that this strategy would continue to allow customers to contact the Council via their method of choice, including face to face or by telephone if desired.

## **Scrutiny outcomes**

The Committee wrote to the Cabinet member for Communities Housing and Social Justice to:

- underline Members' strong feeling that the Council must avoid the creation of a 'two-tier' contact system which favours those who have easy access to the internet;
- request further details regarding customer satisfaction levels of those contacting C2C via webchat or email versus those who telephone;
- ask to be kept informed regarding further expansion of twenty-four hour and out of hours provision;
- note comments that some calls which C2C receives may result from difficulties or defects stemming from lack of clarity in communications sent out by other sections of the Council, and hoped that C2C will work with service areas to address these issues;
- request further information regarding the Service Improvement 'Rapid Improvement Event' which had been undertaken in the area, following comments that it is essential that change initiatives involve staff directly;
- query whether there were any opportunities to generate income via C2C and recommend that this should be investigated further;
- request a ward-by-ward and service area breakdown in terms of types of enquiry C2C receives.

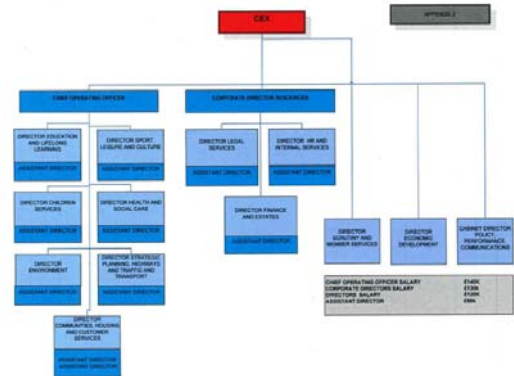
## **Cabinet response**

*The Cabinet member for Communities Housing and Social Justice replied that while the Council remains committed to promoting channel shift to web-based technology, it also fully supported other methods of communication, to ensure customers, particularly the vulnerable can seek support via methods such as Citizen Hubs. She also stated that part of the channel shift strategy was to ensure suitable out of hours service and that the Cabinet would be happy to brief the Committee as appropriate. She also stated that Connect to Cardiff prided itself on the good working relationship it had established with service areas and that they worked with them to improve customer communications.*

## Proposed Senior Team Model

### Context

The Committee scrutinised the proposals for a revised senior management structure to support the new Administration's vision for the city. It was stated that the model proposed would strengthen management support to facilitate the Member-led delivery of local services. The proposals would give the opportunity to appoint candidates with the necessary expertise to bring senior knowledge and experience to the Council, ensuring less dependency on external consultants. Savings from the reduction in consultant spend would be used to fund the £1.67 million differential cost of the new structure.



### Scrutiny outcomes

The Committee wrote to the Chief Executive to:

- set out a number of concerns regarding the new structure, stating that it would not necessarily lead to an improvement in public service;
- state that it risked the development of a silo approach to service delivery and would result in the appointment of generalist rather than specialist managers;
- state that Members were unconvinced that the evidence base for the proposal was sufficient, recommending that benchmarking with other similar local authorities should have been carried out. Members considered that the comparator local authorities used by Hay in its advice to the Council were not necessarily suitable (for example the reference to London Boroughs);
- say that there should be an analysis of how senior managers' pay linked to their performance;
- advocate a phased approach, feeling that a gradual review would be more appropriate and cause less disruption across the organisation;
- cite the need to strengthen arrangements in social services and education;

- say that the Council should invest further in Cardiff Council Academy support for senior managers to ensure that internal candidates were able to compete with external talent;
- With reference to the proposal to create a Director of Scrutiny and Member Services, comment that, while it considered Scrutiny to be under-resourced, it felt that this was an unnecessary investment;
- raise concerns over the timing of the consultation, over the summer, and had been disappointed that Members had not been written to directly with the consultation details.

