

POLICY REVIEW & PERFORMANCE  
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

7 January 2014

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CORRESPONDENCE – INFORMATION REPORT

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**Background**

1. Following Committee meetings, the Chair writes a letter to the relevant Cabinet Member or senior officer, summing up the Committee's comments, concerns and recommendations regarding the issues considered during that meeting. The letter usually asks for a response from the Cabinet Member to any recommendations made and sometimes requests further information.

**Issues**

2. A copy of the Correspondence Monitoring sheet detailing the Committee's correspondence and those responses received is attached at **Appendix A**. For ease of reference, the lines of those letters to which the Committee has received a full response have now been removed from the document where no actions are left outstanding. Where new information has been added since the Committee last considered a correspondence report, this information is highlighted in **bold**. Attached to this report are copies of recent correspondence, as follows:

**1 October 2013 meeting**

3. At this meeting, the Committee considered proposals to review the Council's Grants to external bodies. The Chair's letter to the Cabinet Member for Community & Neighbourhood Regeneration and Social Justice is attached at **Appendix B** and a copy of her response at **Appendix C**.

### **29 October 2013 meeting**

4. In relation to the Grants review, the Committee considered the Procurement process for the Advice package at its 29 October 2013 meeting. A copy of the Chair's letter to the or Community & Neighbourhood Regeneration and Social Justice is attached at **Appendix D** and a copy of her response at **Appendix E**.

### **26 November 2013 meeting**

5. At this meeting, the Committee considered proposed changes to the Council's Redeployment Policy. A copy of the Chair's letter to the Deputy Leader is attached at **Appendix F** and a copy of his response at **Appendix G**.
6. The Committee also considered the Updated Budget Strategy and Directorate Budget Briefings from the Economic Development and Resources Directorates, as well as regarding the Corporate Management budget. A copy of the Chair's letter to the Cabinet Member for Finance and Economic Development is attached at **Appendix H**. A response has not yet been received.
7. Finally, the Committee received a briefing regarding the County Clerk and Monitoring Officer budget. A copy of the Chair's letter to the Deputy Leader is attached at **Appendix I**. A response has not yet been received.

### **Legal Implications**

8. 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 of the Council must (a) be within the legal powers of the Council; (b) comply with any procedural requirement imposed by law; (c) be within the powers of the body or person exercising powers 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**

9. 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 financial implications at this stage in relation to any of the work programme. However, financial implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet/Council will set out any financial implications arising from those recommendations.

### **Recommendation**

The Committee is recommended to note the content of the letters attached to this report and decide whether it wishes to take any further actions, or request any further information.

**MARIE ROSENTHAL**

County Clerk and Monitoring Officer

30 December 2013

Policy Review Performance Scrutiny Committee  
Correspondence

Committee date	Committee item	Recipient	Comments/Information requested	Response date	Response	Further Action
17/04/2013	Non-Operational Property	Cllr Russell Goodway	<p>Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Made clear its disappointment that Cllr Goodway did not attend and that Committee did not have access to the full draft Cabinet report</li> <li>- Commented that there seems to be a lack of vision around the use of non-operational property</li> <li>- Recommended that the social and community benefits of the estate should be considered, as well as the financial benefits</li> <li>- Commented that the Review has featured on the Cabinet Forward Plan for months without being considered, making planning effective scrutiny difficult</li> <li>- Welcomed moves to monitor performance of the estate and to compare this to other cities</li> <li>- Stated that it wishes to consider the Draft Cabinet report in pre-decision. Prior to this, a strategic vision for the use of Non-Operational Property should be developed, as well as comparative performance indicators, a communications strategy for existing tenants, details of the asset management process and a statement regarding the non-financial value/benefits of the estate.</li> </ul>	17/05/2013	<p>Response:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Cabinet report will cover many of points raised, but officers have been asked to develop a specific section to set out the vision for the development of the estate.</li> <li>- A review of workshops is being undertaken and the two issues will be dealt with in one report. Timescale to be determined.</li> <li>- Cllr Goodway will reflect on the Committee's request to consider the report in pre-decision at the appropriate time</li> </ul>	<p>UPDATE 09/07/2013 Officers have stated that the report may go to September Cabinet in conjunction with a review of the Council's workshop estate</p> <p>UPDATE 12/08/2013 Officers have confirmed that the report will not be ready for September Cabinet. Date has yet to be confirmed.</p> <p>UPDATE 20/09/2013 This may be ready for 29th October Committee meeting.</p> <p>UPDATE 09/10/2013 Asset management has been raised as a pressing issue which the Council must address, by both the WLGA Peer Review and the WAO Improvement Report.</p> <p><b>UPDATE 27/11/2013</b> <b>The Economic Development Director indicated that a paving asset management report would go to Cabinet in January 2014, followed by a more detailed report in March 2014. The Committee indicated that they would like to consider the detailed report in March.</b></p>
12/09/2013	Budget Strategy 2014/15	Cllr Goodway	<p>Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Requested to be kept informed regarding plans for policy-led and business-process led savings as plans develop</li> <li>- Discussed 'nice to have' versus necessary services and wish to continue to engage with the Cabinet as these ideas develop</li> <li>- Will consider Grants proposals at its next meeting</li> <li>- Raised the issue of affordability of borrowing.</li> </ul> <p>Committee also made a number of comments about the budget process. Members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Welcomed the offer of directorate briefings</li> <li>- Requested to know when the Budget Proposals would be released into the public domain</li> <li>- Hope that the proposals' narrative will reflect the needs of various audiences</li> <li>- Asked that all options presented for consultation are pursued, but asked that thought is given to those who prefer not to access web-based surveys</li> <li>- Request that the full results of consultation are available to scrutiny committees and that a full review is carried out afterwards to judge the effectiveness of consultation.</li> </ul>		Not yet received	

