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GOHEBIAETH YN DILYN CYFARFOD Y PWYLLGOR

Pwyllgor PWYLLGOR CRAFFU ADOLYGU POLISI A CHRAFFU PERFFORMIAD

Dyddiad ac amser y cyfarfod DYDD MERCHER, 8 MAI 2019, 4.30 PM

Gweler isod gohebiaeth anfon gan Gadeirydd y Pwyllgor ar ôl y cyfarfod , ynghyd ag unrhyw ymatebion a gafwyd

Am unrhyw fanylion pellach, cysylltwch â scrutinyviewpoints@caerdydd.gov.uk

10 **Gohebiaeth yn dilyn Cyfarfod y Pwyllgor** (*Tudalennau 3 - 14*)

Mae'r dudalen hon yn wag yn fwriadol

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

Date: 05 June 2019



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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: 8 May 2019

As Chair of the Policy Review and Performance Scrutiny Committee, thank you for attending Committee to update Members on the progress being made with the Bilingual Cardiff Strategy Action Plan which had been drafted to enable Cardiff to play its part in achieving the vision of the Welsh Government to have a million Welsh speakers by 2050.

Members would also like to thank Ffion Gruffudd the Operational Manager of Bilingual Cardiff for her clear presentation. We offer the following comments and observations for your consideration as you progress the Bilingual Cardiff Strategy Action Plan.

The Committee acknowledged that the Bilingual Cardiff Action Plan was actually a major change programme and that the Bilingual Cardiff team considered themselves in a good position to successfully deliver the action plan. The effective delivery of the existing action plan was acknowledged by the Welsh Language Commissioner who had indicated that the changes that had been made were “already plain to be seen”. It was identified that clear governance arrangements needed to be put into in place but those partners essential to achieving the expected outcomes had already agreed the draft action plan and were committed to realising its objectives. However, there were some concerns that the duty for Welsh Language Standards which provided the basis for the draft Bilingual Cardiff Action plan was primarily the responsibility of Cardiff Council. Monitoring the action plan would be undertaken at quarterly meetings with partners, but ensuring everyone continued to support the Authority in the achievement of the action plan would still be a significant challenge.

The committee queried the introduction and development of a bilingual school in Plasdwr. It was suggested that the introduction of bi-lingual schools could be a dilution of the Welsh language in education. It was explained that the proposal in the Plasdwr development would be to provide Welsh Medium Education and English Medium Education with a heavy use of Welsh. Having a bilingual school provided an opportunity for parents living in the new development to have their children attend a school where Welsh is spoken from the outset. This also prevented any adverse demand impact on nearby Welsh and English medium schools and would provide some stability in terms of the number of school places. That would not be the case if a single language school was established. However, with the growth of the Plasdwr development it was anticipated that other schools would be opened which would then enable the provision of Welsh and English medium schools.

The committee acknowledged the achievements that had already been made with the current action plan and the variety of activities being delivered through the medium of Welsh. The aim of developing bilingual young people during their educational years was seen as positive. However, there were challenges regarding the transition points between primary and secondary schools and again into the workplace where opportunities to maintain the use of the Welsh outside of the school gates were more difficult to locate, deliver and maintain. An example of this was that there was not a Welsh Language Youth Centre in Cardiff to support the use of the Welsh language for young people outside of the educational environment. Members requested further information on the establishment of the Youth Centre which it was allocated funding in this year's budget.

Another challenge was measuring the overall use of the Welsh language, to enable the investment being made in Welsh education to be professionally assessed.

The committee welcomed the recruitment of a Welsh tutor to continue the increase of Welsh speakers within the Authority and the introduction of Welsh word of the day to encourage the use of Welsh in the day to day business of the authority.

The committee asked whether difficulties were experienced for those seeking employment with mathematics or science based roles when taught in Welsh

particularly when looking for employment outside of Wales. The subjective view expressed was that people learned in their own language and this should not be seen as a barrier to employment. Whether employers see the matter differently was not clear and we suggested that this be investigated further.

Members expressed concerns that the procurement of software and other facilities necessary to achieve the Welsh Language Standard was constrained by the reduced pool of providers and services able to meet the demands of these requirements. The committee was informed of some positive outcomes that have been achieved including the provision of a bilingual Next Bike service.

It was acknowledged that there were challenges with bilingual computer services. One such challenge is the potential provision of “chatbot” for customer services enquiries. This matter is presently being addressed in Wales in consultation with Microsoft.

Overall, the Bilingual Cardiff Strategy Action Plan was reported as providing positive outcomes and that, as part of the ongoing monitoring of the progress of the strategy, it was agreed that this item be reviewed next year in accordance with the requirement for ongoing scrutiny including monitoring the outcomes achieved against the plans submitted and approved.

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

Once again, on behalf of the Committee, my sincere thanks for attending the PRAP Scrutiny Committee.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Walker', written in a cursive style.

