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## CORRESPONDENCE FOLLOWING THE COMMITTEE MEETING

**Committee** ECONOMY & CULTURE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

**Date and Time of Meeting** TUESDAY, 18 FEBRUARY 2020, 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](mailto:scrutinyviewpoints@cardiff.gov.uk)

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

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My Ref: T: Scrutiny/Correspondence/Cllr NH

Date: 19 February 2020



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

Dear Councillor Weaver,

## **Economy & Culture Scrutiny Committee: 18 February 2020**

On behalf of the Economy & Culture Scrutiny Committee, please accept Members' thanks for attending, along with Cabinet colleagues and officers, for our scrutiny of the draft Corporate Plan 2020-2023 and Budgetary Proposals. Members have asked that I pass on the following comments and observations.

### **Corporate Plan 2020 – 2023**

Members are pleased to note that several of the points raised by Scrutiny Chairs and the Policy Review & Performance Panel Members, at their recent meeting to consider the draft Corporate Plan, have been taken on board, including points relating to Tourism, Innovation & Workshops, Adult Community Learning and the Shared Regulatory Services.

### **Overall Budget**

Members note the following points in particular:

- That the Financial Resilience Mechanism contains £478,000 for use in Parks and Sports this year
- That you believe the use of £750,000 reserves to be appropriate and prudent and that it comes from an earmarked reserve
- That savings proposals have been subject to strong due diligence checks, with £1M already achieved and the remainder expected to be achieved in year.
- That, over the course of this year, you will review the use of a Budget Contingency Fund and determine whether one is required for 2021-2022; this

process will be informed by a review of trends in the deliverability of savings and Welsh Government settlements.

Members welcome your confidence in the deliverability of savings and look forward to monitoring this over the coming year.

### **Into Work Services**

Members note that this service now falls within your portfolio and are pleased to see the interface with Adult Community Learning referenced in the Corporate Plan.

### **Economic Directorate**

Members wish to pass on their thanks to Councillor Thomas, Councillor Bradbury, Councillor Goodway, Neil Hanratty, Jon Day and Steve Morris for attending.

With regard to City Deal, Members note the delivery of projects outlined by Councillor Thomas and the need to ensure that there is effective scrutiny of these. Members are pleased that Councillor Thomas will feedback our concerns about the existing scrutiny arrangements for City Deal. We also note his support for this Committee undertaking appropriate scrutiny of the City Deal; this is something we are interested in and intend to explore in more detail during our work programming. We wish to avoid duplication of scrutiny and to ensure that any scrutiny we undertake is constructive and will look to engage with Councillor Thomas and officers when scoping proposed scrutiny.

With regard to the income raising proposals, Members note that the New Theatre income is due to rental income and that the Cardiff Castle income will come from new products stocked in the shop. There was discussion about whether the income target for St David's Hall was stretching enough; Members wish to monitor achievability of this over the year.

With regard to monies to increase the tree canopy of Cardiff, Members are pleased that a programme will start and would like to receive regular updates on progress with this, as offered at the meeting; these would be shared with the Environmental Scrutiny Committee, which naturally has an interest in this matter.

Members discussed Line EC7 – Relocation of the Tourist Information Centre from Old Library to St David’s Hall. Members expressed their concerns about this proposal, in terms of both the impact on service provision and the impact on existing staff at St David’s Hall. In terms of service provision, Members were informed that staff at St David’s Hall will signpost tourists to online information. Members do not believe that this will meet the needs of visitors to Cardiff, not all of whom may be comfortable with using online services. It is also important to have people who are able to promote Cardiff effectively and who have the knowledge and skills to offer a good tourist information service to visitors, which is more than providing good customer service. Members believe it is essential that the staff at St David’s Hall receive appropriate training to enable them to take on this role, which is in addition to their existing duties. Members are currently undertaking an Inquiry into Tourism in Cardiff and will explore this service change further as part of this work.

Members note that the savings coming from the Dr Who experience building (Line E3) relates to cessation of security costs and rates.

Members note that, overall, the Economic Development Directorate is losing 16.15 FTE posts, one of which is due to their role no longer being required as it relates to EU funding. Members note Neil Hanratty’s response that the posts are spread across the Directorate and that this should help to spread the impact but that losing this number of posts will still be felt. We note these concerns but also the assurance that the ambitious programme in this area can still be delivered.

## **Communities & Housing**

Members wish to thank Councillor Merry, Councillor Thorne and Jane Thomas for attending committee.