Policy Review Performance Scrutiny Committee  
Correspondence

Committee date	Committee item	Recipient	Comments/Information requested	Response date	Response	Further Action
01/10/2013	Budget Strategy 2013/14 Proposals for a review of Council Grant Funding	Cllr Thorne	<p>Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Welcomed the longer time allowed for consultation</li> <li>- Requested full scrutiny engagement with the commissioning approach for the three proposed packages</li> <li>- Wishes to understand the implementation costs of the new approach</li> <li>- Recommends that the neighbourhood fund is as transparent as possible. Members wish to consider the allocation process/criteria for applications, and recommends regular Scrutiny monitoring of grants made under the fund. Committee also wants details of the support which will be given to organisations in applying for the grant</li> <li>- Requested details of the consultation results prior to consideration of the final budget proposals</li> <li>- Recommended that the use of the word 'reserve' (with reference to the Advice package) should make clear that this is not funding which is easily accessible and is very much a contingency</li> <li>- Wishes to understand the rationale for the full transfer of the Advice to Industry grant and the Audience Wales grant without their being subject to a 10% cut.</li> </ul>	19/11/2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Appreciated the welcome for the longer consultation time</li> <li>- Confirmed that workshops will be held with providers</li> <li>- Advised that the process will not incur additional costs as the grants management staff will be supported by the Commissioning and Procurement team</li> <li>- Set out details of the operation of the neighbourhood fund</li> <li>- Noted the point regarding the 'reserve' and will make sure that this is communicated</li> <li>- Gave further details regarding the transfer of the Advice to Industry and Audience Wales Grants</li> </ul>	Confirm if consultation results will be available with budget papers
15/10/2013	WLGA Peer Review	Leader	<p>Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Recommended that the Peer Review Action Plan is debated at Full Council</li> <li>- Wishes to consider the Action Plan earlier than 26 Nov if possible</li> <li>- Were concerned that the Action Plan should be a Member-led document</li> <li>- Recommended that the Action Plan should contained clearly measurable actions and milestones and demonstrate outcomes for citizens</li> <li>- Will invite Trade Union colleagues to the scrutiny of the Action Plan</li> <li>- Endorses comments made about the current Corporate Plan, and the need for better alignment between financial, corporate and directorate business planning</li> <li>- Wishes to consider the results of the Communications &amp; Media review</li> <li>- Urges progress on asset management</li> <li>- Requested further details regarding Personal Performance and Development Review completions</li> <li>- May scheduled further items coming from the Action Plan in future meetings</li> <li>- Wishes to have an update to Month 5 information with M3 budget monitoring on 29 Oct.</li> </ul>	31/10/2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Expressed concern about some of the language used in the letter, in particular 'issues uncovered by the review' and 'grave concern'.</li> <li>- States that a 'high level response' to the Review will be brought to Cabinet on 7 November followed by an overarching Delivery Plan addressing the challenges facing the Authority in a cohesive and prioritised way, to be considered in early 2014. the Leader suggests that this would be more appropriate for Scrutiny consideration than the high level response.</li> <li>- States that the Leader is minded to put the 'high level response' to Full Council in November to be noted and to allow a wider debate</li> <li>- Refutes the opinion that the impetus for the development of the Action Plan has come from officers rather than Cabinet Members</li> <li>- Has referred some of the more specific issues raised to the relevant Cabinet Member</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Response regarding more specific issues PPDR information, Communications review.</li> <li>- Other issues were discussed at Committee with Cllr Goodway in his Economic Development Directorate budget briefing</li> </ul>