**COUNCILLOR DAVID WALKER
CHAIR, POLICY REVIEW AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Cc: Members of the Policy Review & Performance Scrutiny Committee.
Councillor Huw Thomas - Leader of the Council and Portfolio holder.
Ffion Gruffudd the Operational Manager of Bilingual Cardiff
Cabinet Support Team

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

Date: 07 June 2019

Councillor Russell Goodway,
Cabinet Member for Investment and Development
County Hall,
Cardiff
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Dear Russell,

Policy Review & Performance Scrutiny Committee: 8 May 2019

As Chair of the Policy Review and Performance Scrutiny Committee, I would like to thank you for attending Committee and providing the opportunity for Members to contribute their initial views to assist in the development of the Corporate Property Strategy 2020 -2025.

Members would also like to thank Helen Thomas, Head of Property for her presentation and the additional support provided by Matthew Seymour, Principal Asset Manager. We offer the following comments and observations for your consideration and response as you develop the Corporate Property Strategy 2020 - 2025.

The committee acknowledged that the current Property Strategy had assisted property users in gaining a better understanding of the needs of their services and future requirements. As a result of the property team being better resourced, a greater understanding of the condition of properties, their utilisation, running costs and value to the organisation has started to be achieved. This combined with improved professional and commercial advice has enabled property services to deliver the full range of transactions. The role of the service had also become a driver for change due to consolidation of services, supported by the Corporate Landlord model and the improved governance arrangements of the Asset Management Board.

The committee queried if the debate on the allocation of responsibilities for the education property portfolio had been resolved. It was explained that an agreement

was in place with the Director of Education and that his department would have a significant input into the property specifications but that the Corporate Landlord would also have a role in the identification of potential sites for schools. You were frank in describing this arrangement as 'a fudge'. A small group of Cabinet members will review the schools' operational plan every 6 weeks to monitor the situation. The committee will trust that this arrangement, which may not have satisfied all parties, is kept under review.

One of the aims identified in the report was to address the silo mentality of the council. It was indicated that the involvement of external public sector colleagues such as the police service had led to them looking to rationalise their estate and identify opportunities to co-locate with others for the mutual benefit of a wide group of public service providers. This in turn was challenging council service areas to think creatively in terms of their needs and accommodation requirements along with opportunities to collaborate internally as well as externally rather than to operate in isolation.

However, it was stated that the level of effort required to address this issue should not be underestimated and it was suggested that the use of the asset Management Board could assist in this task.

It was reported that Strategic Estates was being challenged to maximise its income from investment properties in order to fund the Economic Development service and the general revenue fund. The council was also being challenged to support social projects by subsidising the rents of some properties. The committee queried who was making these types of decisions and whether clear criteria and parameters had been developed and were being used. If they do exist, which was unclear, the committee will wish to examine them.

It was noted that there were natural tensions in balancing the entrepreneurial requirements of the council and financing its wellbeing agenda but that such tensions should be resolved using clear guidelines and agreed priorities.

The Committee requested clarification on the decision making process used to develop or dispose of properties or to use them to meet new alternative needs, sometimes with a social benefit. It was explained that assessment of the use, costs

and value of all council property was being undertaken to ensure all options are considered and appropriate decisions taken.

The collaborative arrangements with other public sector bodies currently relate to surplus properties but the property service could consider opportunities for co-location. These potentially complex arrangements would need careful assessment to ensure that appropriate value and benefits were achieved. Benevolence to other public bodies would not normally be justifiable and any benefits of a collaborative arrangement would be based on the council seeking equality of outcome value or benefit.

The committee raised questions regarding the authority's liability in respect of community asset transfer should a property fall into disrepair with residual risk in terms of Health and Safety and sustainability. It was stated that the council should undertake due diligence to ensure the acquiring organisation has the capability to meet the liabilities and financial expectations placed on them. A review of Community Asset Transfer policy could provide opportunities for communities and the council, provided that the model proposed contained the proper safeguards.

In summary, this letter refers to the need for reviews, policies and guidelines in a number of areas. If these already exist could your colleagues please let Nicola have copies? If they have yet to be drafted, the committee suggests that further clarification in the form of policies and guidelines be prepared and would wish to scrutinise them in due course. These include:

- A property policy statement indicating how service areas could break free of silos by sharing property with other service areas or public sector bodies.
- Guidelines on how income from property transactions can be used.
- A policy statement on how the Council intends to collaborate with other public sector bodies in terms of property use and ownership.
- A review of where the Council stands on Community Asset Transfer taking into account the experience of other LAs and best practice guidelines.
- A review, a year from its starting point, of the effectiveness of the compromise arrangements put in place to manage the schools' estate.

Finally, as Councillors, Members have considerable experience of accessing the Council's frontline services, and we urge you to engage with all Members and utilise their expertise to assist in the development of services and that the Committee's involvement during the development of the new strategy be continued.

Once again, on behalf of the Committee, my sincere thanks for attending the PRAP Scrutiny Committee.

Yours sincerely,

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

COUNCILLOR DAVID WALKER
CHAIR, POLICY REVIEW AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Cc: Members of the Policy Review & Performance Scrutiny Committee.
Helen Thomas, Head of Property
Matthew Seymour, Principal Asset Manager
Cabinet Support Team

Date: 07 June 2019



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

Policy Review & Performance Scrutiny Committee: 8 May 2019

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Yours sincerely,

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

**COUNCILLOR DAVID WALKER
CHAIR, POLICY REVIEW AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

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

Mae'r dudalen hon yn wag yn fwriadol