### **Cabinet response**

*A final senior management structure was presented to Cabinet in October 2012 and discussed by the Employment Conditions Committee in November 2012. The latter report stated that the new organisational structure presented significant people implications which would be managed in accordance with the recommended legal principles and the employment legislative framework. There would also be ongoing dialogue with Trade Union colleagues to minimise disruption to the organisation. The post of Director of Scrutiny & Member Services was not included in the final structure which went out to advert. Instead, a director-level post of County Clerk and Monitoring Officer (Democratic Services) had been added to the structure.*

## **Non-Operational Property Review**

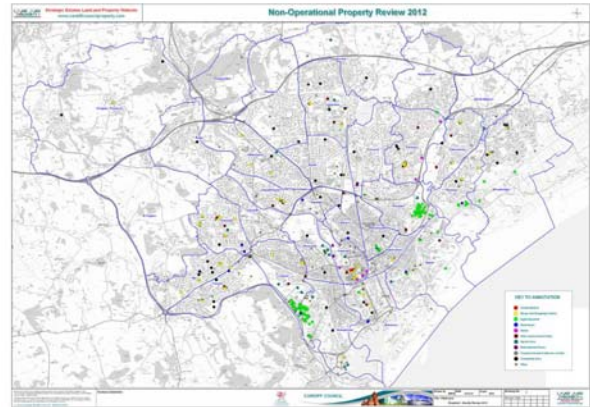
### **Context**

The Committee considered the Council's non-operational estate in April 2013. Non-operational property is defined as property and land owned by the Council but not used to operate from or to deliver services. Often the Council lets these properties for commercial return or to promote local employment, small businesses and the economic regeneration of local areas. This followed on from a Wales Audit Office report published in 2010 which noted a number of issues with the management of the public sector property estate across Wales, including the often poor condition of the estate; lack of accurate maintenance information; inconsistent land and property



strategies; and insufficient emphasis being placed on the non-financial (for example the sustainability and social impact) benefits of this estate.

The Committee considered the results of an officer review of the non-operational estate, which included early officer proposals for the management and rationalisation of this estate. In the 2010/11 financial year the percentage net yield achieved from these properties varied from 3.7% to 8.4%, with an average of 6.4%. Total annual gross rental income at that point was c. £3.9 million. The estate also had an estimated maintenance backlog of £1.4 million.



### **Scrutiny Outcomes**

The Cabinet Member for Finance, Business and the Local Economy had been unable to attend the meeting. The Committee wrote to him:

- requesting that he return in the very near future with the draft Cabinet Report in order to allow comprehensive pre-decision scrutiny of any proposals put before the Cabinet in terms of any rationalisation of the Council's non-operational estate;
- setting out Members' concerns that there seemed to be no rationale or strategic vision behind the future management or disposal of the estate; and
- emphasising the importance of non-financial considerations in any future plan for the estate, for example the potential social, community and economic advantages of the use of the estate.

### **Cabinet response**

*The Committee is awaiting a response from the Cabinet Member.*

## Equal Pay Settlement

### Context

In 2008 the Council agreed an Equal Pay settlement which led to offers being made directly to over 3,000 employees in cleaning, catering and caring jobs. However, the Council still had over 1500 outstanding equal pay claims lodged against it at tribunal in 2012 (a separate issue to the Single Status agreement concluded in August 2012). Following negotiations between Trade Unions and the Council, a draft Memorandum of Understanding was developed and the Committee undertook pre-decision scrutiny of the settlement, prior to its consideration by the Cabinet.

### Scrutiny outcomes

The Committee wrote to the Cabinet Member for Finance, Business and the Local Economy to:

- state that they were largely satisfied with the approach that had been set out;
- counsel that senior managers should ensure that appropriate advice was available to staff members making that decision, upon hearing that the experience of other local authorities was that officers tend to opt out of making additional pension contributions; and
- request details of the costs of the legal advice which the Council had commissioned in this area.

### Cabinet response

*The Cabinet later confirmed that the Council had spent £640,765 on external legal advice associated with the Equal Pay Settlement since the 2007/08 financial year.*

## Complaints Policy

### Context

In November 2012, the Committee considered the draft revised Complaint Policy Guidance Notes prior to their presentation to the Cabinet for approval. Members also looked at the Annual Complaints Report for 2011-12. To date the Council has had a Complaints Policy and Procedure that requires all service areas to report on a monthly

basis the numbers of complaints about service received and processed. A review of the Council's Complaints Policy and Procedure had been undertaken and improvements recommended to ensure that the Council's policy fully reflects guidance from the Welsh Government Model Policy and Guidance Paper for Handling Complaints, as well as guidance received from the Public Service Ombudsman for Wales.

### **Scrutiny outcomes**

The Committee wrote to the Cabinet member for Communities Housing and Social Justice to:

- agree with the proposal to reduce the timescales for acknowledging complaints;
- noted that the Policy adopted an 'investigate once, investigate well' approach, removing the independent review stage of the former policy, as proposed by the Public Ombudsman for Wales;
- state that Members were concerned that there is currently some variation across service areas in terms of handling complaints;
- emphasise the need for the Council to publicise the Policy on a regular basis so that members of the public know how to raise a complaint; and
- suggest the Policy might merge into a more general 'feedback' policy to give citizens a clearer route to contact the Council with complaints or compliments.