Policy Review Performance Scrutiny Committee  
Correspondence

Committee date	Committee item	Recipient	Comments/Information requested	Response date	Response	Further Action
15/10/2013	WAO Improvement report & letter	Cllr Cook	<p>Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Recommends that methods of making the Council's Annual Improvement report more accessible discussed at the meeting are implemented;</li> <li>- Urges action to address the content of the Corporate Plan Delivery Plan</li> <li>- Requested clarification regarding WG improvement advice that was not made available to the Cabinet</li> <li>- Notes that a further review of performance reporting is underway and therefore postpones its request for a bespoke report</li> <li>- Will investigate a comparative performance research project with the Scrutiny Research team</li> <li>- Urges action on asset management.</li> </ul>	05/11/2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Issues of the accessibility of the Report are being addressed;</li> <li>- The refresh of the Corporate Plan in February 2014 will provide an opportunity to address issues with the measurability of the Corporate Plan;</li> <li>- Offers the revised and clarified guidance regarding improvement planning once available, to ensure the Committee has the most up to date guidance;</li> <li>- Notes the decision to postpone the development of a bespoke report, although the Team remains happy to assist;</li> <li>- Suggests the Scrutiny Research team works with the Improvement Team with regards to comparative data;</li> <li>- Comments regarding Asset management will be passed to the relevant Cabinet Member.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improvement Planning guidance to be forwarded once available;</li> <li>- Scrutiny Research team is currently working with the Improvement Team to draw up a research proposal regarding comparative performance data;</li> <li>- Committee may like to consider the bespoke performance report at a later date.</li> </ul>
29/10/2013	Budget Monitoring 2013/14 M3	Cllr Goodway	<p>Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Noted the seriousness of the Council's financial position and thanked the Cabinet Member for the verbal update regarding the position as at Month 5</li> <li>- Was concerned about the Council's financial forecasting given the speed with which an overspend of £3.9 million was predicted after the budget was set</li> <li>- Emphasised the need for scrutiny of in-year management action and savings activity where these result in changes to service delivery or policy</li> <li>- Recommended consideration of a public monthly monitoring report to Cabinet</li> <li>- Highlighted ongoing issues with Capital Slippage</li> <li>- Noted issues with Facilities Management and Central Transport Services savings and will consider in more depth in January. Members would like sight of the Resources directorate's action plan to reduce its overspend at that meeting</li> <li>- Would like to consider the Budget Strategy update on 26 November and requested a response to this letter and its letter regarding the original Budget Strategy report before that date, if possible.</li> </ul>		Not yet received	

Policy Review Performance Scrutiny Committee  
Correspondence

Committee date	Committee item	Recipient	Comments/Information requested	Response date	Response	Further Action
29/10/2013	Advice Procurement Package	Cllr Thorne	<p>Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Welcomed the opportunity to consider the proposals at an early stage</li> <li>- Requested further details of the supplier workshop at the end of the month with a view to Members attending if possible</li> <li>- Noted the funding envelope has been set at £500k and that any increase would necessitate a financial pressures bid</li> <li>- Noted the importance of contract monitoring to ensure outcomes are delivered and will consider this issue in more depth at its April meeting</li> <li>- Noted that the contract will be reviewed after two years and that the service may come back in-house. Some Members were concerned that this may be the case</li> <li>- Reiterated the request to see the results of the Grants review consultation prior to consideration of 2014/15 budget proposals.</li> </ul>	18/12/2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Details of the Advice workshop were sent to the Principal Scrutiny Officer (Cllr Marshall attended on the Committee's behalf)</li> <li>- Noted comments regarding contract monitoring and would be happy to brief the Committee further</li> <li>- Noted concerns about the vagueness of the Corporate Plan milestones and looks forward to briefing the Committee further in February.</li> </ul>	None
29/10/2013	Communities Directorate Budget briefing	Cllr Thorne	<p>Committee was grateful for the briefing but highlighted a few points during the meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The need to address capital slippage</li> <li>- The vagueness of many of the milestones and actions contained within the Corporate Plan Delivery Plan</li> <li>- The Committee's intention to commission research into comparative performance data.</li> </ul>	N/A	N/A	
26/11/2013	Redeployment policy	Cllr Cook	<p>Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Noted the shift to external signposting;</li> <li>- Recommended looking wider for external redeployment opportunities</li> <li>- Recommended that time spent in training should be discounted from the redeployment period, and that training opportunities should be proactively identified</li> <li>- Shared concerns about the capacity of the Redeployment team to handle increasing numbers in future, and recommended this should be addressed through the budget or allocation of tasks within Human Resources</li> <li>- Queried the implications linked to moving into alternative delivery mechanisms and asked for further information</li> <li>- Highlighted issues of corporate memory and workforce planning;</li> <li>- Requested a number of pieces of further information, around number of staff to be affected by the proposed changes.</li> </ul>	12/12/2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The report was to be presented to Cabinet on 16th December and a copy of the Chair's letter attached to it.</li> <li>- The further information requested would be sent to follow by officers.</li> </ul>	- Further information to be received

