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CORRESPONDENCE FOLLOWING THE COMMITTEE MEETING

Committee POLICY REVIEW AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date and Time of Meeting WEDNESDAY, 16 MAY 2018, 4.30 PM

Please find below correspondence send by the Committee Chair following the meeting, together with any responses received.

For any further details, please contact scrutinyviewpoints@cardiff.gov.uk

10 **Correspondence Following Committee Meeting** (Pages 3 - 14)

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

Date: 23 May 2018

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



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Dear Councillor Goodway,

Policy Review & Performance Scrutiny Committee: 18 April 2017

Thank you for attending the Policy Review and Performance Scrutiny Committee last week to facilitate policy development scrutiny of proposals to commercially develop the Central Transport Service (CTS). I would be grateful if you would also pass on our appreciation to Tara King and her team for the presentation, and for assisting with members' inquiries. We discussed your proposals, and the Committee has requested that I pass on the following comments and observations to inform the Cabinet's consideration of CTS and the best way to proceed.

Proposed new model

The Committee noted the progress made since the centralisation of transport services, however the approach has not fully utilised the capacity for commercial growth and efficiency savings that exist within the service. We note the administration's political decision to retain these services in house and that in June there will be news of a new proposal to test a public - private partnership approach, with one or a number of external organisations.

We note your view that an external commercial partner has the potential to make improvements to the service and that there are a wide range of issues to be evaluated in taking such a decision. Whilst with this approach a level of existing commercial risk will be transferred to a commercial partner, you are clearly aware that a new partnership can bring new risks to the authority.

Budget implications

Members were interested to hear that you have central sight of the overall costs to the Council of vehicle maintenance and note that they are increasing. We therefore understand your proposal that budgets for vehicle maintenance should sit within service areas, as you believe that this would provide greater accountability with vehicle usage clearly within service area cost control.

We note your view that some service areas are more forthcoming than others in co-operating to optimise vehicle usage, and that team behaviours can sometimes be an obstacle to maximising the potential for savings. You stated that when service areas are challenged they often offer reasons why some vehicles are not fully utilised.

Having clarified that the £8.6m budget for the vehicle maintenance service includes Council related internal service overheads, we commented that having budgets located in service areas provides the option of service areas looking elsewhere for vehicle maintenance services where they believe they are feasible and cost effective.

The Committee considers that budgets need to factor in depreciation and the cost of replacement at the end of a vehicles lifespan.

Exploring all markets/ opportunities

The Committee wishes to stress that, if the Council decides to retain a central transport service, it must engage in better market planning and targeting.

Specifically, targeted exploration of opportunities for commercial partnerships or agreements, to make full use of the facilities. Some members believe there is an opportunity to increase the marketing of MOT's, particularly to staff and councillors.

Evaluating success

The Committee considers it important that your proposals for a public –private partnership approach to the commercialisation of CTS includes a clear indication of how you will measure success. We note your view that the criteria for doing so might include the reduction of risk, and a share in any profits.

To re-cap, following policy development scrutiny, the Committee

- concurs that it is worth exploring engagement with an external commercial partner to improve efficiency and reduce costs noting that a level of existing commercial risk will be transferred to a commercial partner, and that the new partnership could bring new risks to the Council.
- understands your proposal that budgets for vehicle maintenance should sit within service areas as this will provide greater accountability.
- considers it important that budgets factor in overhead costs such as depreciation and the cost of replacement at the end of a vehicle's lifespan
- encourages you to engage in market planning and targeting to make full use of the facilities.

As this was policy development scrutiny, we will not expect a response at this stage. We will, however, maintain an interest in progress in forward work programming. Once again, on behalf of the Committee, please pass my sincere thanks to all who attended PRAP Scrutiny Committee for the consideration of the Central Transport Service.

Yours sincerely,



COUNCILLOR DAVID WALKER CHAIR, POLICY REVIEW AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

cc Members of the Policy Review & Performance Scrutiny Committee.
Tara King, Assistant Director Commercial and Collaboration
David Lowe, Operations Manager,
Joanne Watkins, Cabinet Office Manager.
Alison Taylor, Cabinet Support Officer.