### **Cabinet response**

*The Cabinet Member for Communities, Housing and Social Justice responded that the Complaints Policy and Guidance notes would be re-branded to ensure that it promotes the Council's desire to capture complaint, comments and compliments. She also reassured the Committee that the Corporate Complaints team would continue to work with service areas to ensure that officers have a full understanding of the changes included in the policy. Updates to the Council's Complaints Policy were presented to Cabinet in March 2013. The Policy has been re-named the Comments, Complaints and Compliments Policy to inform customers that the Council 'welcomes their comments and want to hear about the positive experiences they have had'. However, the Policy itself makes very little reference to how Compliments or Comments should*

*be submitted. The Policy Guidance notes state that the Policy will be available on the Council's website that bilingual leaflets will be placed in Council buildings.*

## **Draft Attendance and Wellbeing Policy**

### **Context**

The previous Committee membership took a long-standing interest in the Council's policies regarding the management of attendance and sickness absence. Task and Finish inquiries into sickness absence had been carried out in 2005 and late 2011. The latter Inquiry report was presented to the then Executive in January 2012. Following indications that management of sickness absence would be a key consideration for the new Administration, the Committee considered a consultation draft of the Attendance and Wellbeing Policy in November. This draft Policy was intended to replace the Council's existing Sickness Absence policy, as well as including an updated Special Leave Scheme and critical illness policy.

### **Scrutiny outcomes**

The Committee wrote to the Cabinet member for Finance, Business and the Local Economy to:

- state its unanimous opposition to the proposal contained within the draft Policy to withdraw pay for the first three days of any sickness absence, feeling that it would unfairly penalise genuinely ill staff and in particular would affect the Council's lowest-paid officers;
- state that Members were unconvinced by the evidence available to support the implementation of such a suggestion;
- make known its dismay that Council employees may have become aware of the proposal to remove payment via media reports following the publication of committee papers and the accompanying draft policy;
- praise some of the more positive approaches contained within the draft Policy, particularly in terms of earlier referral to the Occupational Health Service; the increase in preventative initiatives; and work around mental health issues;
- urge the extension of Employee Counselling Service if possible;

- urge the Cabinet to ensure that the Corporate Plan set a target of an average of 9 FTE days of sickness for 2013/14 and a target of 8.5 days for 2014/15, as per the original Inquiry recommendations;
- state that the Committee was interested in monitoring the effects of the Policy's implementation once finalised and would recommend that the Committee's 2013/14 work programme should include a progress update;
- state that Members wished to consider the results of the Policy's Equality Impact Assessment, as well as the effectiveness and implementation of the training which is available for line managers, the effectiveness of changes in triggers/stages at this juncture.

### **Cabinet response**

*The revised Attendance and Wellbeing Policy was approved by the Cabinet in April 2013. The proposal to withdraw payment for the first three days of sickness had been removed, following the Committee's comments. The Cabinet report stated that the Equality Impact Assessment had recommended Policy should be monitored. The Corporate Plan for 2013-17 sets targets of 10 FTE days for 2013/14 and 9 FTE days for 2014/15.*

## **2012/13 Performance Monitoring**

### **Context**

The Committee examined the delivery of the Administration's vision for the city through consideration of quarterly performance reports to the Cabinet. To ensure appropriate levels of monitoring, the Committee agreed to consider performance in depth every six months, receiving the interim reports for information only. Following the election of the new Administration, the structure and content of the performance reports have been under review and the Committee took an active role in contributing to that discussion. The Council has developed a report format which concentrates on delivery of the Administration's Year One document, 'Leading Cardiff, Building Communities' as well as the revised Corporate Plan for 2012-14. The report is structured around Cabinet portfolios to show a direct line of accountability for delivery

of actions contained within the Corporate Plan. A number of relevant performance indicators have also been selected for regular review in each portfolio section.