Policy Review Performance Scrutiny Committee  
Correspondence

Committee date	Committee item	Recipient	Comments/Information requested	Response date	Response	Further Action
26/11/2013	Budget Strategy / Directorate Budget briefings	Cllr Goodway	<p>On the budget strategy, the Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hoped that the Council is looking towards English Councils for examples of how to deal with the economic situation, and wished to receive further details of work that is ongoing;</li> <li>- Noted comments that Council Tax may have to be raised next year, and would support moves to establish with the Minister the exact nature of any cap on such a raise;</li> </ul> <p>Noted that it could not be confirmed that a rise in council tax would result in lower savings targets for directorates.</p> <p>On the Resources Directorate Budget Briefing, the Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Noted the various sources of savings under consideration;</li> <li>- Requested a copy of the KPMG commissioning and procurement report.</li> </ul> <p>On the Corporate Management Budget Briefing, the Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Queried the different approaches taken to filling or deleting the Corporate Director Operations and the Head of Cabinet Office posts;</li> <li>- Requested a breakdown of the Corporate Initiatives spend this year and confirmation that this has been topped up via reserves;</li> <li>- Requested a breakdown of the Precepts, Levies and Contributions budget.</li> </ul> <p>On the Economic Development Directorate Budget briefing, the Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Noted the savings drivers;</li> <li>- Commented that the transfer of strategic estates to the Directorate would appear to be a good use of funds;</li> <li>- Recommended pursuing sponsorship opportunities;</li> <li>- Would like to consider the full asset management report in March 2014.</li> </ul> <p>Committee also asked for replies to any outstanding correspondence.</p>		Not yet received	
26/11/2013	Directorate Budget briefings	Cllr Cook	<p>Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Noted the 38% savings target which the County Clerk and Monitoring Officer is working towards;</li> <li>- Raised the comment of the Cabinet Member for Finance and Economic Development during last year's budget process that the financial pressure approved for Scrutiny Services would not be chipped away in future years;</li> <li>- Would like to be kept informed regarding the Communications review;</li> <li>- Requested a breakdown of the Members' expenses budget to aid budget scrutiny.</li> </ul>		Not yet received	



Date: 3 October 2013



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

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

Councillor Lynda Thorne,  
Cabinet Member Community & Neighbourhood Regeneration and Social Justice  
Cardiff Council, County Hall  
Cardiff  
CF10 4UW

Dear Councillor Thorne,

**POLICY REVIEW AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**  
**1 October 2013 – Proposals for a Review of Council Grant Funding**

Thank you for attending the Policy Review and Performance Scrutiny Committee to present the draft proposals for a review of Council Grant Funding. The Committee had a number of comments and requests for further engagement with Scrutiny, as set out below.

- As you will be aware, Members were concerned during the 2013/14 budget setting process that reductions in voluntary sector grant funding had been communicated to recipient organisations at too late a stage to allow time to develop suitable contingency plans. While the level of the proposed cuts in 2014/15 is of grave concern, the Committee welcomed the longer period allowed for the consultation and the impact assessment process which is being put in place.
- We noted the shift towards the use of grant funding to ensure delivery of outcomes and away from historic allocations where there is no clear support for strategic priorities. This is not a new issue; the Committee's own 2011 report regarding the Council's Grant Allocation System noted the variable use of grants to support the corporate priorities. The report recommended a more strategic approach and a move away from duplication and overlap of grant funding, which these proposals appear to support.
- However, the Committee wishes to be assured that the proposed commissioning approach will deliver as intended and therefore requests full engagement in the development of the commissioning approach for the three proposed packages, prior to final approval and implementation.
- While understanding that these changes are proposed in order support outcomes, and not simply savings targets, the Committee also raised the possibility that the additional administration on the Council's part may make the savings negligible. We therefore wish to better understand the costs involved in implementing this new approach.



- The Committee recommends that the operation of the proposed neighbourhood fund should be as transparent as possible. If the fund is intended to better support outcomes, Members must be assured that the allocation process is suitable. Members therefore wish to have sight of the criteria against which applications to the fund will be made, and asks that the relevant Scrutiny Committee is regularly briefed regarding future expenditure under this fund. We would also like you to confirm how organisations will be supported to apply for this funding without the process being overly burdensome.
- Members were very much concerned of the effect the cuts could have on smaller voluntary sector organisations in particular, so would like an update on the results of the consultation with the organisations affected at the appropriate point, and prior to presentation of the final budget proposals.
- Given the importance of the equality impact assessment process, Members request further information regarding its operation in the Council generally and in this case specifically, with a view to scheduling a more in-depth scrutiny if the Committee's work programme allows.
- On the specific point of the 'reserve' referenced under the proposed Advice Package, as discussed at the meeting, it needs to be clearly communicated that this is very much intended as a contingency, rather than additional funding which can be easily accessed. The current wording seems to provide little incentive for organisations to remain within the funding envelope set out.
- Members were not satisfied with the explanation regarding the full transfer of the Audience Wales grant and the Assistance to Industry grant, without being subject to a 10% reduction prior to transfer. We would like to understand the rationale for a full transfer of these funds to directorate budgets as opposed to others.

I hope that you will ensure that the Committee's comments are relayed to the Cabinet to aid its consideration of these proposals.