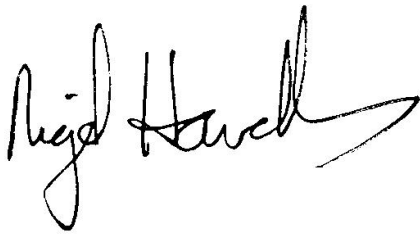
With regard to Adult Community Learning, Members thank Councillor Merry for highlighting that Learning for Life courses are self-sustaining and that Learning for Work courses, funded by Welsh Government, are expected to have a 50% cut, possibly higher, in funding following the recent Wales-wide review. Members note that it is not yet clear whether this review is part of a broader review of Further Education strategies and approaches, which could ameliorate the impact. However, on the evidence currently available, Members are concerned about the impact of a

50% cut on adults who wish to increase their literacy, numeracy and other core skills. We are also concerned about the ripple effect this would have on their children and/or extended families, who would benefit from their adults increasing their skills. Members have previously given their support to the Council's representation to Welsh Government regarding the need for appropriate levels of funding for Adult Community Learning in Cardiff; please let me know if this Committee can be of any support in future negotiations with Welsh Government. We note that a service review is underway and that a report will be brought for scrutiny consideration, prior to decision.

With regard to Libraries and Hubs, Members note that room hire charges generated approximately £100,000 per annum. Our next item considered the proposed Hub & Library Strategy and Library Collections Policy and I am writing separately to Councillor Thorne on these proposals.

Thank you once again for your attendance at Committee. I would be grateful if you would consider the above comments and work with the relevant Cabinet portfolio holders to provide a response to this letter.

Yours sincerely,



**COUNCILLOR NIGEL HOWELLS**  
**CHAIR, ECONOMY & CULTURE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

cc      Members of the Economy & Culture Scrutiny Committee  
Cllr Thomas   Cllr Bradbury   Cllr Goodway   Cllr Merry   Cllr Thorne  
Chris Lee   Ian Allwood  
Neil Hanratty   Jon Day   Steve Morris  
Jane Thomas  
Cabinet Support Office   Rita Rohman   Liz Patterson   Clair James

Cyf/My Ref::CM43110

Eich Cyf/Your Ref:: T: Scrutiny/Correspondence/Cllr NH

Dyddiad/Date: 20 February 2020

Councillor Nigel Howells  
Chairperson Economy & Culture Scrutiny Committee  
City of Cardiff Council  
County Hall  
Cardiff  
CF10 4UW

Dear Nigel

### **Economy & Culture Scrutiny Committee : 18 February 2020**

Thank you for your letter dated 19 February 2020 and the useful comments raised. I can assure you that Cabinet was able to reflect on the points raised prior to our meeting on 20 February 2020.

May I thank you firstly as a Committee Chair for your participation in the recent Performance Panel, where the Steps, KPIs and Targets included in the Corporate Plan 2020/23 were considered in some detail. I believe this process has helped strengthen the Corporate Plan as well as our wider planning arrangements. A response to the issues raised has been shared with the Policy Review and Performance Scrutiny Committee following their consideration of the Corporate Plan.

Your Committee's interest in the City Deal arrangements is welcomed and I will liaise with Cllr Thomas and officers to ensure that the Committee's concerns are raised with City Deal representatives and consideration is given to how these issues can be addressed.

I welcome the Committee's interest in the income performance for St David's Hall and officers will provide you with a monitoring update of the performance throughout the financial year 2020/21.

I am pleased that we will share progress on the tree canopy of Cardiff with this Committee and Environmental Scrutiny Committee over the forthcoming months.

I believe that the proposed service changes in respect of the Tourist Information Centre will be effective and as noted at the meeting, I agree that training of staff covered by the new arrangements will be key. I also welcome the Committee's wider inquiry into Tourism in Cardiff.

#### **GWEITHIO DROS GAERDYDD, GWEITHIO DROS OCH CHI**

Mae'r Cynghor yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg, Saesneg neu'n ddwyieithog. Byddiwn yn cyfathrebu â chi yn ôl eich dewis, dim ond i chi roi gwybod i ni pa un sydd well gennych. Ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

#### **WORKING FOR CARDIFF, WORKING FOR YOU**

The Council welcomes correspondence in Welsh, English or bilingually. We will ensure that we communicate with you in the language of your choice, as long as you let us know which you prefer. Corresponding in Welsh will not lead to delay.

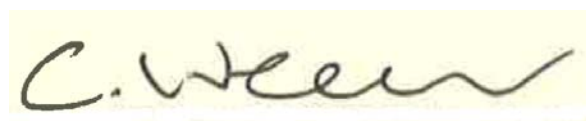


The relocation of the Tourism Information Centre from the Old Library to St. David's Hall is based on the provision of additional information and signposting within St. David's Hall reception area. This will all be supported by an improved Visit Cardiff digital platform which had a soft launch earlier this year and provides more detailed information for visitors. The core Tourism Information Centre will continue to be provided at Cardiff Castle and staff at St. David's Hall will signpost visitors there for more specific visitor enquiries. It is not intended that St. David's Hall staff will take on the same roles as Tourist Information officers but initial training will be provided to ensure they are comfortable with undertaking a limited signposting role.