### **Scrutiny outcomes**

Across its various considerations of Corporate Performance, the Committee wrote to the Leader to:

- advocate clear trend analysis in performance reports;
- comment that there was a need for comprehensive analysis regarding the trends;
- state that too few targets were included within the performance reports, with little explanation of how those included were arrived at and no information regarding the process to ensure that the targets were sufficiently challenging;
- request greater comparative data to allow evaluation of Cardiff's performance against appropriate comparator cities if possible, and with other Welsh local authorities;
- state its concerns that the Corporate Risk Register and performance reports were not sufficiently aligned. Members felt that the performance reports should enable the monitoring of the delivery of actions mitigating the most serious risks to the Council;
- linking to the Committee's ongoing interest in sickness absence, state Members' concern that the quarterly reports did not contain sufficient information regarding service areas' varying sickness absence rates; and
- request further data regarding Freedom of Information requests.

### **Cabinet response**

*During its considerations of performance, the Committee was assured that the ongoing Performance and Information project was reviewing the structures and approaches supporting performance management across the Council. It was stated by officers that this would improve the consistency of performance management by early 2014. The Committee was also assured that the selection of performance indicators under each portfolio would remain relatively static over the lifetime of the Administration, enabling trend analysis. Officers agreed to investigate whether it was possible to include further past data in the reports in future.*

*Members were also advised that officers were investigating how the synergy between the Corporate Risk Register and performance reports could be improved and that suggestions as to how to take this forward would be brought forward as part of 2012/13 quarter 4 data in summer 2013. Service area data regarding sickness absence levels was included with quarter three data. The Leader had also asked for the inclusion of Freedom of Information data. In terms of comparative data, the Leader assured the Committee that initial work had been undertaken to identify useful comparative data. This work will recommence once more resources are in place through the implementation of the Performance and Information project. With regards to further information around target-setting, the Leader replied that it was not appropriate to include this in the performance reports but that these could be discussed directly with officers when the Committee considered performance in future.*

## **Draft Corporate Plan 2013-17**

### **Context**

The Committee considered the draft Corporate Plan, as well as the draft Budget proposals at its February 2013 meeting.

### **Scrutiny outcomes**

The Committee wrote to the Leader to:

- state that, having placed some importance on performance monitoring throughout the year, Members had a number of comments about the draft Plan, particularly in terms of its measurability;
- make clear its concern that the linkages between the overarching Integrated Partnership Strategy and the Corporate Plan were not clear;
- welcome the portfolio-based structure of the Plan and its readability;
- comment that many of the milestones included in the Delivery Plan were intangible, inconsistent, difficult to measure and that many needed to be more clearly defined;
- say that insufficient attention had been paid to the results of the Ask Cardiff survey in terms of addressing the priorities which Cardiff citizens had identified.

## **Cabinet response**

*The Leader responded that she welcomed the Committee's positive comments about the Plan's structure and readability. She stated that the Delivery Plan was very much a live document, so its content would develop to take on board the comments of both Scrutiny and the Wales Audit Office. She also stated that the Committee's comments regarding the Ask Cardiff survey would be taken on Board during next year's corporate planning process.*

Cardiff Council  
Corporate Plan 2013 -17



## **2013/14 Budget Strategy & Draft Budget Proposals**

### **Context**

The Committee considered the Administration's budget strategy for 2013/2014 at its September meeting. The Budget Strategy set out that the gap between expenditure and financing that it was anticipated will need to be found from service area savings and use of reserves was £18.4million for 2013/14. There was potentially for this to increase to £21million, dependent on Welsh Government funding. Service areas had therefore been asked to identify savings totalling 14.6% of their controllable budgets.

Members were presented with the draft Budget proposals regarding savings, financial pressures, the Capital programme and proposals regarding reductions in grants in February 2013. For the first time this year, the draft proposals had been released for public consultation.

### **Scrutiny outcomes**

The Committee wrote to the Leader to:

- state that it had a number of concerns about the consultation process as well as about the proposals concerned within the papers;
- comment that the papers seemed to have been drafted with an officer and Cabinet member audience in mind and therefore the phrasing of some of the



proposals had caused confusion and concern among those who would be affected by the proposals if implemented;

- comment that statements in the media from some Cabinet members in terms of alternatives to the proposals, which seemed to pre-empt the formal budget process, had equally caused some concern;
- state that there were a number of ways in which the online budget survey could have been improved and that, while a step forward, it missed an opportunity to fully explore the public's views regarding the budget proposals;
- say that the survey's reliance on free text responses would make analysis more difficult;
- comment that engagement and consultation with officers affected by the proposals had not been sufficient and ask for this process to be tightened up in future years;
- recommend improvements to engagement with the voluntary sector, in order to allow adequate time for groups to prepare contingency plans;
- note Members' concerns regarding the information which had been made available to Scrutiny to enable consideration the budget proposals;
- comment that in future years they would expect to receive a greater range of information, similar to that which the Cabinet receives;
- indicate that it wishes to establish a working group in 2013/14 to ensure a longer-term scrutiny engagement with the budget setting process;
- state that it wishes to understand the assessments which proposals undergo in terms of risk and equality impact, as well as the selection of proposals to be progressed, and which budgets had not been affected by savings proposals.