Yours sincerely,



**COUNCILLOR NIGEL HOWELLS**  
**CHAIR, POLICY REVIEW AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

cc Sheila Hendrickson Brown, Chief Officer, Cardiff Third Sector Council

**Sarah McGill, Director – Communities, Housing and Customer Service**  
**Luke Burton, Principal Citizen Focus Officer**  
**Natalie Southgate, Housing Strategy Manager**  
**Cabinet Office**  
**Members of the Policy Review & Performance Scrutiny Committee**



**CABINET SUPPORT OFFICE  
SWYDDFA CYMORTH Y CABINET**

My Ref: CM25991

Date: 19 November 2013

Cllr Nigel Howells  
Chairperson  
Cardiff County Council  
Atlantic Wharf  
Cardiff  
CF10 4UW

Dear Nigel

**Policy Review & Performance Scrutiny Committee - 1 October 2013**

I am writing in response to your correspondence concerning the Policy Review & Performance Scrutiny Committee which took place on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2013, to review the proposals for the Council Grant Funding. Please accept my apologies for the delay.

Thank you for setting out the observations, recommendations and comments of the committee. My response is set out below:

I share the Committees concerns about ensuring that the maximum possible time is made available to organisations potentially impacted by reductions to, or changes in, funding in order that organisations can make appropriate contingency plans and I appreciate the welcome given by the Committee to the longer period built in for our Grant funding proposals.

With reference to your comments on the proposed commissioning arrangements and the engagement of providers. I can confirm that workshops will be held with current providers to inform the development of our approach and we will also make available the expertise of Business Wales which is funded by the Welsh Government, to offer support to providers around tendering for services. Officers will report back to Scrutiny on progress in this area

I note your concern that additional administration on the Council's part may make savings negligible, however I can advise that transferring these grants into commissioned services will not incur any additional costs as the staff involved in current grant management, including senior managers, will be given assistance throughout by the appropriate Category Management experts within our Commissioning and Procurement service

**PLEASE REPLY TO:** Cabinet Support Office, Room 529, County Hall,  
Atlantic Wharf, Cardiff CF10 4UW  
Tel (029) 2087 2598 Fax (029) 2087 2599

In relation to the recommendation that the operation of the proposed neighbourhood fund must be as transparent as possible, should it be agreed by Council, I can advise that the suggested local grant budget of £30,000 will be provided for each Neighbourhood Partnership Area. Should this be approved as part of the Council's budget decision making process in February 2014 the grant will support the pump-priming of local activities.

The applications will be expected to demonstrate that they are meeting local need and are consistent with the priorities of the Neighbourhood Action Plan. The Neighbourhood Partnership Officers (NPOs) will work closely with local organisations to promote the grant and ensure the process is open and transparent.

In addition the NPOs will also work alongside other relevant partners to support organisations through the process to ensure that the applications being developed deliver maximum value for the local area. An eligibility criteria is being developed and will be shared with the Scrutiny Committee for comment however all local applications will be expected to:

- Be endorsed by at least one local elected member for that area;
- Be aligned with the priorities of the Neighbourhood Action Plan;
- Demonstrate clear evidence of need (including any consultation and engagement with the community);
- Demonstrate that relevant partners have been engaged;
- Be developed in line with the principles of co-production;
- Add value to existing programmes, particularly strategic programmes such as Communities First and Families First to ensure maximum impact.

Funding applications will be considered and approved against the agreed criteria by the Neighbourhood Partnerships Operational Group to ensure that joint working is encouraged and any duplication of activity identified.

I agree with the importance of the equality impact assessment process which gives us the opportunity to engage with affected groups internally and externally as well as fulfilling our statutory duty. The process with the proposed grant review are identical of the full budget setting process and are now mainstreamed into both of these processes. More recently a statutory screening tool has been developed which allows every report that I submitted at Council to receive equality impact checks.

Your specific point of the 'reserve' reference under the proposed Advice Package will be clearly communicated to providers at the workshop and in any tendering documentation.

I note your dissatisfaction with the explanation regarding the full transfer of the Audience Wales grant and the Assistance to Industry grant and I apologise if the information provided at Committee was unclear. Grant funding has always been accounted for within specific service area budgets and consequently the saving deriving from the application of the Grant review falls to individual service budgets. The issue therefore is not one of a transfer of budgets but, as I explained, one for each service area to consider in terms of priorities when looking at opportunities to meet current saving targets.

I hope the above gives you and the Committee Members more clarity on the information requested, and I would like to thank you for your comments.

Yours sincerely

**Councillor Lynda Thorne**  
**Cabinet Member for Communities, Housing & Neighbourhood Renewal**

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

Date: 5 November 2013



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Councillor Lynda Thorne,  
Cabinet Member Community & Neighbourhood Regeneration and Social Justice  
Cardiff Council, County Hall  
Cardiff  
CF10 4UW

Dear Councillor Thorne,

**POLICY REVIEW AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**  
**29 October 2013**

Thank you for attending the Policy Review and Performance Scrutiny Committee to discuss the proposed procurement process for the Advice Package and to set the context under which Communities Directorate is developing its budget proposals for 2014/15. The Committee had a number of comments, as set out below.

**Review of Council Grant Funding – Procurement of Advice Package**

Firstly, the Committee would like to thank you for providing the opportunity to consider the proposals for the procurement process at an early stage. Members welcome this open approach and that suppliers will be involved in the process in the very near future. Members were interested in attending the supplier workshop which has been tentatively set for 27 November 2013 and would be grateful if further details could be forwarded to the Principal Scrutiny Officer.