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Date: 22 May 2018



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

Dear Councillor Weaver,

Policy Review & Performance Scrutiny Committee: 16 May 2018

On behalf of the Policy Review and Performance Scrutiny Committee thank you for attending Committee to facilitate policy development scrutiny of the Workforce Strategy 2018-21. Please pass on our sincere thanks to Philip Lenz and Tracy Thomas for their full presentation of the five pillars of the strategy. The Members wish to pass on the following comments and observations.

A framework to improve performance and customer service

The Committee notes the strategy is a framework built around five pillars (*equalities and diversity, workforce planning, learning and development, engagement of employees and trade unions, and health and wellbeing*). This framework is designed to deliver an holistic approach to workforce planning and is one we would expect to see in any organisation. However we were very pleased to hear that it aims to strengthen the links between business, financial and workforce planning, with an intended outcome of improving performance and thereby customer service. The Committee has recently completed its own review of customer leadership within the Council and you are aware of our recommendations. It is hoped you will take them into account as you refine the workforce strategy and as service areas embark upon the action planning that will follow.

Members noted the new workforce planning toolkit for use by service areas. We are however keen to establish how the detail collected from applying the toolkit, across all service areas, then collated and reviewed on an annual basis, will address the challenges faced. We feel the strategy should clearly identify the workforce issues and problems the Council is facing that the strategy will be designed to address.

We are unclear as to what the strategy will tell us about the recruitment and retention of staff, and whether there are visible gaps across the organisation where it is proving difficult to recruit and retain staff. Members are of the view that this should be clear in the strategy.

The Committee considers it is important that the Council workforce reflects the community it serves, and it must therefore prepare to serve the increasing number of Welsh speakers, particularly in the context of Welsh Government targets for one million Welsh speakers by 2050. We therefore endorse your engagement with Welsh medium schools and the increased language training on offer to all staff.

Collating and using the data

We accept that the new workforce strategy will be a mix of consolidating existing approaches and introducing new ones. For example, proactive initiatives such as introducing corporate traineeships to address the surprising fact that only 4% of the Council's workforce is made up of young people under the age of 25.

The Committee is pleased to hear that service areas have bought in to the requirement for workforce planning, the application of the workforce toolkit and the requirement that they assess the impact of all external factors. Whilst we note that the resulting service area owned data, produced by those familiar with their directorate delivery plans, will be collated by the human resources directorate, and used to develop the strategy, we are concerned that such analysis will require significant resources. We note the intention that such analysis will be achieved by human resources and service areas working together. Members heard that this service area data exists and would welcome sight of it.

The Committee understands the challenge you face in collating accurate data on disability and the natural caution around drawing attention to one's disability. We believe staff require reassurance that such data will not be shared. Collecting such data is considered essential in enabling the Council to collate an accurate profile of disability across the workforce and most importantly, where the strategy needs to improve.

Building a loyal workforce

The Committee is firmly of the opinion that a key outcome of the workforce strategy under development should be building a loyal workforce and attracting talent, and as such made the following observations.

Members note that the Employee Survey forms a part of the framework for employee engagement. We do not necessarily consider this a good quality engagement process. Officers were clear there is often a deficiency in frontline response to the staff survey and we take the view that surveys do not need to be paper based. Our view is that staff may be more willing to engage at team meetings. We note your intention to hold an annual engagement event for employees led by Cabinet and the Chief Executive and to review the format of the employee survey to ensure harder to reach groups have accessible means to respond.

The Committee is keen that the Council should maximise the use of its assets such as the Castle and St Davids Hall for the benefit of staff. Access to such venues is a staff benefit worthy of support. Similarly, the Council's promotion of agile working and a management focus on outcomes rather than presentism is something the Committee will be interested in evaluating in due course.

Members endorsed the Council's re-joining of the Stonewall Cymru network. We consider this a positive move and, as with agile working and wider staff benefits, we would encourage the use of the Stonewall brand and other employee networks (*BME, Carers, Disability, LGBT, Women's network*) in all job advertisements.

Importance of action planning

Finally, returning to the importance of the action plans that will sit beneath the Workforce Strategy. The Committee would welcome sight of the action plans and the final strategy and look forward to monitoring what is achieved six months on from its implementation.