### **Cabinet response**

*The Leader responded to the Committee's comments, stating that she believed that the budget setting process had been significantly more open and transparent this year. She noted the Committee's concerns regarding the publication of the proposals and the worry that this may have caused in those affected by their implementation. She stated that this would be considered ahead of the following year's budget process. She also stated that engagement with officers and teams affected would be more robust in future. In terms of engagement with the voluntary sector, she stated*

*that it was appropriate to treat the third sector as Council service areas have been treated, but that the communication process would be reviewed prior to next year's process. She welcomed the Committee's intention to seek to gain a greater understanding of the budget process in 2013/14.*

## **Transformation Portfolio**

### **Context**

The former Committee membership took a strong interest in the Council's 'Transformation' portfolio of change projects. This Portfolio was targeted to achieve £8.713m of savings in the 2011/12 financial year and a saving of £10.847 in 2012/13. The Committee had established a regime of six-monthly updates to monitor progress in achieving these targets, the value of engaging with Scrutiny Members having been recognised by the Transformation portfolio. In October 2012 the Committee received an update. Members were informed that the 2011/12 target had been missed by £175k and that it was predicted at Month 3 that the 2012/13 target would be missed by £2.289m. The Committee were also told that, the number of external consultants supporting the projects having significantly reduced, there would be adjustments to how the projects would be managed, in terms of embedding change into the organisation and ensuring that service areas engaged with it more effectively.

### **Scrutiny outcomes**

The Committee wrote to the Cabinet member for Finance Business and the Local Economy to:

- request further information with regards to the 'Wave 2' projects which had been previously identified, in order to establish the reasons why these projects would or would not proceed under the new administration.

### **Cabinet response**

*The Committee is awaiting a response from the Cabinet Member for Finance, Business and the Local Economy on these matters. An update on the delivery of the 2012/13 savings target is recommended for summer 2013. Other Scrutiny Committee*

*have considered updates on former Transformation Portfolio projects, including Cardiff Outdoors, Citizen Hubs and Adult Social Care.*

## **Corporate Risk Register**

In January 2013, the Committee considered the Corporate Risk Register which is identified under the Council's Risk Management Policy and Strategy<sup>1</sup> as the key record of 'strategic risks which have an impact beyond any one service area and/or are of such significance that they need to be highlighted corporately'. The Register is currently updated and presented to the Senior Leadership Team on a quarterly basis and to Cabinet six monthly.

### **Scrutiny outcomes**

The Committee wrote to the Cabinet Member for Sport, Leisure and Culture, who acts as Member Risk Champion, to:

- state that the Committee considered that the system of regular reporting to both senior managers and the Cabinet should help to ensure that appropriate mitigating actions are taken;
- note a number of specific risk areas which Members would be interested in considering in more depth, including the Council's ICT platforms becoming outdated and information governance (which the Committee looked at in its March meeting);
- ask for specific thought to be given to additional mitigating actions to be put into place to help Ward Members respond to constituents' queries regarding Welfare Reform, which was identified as a significant current risk;
- set out its concern that there was insufficient synergy between the Risk Register and the Corporate Performance reporting process, and recommend that this should be given further thought to ensure that Corporate Risks are given sufficient prominence in the Delivery & Performance Report;

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<sup>1</sup> Available on the Council's website at:  
[http://www.cardiff.gov.uk/content.asp?nav=2872,3385,3391&parent\\_directory\\_id=2865&id=290&d1p1=1](http://www.cardiff.gov.uk/content.asp?nav=2872,3385,3391&parent_directory_id=2865&id=290&d1p1=1)

- state that Members were interested to hear that an ‘opportunity register’ will be created to sit alongside the risk register, in order to record potential initiatives for the Council to pursue.