The Committee noted that the funding envelope for the Advice Service, subject to agreement during the budget-setting process, will be fixed at £500,000, with a small contingency which is only to be used to meet unforeseen need. Officers informed the Committee that strict minimum requirements for service levels will be set out in the Contract Notice. We further noted that if it became clear that additional service pressures would require further funding, this would necessitate a financial pressure bid through the usual budget setting process.

The Committee was informed that a one supplier approach is being pursued, with the aim of ensuring a more consistent advice service across the city; a more coherent customer journey into the advice system; and to better monitor the delivery of outcomes for customers. Members highlighted during the meeting the issues around sub-contracting within a single contract and recommend that our contract requirements very strongly set out our expectation to be informed where sub-contractors are to be used, or where several suppliers form one entity to bid for the contract.





It was obvious to Members from the discussions that the ongoing monitoring of the contract will be vital in ensuring that the advice services meet the needs of Cardiff citizens. The selection of appropriate performance indicators, to monitor delivery of outcomes, the potential penalties which could be put in place and the project management advice which the Council can call upon are all fundamental in this. The Committee intends to consider the Council's approach to contract compliance and monitoring at its 1 April 2014 meeting so will explore these general issues in more depth then.

Members discussed the need for advice to be provided as an independent service to ensure the quality of advice in future. Some Members were concerned by your comments that following the two year contract period, the potential to bring these services in-house may be explored.

When we considered the original Proposals for the Review of Council grants, we requested to receive an update once the consultation process with suppliers had taken place, prior to considering the final budget proposals. We remain particularly interested in the effects of the overall, and of these specific, proposals on small suppliers, so reiterate this request now. We would ask that this update includes further information on the response to the Advice contract preparation process from small suppliers in particular.

#### **Communities Directorate – Budget briefing Procurement of Advice Package**

Again, the Committee would like to express its thanks for your attendance at the meeting. We welcomed the opportunity to consider the context around those parts of your portfolio which fall under the Committee's remit in preparation for considering the Budget Proposals themselves. The information presented was very useful and we welcome this shift in the budget scrutiny process.

Although this was largely a briefing session, Members highlighted a couple of points during the meeting:

- There is a need for all directorates to address capital slippage as well as their profiling of capital spend to ensure it is as accurate as possible;
- We would re-emphasise the vagueness of many of the milestones and actions contained within the Corporate Plan. This issue was clearly underlined by the Wales Audit Office's recent Improvement Report and was something which this Committee commented on when it considered the draft Plan in February this year. We hope that all Portfolio-holders will work with directors to address this in next year's Plan;
- Members commented on some of the comparative data contained within the briefing pack, feeling that Welsh comparators are often not that helpful. The Committee is aiming to commission research into appropriate comparative performance data and will consider the results in due course.

I would be grateful if you could respond as appropriate to the comments above.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nigel Howells', with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

**COUNCILLOR NIGEL HOWELLS**  
**CHAIR, POLICY REVIEW AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

cc Sarah McGill, Director – Communities, Housing and Customer Service  
Jane Thomas, Operational Manager, Benefits, Finance and Tenants Services  
Bethan Jones, Category Manager, Commissioning and Procurement  
Marcia Sinfield, Interim Section 151 Officer  
Cabinet Office  
Members of the Policy Review & Performance Scrutiny Committee



**CABINET SUPPORT OFFICE  
SWYDDFA CYMORTH Y CABINET**

My Ref: CM25910

Date: 18th December 2013



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

Neuadd y Sir  
Caerdydd,  
CF10 4UW  
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Cllr Nigel Howells  
Cardiff County Council  
Atlantic Wharf  
Cardiff  
CF10 4UW

Dear Nigel

**Policy Review & Performance Scrutiny Committee - 20 October 2013 -  
Grant Funding & Communities Budget Briefing**

I am writing in response to your correspondence concerning the Policy Review & Performance Scrutiny Committee which took place on 29 October 2013, to review the proposals for the procurement of advice package as part of the Council Grant Funding, and the Budget Briefing. Thank you for setting out the observations, recommendations and comments of the committee.

As requested, details were sent to the Principal Scrutiny Officer in advance of the Supplier Workshop scheduled for 27 November 2013. If you would like further details from the workshop please let me know.

I also note the Committee's comments regarding subcontracting, the monitoring of the contract and the impact on small providers. I would be happy to report back to the Committee on progress with the procurement before the budget is finalised.

Thank you for your comments regarding the budget briefing proposals. I also note your concerns on the vagueness of some of the milestones and actions within the Corporate Plan. This is being addressed and I look forward to briefing the Committee on the draft plan in February.

I hope the above gives you and the Committee Members more clarity on the information requested, and I would like to thank you for your comments.