To recap, in developing the workforce strategy the Committee:

- refers you to the recommendations of its Customer Leadership inquiry, as you refine the workforce strategy;

- considers the strategy should clearly identify the workforce problems the Council is facing;
- considers clarity is needed as to whether there are visible gaps across the organisation where it is proving difficult to recruit and retain staff;
- believes it is important that the Council workforce reflects the community it serves, and we must therefore prepare to serve the increasing numbers of Welsh speakers
- is concerned that analysing service area data to develop the strategy will require significant resources;
- would welcome sight of the service area data that exists on which to develop the workforce strategy;
- believes staff require reassurance that disability data will not be shared, but will enable the Council to collate an accurate profile to inform the strategy.
- considers staff may be more willing to engage in workforce planning at team meetings;
- would like assets such as the Castle and St Davids Hall to be used as a benefit to attract and retain staff;
- similarly, the Council's promotion of agile working be used as a benefit to attract and retain staff;
- endorses the Council's re-joining of the Stonewall Cymru network and encourages the use of the Stonewall brand and other employee networks (BME, Carers, Disability, LGBT, Women's network) in all job advertisements;
- Would welcome sight of the action plans and the final strategy;
- looks forward to monitoring what is achieved six months on from its implementation.

Once again, on behalf of the Committee, please pass my sincere thanks to all who attended PRAP Scrutiny Committee to assist us in consideration of the Workforce Strategy.

Yours sincerely,



COUNCILLOR DAVID WALKER
CHAIR, POLICY REVIEW AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

cc Members of the Policy Review & Performance Scrutiny Committee
Philip Lenz, Chief Human Resources Officer
Tracey Thomas, HR People Partner
Joanne Watkins, Cabinet Office Manager
Heather Warren, Cabinet Support Officer.

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Fy Nghyf / My Ref: CM39700

Dyddiad / Date: 7th June 2018

Councillor David Walker
County Hall
Atlantic Wharf
Cardiff
CF10 4UW

Annwyl/Dear Councillor Walker

PRAP Scrutiny Committee - Workforce Strategy

Thank you for your letter of 22nd May 2018 and the opportunity to present to committee on 16th May 2018. Your comments both on the day and in your letter are welcomed and have been incorporated into the Workforce Strategy that will be presented to Cabinet on 5th July 2018.

Your suggestion for a focus on Customer Leadership has been included in the actions within the Learning and Development section of the Workforce Strategy, including a development programme developed in conjunction with Customer Service colleagues to support the requirements as set out in your paper.

Concerning the setting out of workforce issues the Council is facing, the Strategy sets out in the introductory sections the challenges being faced by the Council and therefore its workforce. However it does also recognise the good work which has been done to date across the organisation and identifies that unless we continue with this and in many instances develop new initiatives, then these challenges could become issues in the future.

As for visible gaps in the organisation where it is difficult to recruit and retain staff, some of these issues are already known and actions have been taken for some roles such as social workers. In other cases, these challenges will be identified through the service area workforce planning process and therefore actions included in those service area action plans to mitigate, where possible, against this.

ATEBWCH I / PLEASE REPLY TO :

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The Committee's concerns regarding the resources required to support the workforce planning process are noted and will be monitored.

Your comments regarding employee surveys forming part of the framework for employee engagement are noted. The intention is that employee engagement would be far wider than a survey and consideration is currently taking place regarding what any employee survey would consist of, and, in agreement with yourselves, we do not think that any survey necessarily needs to be paper based.

As part of that engagement agenda, the role of agile working in our workforce and the use of softer benefits as described in your letter will be considered.

The need to review our recruitment processes and 'advertise' some of our equality commitments including the use of branding have been included in the Strategy through the action of reviewing our recruitment processes to ensure they do not create any barriers.

With reference to monitoring of the Workforce Strategy, I would like to suggest that I meet the Chair of PRAP in January 2019 to show the Chair an example of a completed Workforce Plan in practice. I believe going through an example of it in practice - which the Chair can share with the Committee - would give the Chair and Committee the best information to decide how the Committee practically want to scrutinise the directorate workforce plans.

I hope the above is of assistance.

Yn gywir
Yours sincerely



Cynghorydd / Councillor Chris Weaver
Aelod Cabinet dros Gyllid, Moderneiddio a Pherfformiad
Cabinet Member for Finance, Modernisation & Performance