### **Cabinet response**

*The Committee is awaiting a formal response to its comments.*

## **Strategic Equalities Plan Annual Review**

### **Context**

Cardiff Council’s Strategic Equality Plan was published on 2 April 2012. The 2010 Equality Act created a new public sector equality duty, tasking all public bodies with preparing and publishing a Strategic Equality Plan every four years that covers all ‘protected characteristics’. These are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.



There is also a requirement in Wales to report annually on progress in delivering the Strategic Equality Plan. Specifically, the report must set out:

- the steps taken to identify and collect relevant information;
- how the authority has used that information to comply with its equality duties;
- reasons for not collecting any relevant information it has identified but does not hold;
- the progress that the authority has made in order to fulfill each of its equality objectives; and
- a statement of the effectiveness of:
  - its arrangements for identifying and collecting relevant information;

- the steps it has taken in order to fulfill each of its equality objectives.

In March 2013, the Committee considered Cardiff's first Strategic Equalities Plan Progress Report prior to its presentation to the Cabinet for approval.

### **Scrutiny outcomes**

The Committee wrote to the Cabinet member for Communities Housing and Social Justice to:

- state that Members were appreciative of the efforts which the Council has put in to meet its equalities duties;
- note that the Council has aimed to 'mainstream' these duties within service areas;
- note that considerable work has been put in to improving the Equalities Impact Assessment process and that this effort will continue in the coming year;
- state that Members were very concerned that some of the staff monitoring data required to be published was missing from the Progress Report and urge that this omission should be rectified;
- indicate that they would like to build an in-depth consideration of the Equality Impact Assessment process into the Committee's anticipated working group to look at the 2014/15 budget setting process.

### **Cabinet response**

*The Cabinet Member for Communities, Housing and Social Justice responded that she would welcome the Committee's support in embedding the Equality Impact Assessment process. The Cabinet Member also replied that there had been a number of issues with the collection and inclusion of staff monitoring data. Changes to the relevant ICT system had meant the Council did not have the continuity of consistent information that it would like. The Council also needs to work with its officers in order to ensure that they feel confident enough to disclose their information. Finally, the timescale for producing this information had been tight, as staff had not been in post and Guidance from the Equality and Human Rights Commission had been published late. The Cabinet Member stated that this situation would improve by the time of the next Annual Progress Report.*

## Information Management

### **Context**

In March 2013, the Committee considered the Council's policies and procedures for the management of information. This scrutiny followed on from the Committee's mid-year review of the Corporate Risk Register which highlighted Information Governance as posing a significant risk to the Council.

Information management covers a considerable area, including information requests (for example under Freedom of Information legislation); data protection and information security; records management (both physical and electronic) and information sharing. The Council faces reputational risks or financial penalties from the Information Commissioner. Members heard that whereas in 2008 the Council received around three hundred information requests, this figure has increased to the extent that the Council now receives around 1500 requests a year. This has posed a sizeable challenge to the Council in terms of fulfilling and resourcing these requests. While a small central team is in place to coordinate responses to Information Requests, there has historically been some inconsistency in terms of how staff councilwide have been deployed to do so. The service also faces issues in terms of records management, particularly during recent office accommodation changes.

### **Scrutiny outcomes**

Following this briefing, Members recommended that a task and finish inquiry should be considered as part of the 2013/14 work programme.

### **Cabinet response**

*The Cabinet Member and senior officers were keen to continue to work with the Committee in this area.*

## **Future work programme opportunities for 2013/14**

The Committee receives regular work programme updates at which Members have the opportunity to consider items received from members of the public, young people, organisations, Council Members and other Scrutiny Committees, for inclusion on the work programme. Committee Members can also suggest any new issues which may be of interest to the Committee. Presently the following issues are being considered for inclusion in the coming year's work programme:

- Cardiff Council website
- Capital Times and its advertising revenue
- Attendance & Wellbeing Policy Implementation
- Annual Governance Statement
- Wales Audit Office Annual Improvement Report
- An update on successor to Transformation Portfolio and 2012/13 savings.

The following items have been suggested for consideration as issues which may be suitable for a Task & Finish Inquiry:

- Information Management
- Development of 2014/15 budget proposals.

The Committee will also complete the next stage of its joint Inquiry into the Cardiff Local Development Plan, considering the Deposit LDP in July 2013, in order to report to Committee in September 2013.

It is suggested that the Committee continues to receive the regular progress and performance reports on:

- Corporate Performance Monitoring
- Budget Monitoring

In addition to these items, some have been referred for the Committee's consideration by other Scrutiny Committees. These include:

- The Council's relations with the voluntary sector.

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