Yours sincerely

**Councillor Lynda Thorne  
Cabinet Member for Communities, Housing & Neighbourhood Renewal**

**PLEASE REPLY TO:** Cabinet Support Office, Room 529, County Hall,  
Atlantic Wharf, Cardiff CF10 4UW  
Tel (029) 2087 2598 Fax (029) 2087 2599



Date: 2 December 2013



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Councillor Ralph Cook,  
Deputy Leader  
Cardiff Council, County Hall  
Cardiff  
CF10 4UW

Dear Councillor Cook,

### **POLICY REVIEW & PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 26 November 2013 Redeployment Policy**

Many thanks for coming to the Policy Review and Performance Scrutiny Committee to discuss potential revisions to the Council's Redeployment Policy. We noted your comment that discussions with Trade Union representatives and others are ongoing, and that the report may not be presented to Cabinet on 9<sup>th</sup> December 2013, as originally envisaged. We welcomed the opportunity to consider the potential changes at an early stage. Members of the Committee acknowledge that given the challenging financial situation which the Council is facing, and the likelihood that compulsory redundancies will be unavoidable in future, there is a need to address the terms of the Policy.

During the meeting, Members were clear that if the redeployment period is reduced from 6 months to 12 weeks, as seems likely, then opportunities for training must be available. We noted that there is likely to be an external focus on signposting towards ADAPT and ReAct II support, and welcome this activity, as well as the work with partners such as the University Health Board to investigate external redeployment opportunities. We recommend that this is widened to include other bodies such as Universities and the private sector. We also strongly recommend that the Policy should ensure that originating directorate managers and Human Resources proactively identify training opportunities for members of staff under threat of, or already facing, redeployment. The Committee also recommends that time spent on training courses should be discounted from the redeployment period if possible.

Given the high number of employees currently in the redeployment pool (61 as compared to 25 twelve months ago), the Committee shared the concern that levels of resourcing in the current Redeployment team and Panel may be insufficient to handle future demand. In order to ensure that sufficient pastoral support can be given to those staff facing redeployment, we would hope that this is addressed within the approaching budget round or through appropriate allocation of tasks within Human Resources.

Members questioned the implications of the Council's move towards alternative delivery mechanisms for services, and how these would relate to the implementation



of the policy in the future. The Committee asks that these issues be explored and further information provided if possible.

Members were concerned that with increasing numbers of officers entering redeployment and potentially leaving the organisation, this may have a significant impact on the Council's corporate memory. We recommend that more consideration should be given to appropriate workforce planning across the Council, identifying skill sets which the Council is likely to need in future to ensure that we do not lose valuable skills or knowledge. Directorate business planning may be an appropriate vehicle.

The Committee requested a number of pieces of further information during the meeting, in order to have a clearer understanding of the ramifications of these potential changes, set out below:

- The number of temporary staff, and their percentage as a total of the establishment, with 4 years continuous local government service;
- The number of temporary staff, and their percentage as a total of the establishment, with 4 year years continuous service with Cardiff Council;
- The number of staff currently at each stage of the redeployment process, and the same figures for 12 months ago;
- The number of officers who have refused offers of reasonable employment;
- Confirmation of Trade Union comments about the potential changes.

Many thanks again for your engagement with the Committee on this matter; we would appreciate your response on the points raised above.

Yours sincerely,



**COUNCILLOR NIGEL HOWELLS**  
**CHAIR, POLICY REVIEW AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

cc Christine Salter, Interim Head of Paid Service  
Philip Lenz, Chief Human Resources Officer  
Lynne David, Centre of Expertise Manager  
Cabinet Office  
Members of the Policy Review & Performance Scrutiny Committee

**DEPUTY LEADER'S OFFICE**

My Ref: EM26187

Your Ref:

Date: 12th December 2013

Cllr Nigel Howells  
Chair of Policy Review & performance Scrutiny  
Cardiff County Council  
Atlantic Wharf  
Cardiff  
CF10 4UW



County Hall  
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Dear Nigel

**RE: PRAP 26<sup>th</sup> November 2013 – Redeployment Policy**

Thank you for your letter of 2 December 2013 regarding the redeployment policy.

I can confirm that the redeployment policy will now be considered by Cabinet on 16<sup>th</sup> December and a copy of your recommendations will be included within the report for consideration.

I have asked officers to prepare the information that you requested relating to numbers of temporary staff, number of staff at various stages of the process, number of staff who have refused a reasonable offer and union feedback to the changes. This information will be sent to you as soon as it has all been collated.

Yours sincerely



**Councillor Ralph Cook**  
**DEPUTY LEADER**



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

Date: 04 December 2013



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Councillor Russell Goodway  
Cabinet Member Finance & Economic Development  
Cardiff Council, County Hall  
Cardiff  
CF10 4UW

Dear Councillor Goodway,

**POLICY REVIEW AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
26 November 2013**

On behalf of the Committee, thank you for attending the meeting of the Policy Review and Performance Scrutiny Committee which considered the Council's updated Budget Strategy and Directorate Budget briefings. Committee Members have appreciated the approach which has been taken by you and your officers this year in working with all the Committees to prepare for the scrutiny of the 2014/15 budget proposals. As the Committee noted when it considered the Month 3 budget monitoring position and the Provisional Welsh Government Settlement, the Council faces a very difficult financial situation in the coming years and we welcome the opportunity to continue to work with you as detailed proposals develop.