Your concerns regarding the cut to the Adult Community Learning grant are noted. A robust response was made to the Welsh Government during their consultation on this issue and the impact that it could have on the citizens of Cardiff was fully set out. Unfortunately these comments did not result in a change to the approach. I thank the Committee for the offer of assistance in future representations to the Welsh Government, should this be required. Once the service review is complete, these proposals will of course be made available to the Committee for consideration.

I hope that this letter capture all the points raised in your letter and thank you again for your support in the budget process.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink on a yellow rectangular background. The signature appears to be 'C. Weaver' in a cursive, flowing script.

**Y Cyngorydd/Councillor Christopher Weaver**  
**Aelod Cabinet dros Gyllid, Moderneiddio a Pherfformiad/Cabinet member for**  
**Finance, Modernisation & Performance**

cc    Members of the Economy & Culture Scrutiny Committee  
      Cllr Thomas  
      Cllr Bradbury  
      Cllr Goodway  
      Cllr Merry  
      Cllr Thorne  
      Chris Lee  
      Ian Allwood  
      Neil Hanratty  
      Jon Day  
      Steve Morris  
      Jane Thomas  
      Cabinet Support Office  
      Rita Rohman  
      Liz Williams  
      Clair James



Date: 19 February 2020

Councillor Lynda Thorne  
Cabinet Member, Housing and Communities  
Cardiff Council,  
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Dear Councillor Thorne,

### **Economy & Culture Scrutiny Committee: 18 February 2020**

Members have asked that I pass on their thanks to you, Jane Thomas and Nicola Pitman for attending committee and providing a comprehensive and interesting presentation detailing the Hub & Library Strategy and Library Collection Policy.

Overall, Members are supportive of both of these proposals and commend them to Cabinet. It is obvious a lot of thought and effort has gone into fine-tuning proposals to ensure they maximise benefits for citizens of Cardiff.

In terms of specifics, Members note the following:

- Publication of an approved Hub & Library Strategy will mean that the Council will meet all the Core Entitlements set out in the Welsh Public Library Standards
- The Council is querying the relevance for Cardiff of the two quality indicators that are not met in full, namely staff qualified to degree level and the level of spend on books; discussions are being held with Welsh Government on these.
- Work by Inclusion Officers based in Hubs aims to ensure that social activities are maximised and that those offered in the Hubs do not duplicate existing activities.
- The service is hoping to recoup, from Transport for Wales, some of the costs of assisting residents to apply for bus passes.

Members are particularly struck by the work undertaken by the Money Advice teams; we receive positive feedback from our residents about the helpfulness of this service. We also wish to commend the service area for their work in promoting a Dementia Friendly service, in tackling social isolation across the age range and in working with schools and other agencies to promote hubs and libraries as inclusive, welcoming spaces. We will certainly take on board the comments at the meeting to encourage our residents to utilise the many services available at hubs and libraries.

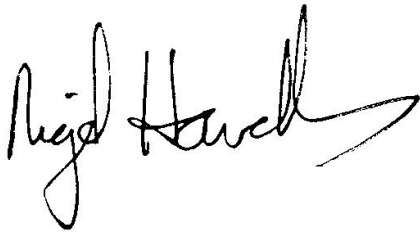
Thank you for your update on work regarding provision at the Cardiff Royal Infirmary; it is pleasing to hear that progress is being made. As raised at the meeting, I believe it would be useful and appropriate for Members of the surrounding wards to be briefed on this progress and look forward to this being arranged.

With regard to the Library Collections Policy, Members are content with the proposed approach and are interested to receive an update on progress in 12 months; we will recommend this be included in this committee's work programme for 2020-21.

Members were also interested to hear your comments about the potential impact on welfare benefits in cases where Rent Smart Wales obtains Landlord Control Orders; this is an area that falls within the remit of the Community & Adult Services Scrutiny Committee and I will ensure the Chair is made aware of this area of concern.

Thank you again for enabling pre-decision scrutiny of this report to Cabinet.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nigel Howells', with a stylized flourish at the end.

**COUNCILLOR NIGEL HOWELLS**  
**CHAIR, ECONOMY & CULTURE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

cc     Members of the Economy & Culture Scrutiny Committee  
       Jane Thomas  
       Nicola Pitman  
       Elizabeth Williams