The Committee had some comments resulting from the meeting, which are set out below.

**Budget Strategy update**

- Members were concerned that as a Council we should aim to learn from England's experience, where local government has been hit by budget reductions much faster than we have in Wales. We noted your comment that work is being carried out to learn from how English Councils have coped with falling budgets and we would like to receive further details if possible.
- With regards to your comments that the Council may have to consider raising Council Tax next year, we would support any moves by you to establish with the Minister the definitive Welsh Government approach to any cap on Council Tax rises. The Committee also queried whether any rise in Council Tax would result in a decrease in the level of savings required from directorates and noted that you could not confirm that this was the case at this point.

**Resources Directorate**

- Members noted that many sources of savings are being considered, including shared services, collaboration and income generation through CardiffWorks, and the Fleet service and the Occupational Health Service.





- Members would like to receive a copy of the KPMG report mentioned regarding Welsh procurement, as it may be useful background information for an item we may have scheduled for our 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 meeting.

### **Corporate Management**

- Members queried during the meeting whether recruitment to the vacant Head of Cabinet Office post would recommence. We noted your comment that this will be subject to discussion with the new Chief Executive, but that the decision had already been taken to delete the Corporate Director Operations post. Members query why different approaches have been taken.
- We would be grateful for a breakdown of expenditure against the Corporate Initiatives budget to date this year, and confirmation that this has been topped up via reserves in the current year. Members were concerned that this kind of action should be as transparent as possible.
- Please also provide a breakdown of the Precepts, Levies and Contributions section of this budget.

### **Economic Development Directorate**

- Members noted that the major drivers for savings in this directorate are income generation and the reduction in consultancy spend, although there are also likely to be losses of posts.
- Members commented during the meeting that the transfer of the Council's Property Budget to the Economic Development Directorate would seem to be subsidising this budget, despite its high (50%) savings target.
- We recommend that further thought should be given to achieving sponsorship income in this Directorate, and were concerned that it is predicted that the income of a major attraction such as the Doctor Who Experience will fall short of the value of the loan to build the venue.
- The Committee were glad to hear that an asset management paving report will go to Cabinet in January with a more detailed report in March. We hope that you will engage with the Committee at the appropriate point and ask that officers work with Scrutiny Services to arrange this.

Finally, during its correspondence item later in the meeting, the Committee noted that there are a few letters written to you in recent months to which there are outstanding responses. We would be grateful if you would address them. Many thanks again for attending the meeting.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nigel Howells', with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke extending to the right.

**COUNCILLOR NIGEL HOWELLS  
CHAIR, POLICY REVIEW AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

cc Christine Salter, Interim Head of Paid Service  
Marcia Sinfield, Interim Section 151 Officer  
Neil Hanratty, Economic Development Director  
Cabinet Office  
Members of the Policy Review & Performance Scrutiny Committee



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

Date: 4 December 2013



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Councillor Ralph Cook,  
Deputy Leader  
Cardiff Council, County Hall  
Cardiff  
CF10 4UW

Dear Councillor Cook,

### **POLICY REVIEW & PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 26 November 2013 Budget briefings**

On behalf of the Committee, please accept my thanks to you and your officers for the budget briefing sessions which you gave the Committee in order to help prepare for scrutiny of the 2014/15 budget proposals. Members noted that there were some inconsistencies in the information available for each directorate, but overall have found the briefings very useful in gaining a deeper understanding of the context in which the proposals are being developed. We hope that this is something that we can continue to receive in future years and welcome the approach that has been taken to supporting the Committees in their budget scrutiny.

#### **County Clerk and Monitoring Officer Directorate**

In terms of the County Clerk and Monitoring Officer's directorate, the Committee noted that she has been asked to develop savings proposal totalling 38% of her budget and that in particular income opportunities are being explored for Scrutiny Services. Members also queried at the meeting whether the additional budget given to Scrutiny Services in last year's budget round is likely to form a savings proposal this year. Members emphasised that the Cabinet Member for Finance and Economic Development stated last year that this budget would not be 'chipped away' in future years.

Members also noted that the Communications review is currently being commissioned. The Committee would like to engage in this process, so would be grateful to be kept informed as it progresses.

The Committee also requested a breakdown of the Members' expenses expenditure section, to identify expenses vs. allowances, and the Member training budget. I would be grateful if this could be provided in time to aid the budget scrutiny.



Thank you again for attending the meeting.

Yours sincerely,



**COUNCILLOR NIGEL HOWELLS**  
**CHAIR, POLICY REVIEW AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

cc Christine Salter, Interim Head of Paid Service  
Marie Rosenthal, Monitoring Officer  
Marcia Sinfield, Interim Section 151 Officer  
Cabinet Office  
Members of the Policy Review & Performance Scrutiny Committee