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## CORRESPONDENCE FOLLOWING THE COMMITTEE MEETING

**Committee** ECONOMY & CULTURE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

**Date and Time of Meeting** MONDAY, 21 FEBRUARY 2022, 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)

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

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My Ref: T: Scrutiny/Correspondence/Cllr NH



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Date: 22 February 2022

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

Dear Councillor Weaver,

## **Economy & Culture Scrutiny Committee: 21 February 2022**

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 2022-2025 and Budgetary Proposals. Members have asked that I pass on the following comments and observations, which are set out to mirror the structure of the meeting.

### **Corporate Plan 2022 – 2025**

Members looked at the proposed steps, measures, and targets in the areas of the Corporate Plan relevant to our terms of reference. Members were pleased to note that the Corporate Plan now includes reference to Regional Sports Partnerships, as recommended by the Scrutiny Performance Panel, which includes the Chairs of all the scrutiny committees.

### **Overall Budget**

Members note the following points in particular:

- That it is felt to be sensible and prudent to retain a £2M Contingency Fund
- That evidence-based judgements, based on costs tracking and modelling, are used to inform the quantum of pressures and realignments required and that these are continually tracked, with reports brought to Cabinet and Council
- That the budget contains other resilience mechanisms to give comfort that the Council will be able to cope with currently unknown pressures

- That processes are in place to monitor slippage and overspends in the capital programme, starting with a firmer business case process and including regular communication with Directorates, monitoring and tracking of costs and supply issues, challenge sessions with Directorates, and reporting via the Governance and Audit Committee.

Members also discussed the disappointing response rate to the Budget Consultation, with 1,547 responses compared to 2,870 last year. Members note the intention for the new Citizen Engagement Strategy to include budget consultation as well as consultation with young people and were pleased to hear your support for the need to improve both these elements. At the meeting, Members highlighted the need to work with secondary school children to inform them about local democracy, rather than rely on surveys alone. Members suggest that the Citizen Engagement Strategy include actions to work with secondary schools to provide Year 11 students with interactive sessions on local democracy and citizenship, including how they can engage.

### **Into Work Services**

Members wish to thank Helen Evans for attending committee alongside you for this section.

Members note that an additional £398,000 is allocated to Into Work services this year, via the Financial Resilience Mechanism, which gives comfort services can continue to be provided this year as the EU funding ceases following Brexit.

At the meeting, Members raised the possibility of linking the Onsite Construction Academy with the Indoor Arena project, to provide work experience, apprenticeships and jobs. Members are pleased to note that this is in hand and that officers are looking for every opportunity to work with developers across the city. Members welcome the news that a Social Value Officer is to be employed to boost this work, ensuring community benefits are maximised and that local people get local jobs.

### **Adult Community Learning**

Members wish to thank Councillor Merry and Helen Evans for attending committee for this section.

Members were pleased to hear that the Welsh Government has not cut the Community Learning grant this year, albeit that a cut is expected in future years. Members note the service, having prepared for a cut, will now be able to provide additional courses. Members also note there is funding for digital learning courses to be expanded.

### **Cardiff Commitment**

Members wish to thank Councillor Merry, Helen Evans and Suzanne Scarlett for attending committee for this section.

Members were pleased to note the additional four posts for this work and note that these posts go across the Economic Development and Education directorates, working collaboratively and with partners, including Into Work services, to extend the reach of Cardiff Commitment into growth sectors such as Creative Industries, Advanced Materials Manufacturing, Financial Services and Construction, as well as providing for a wider range of students, including those with Additional Learning Needs and those Educated Other Than At School (EOTAS).

### **Communities & Housing**

Members wish to thank Councillor Thorne, Helen Evans, and Rebecca Hooper for attending committee for this section.

Members note Capital Programme Line 31 - £250,00 for neighbourhood, district, and local centre regeneration - will be spent on projects in Tudor Street, Cowbridge Road East, and then projects in Adamsdown and Roath, including Broadway, Clifton Street and City Road, with the proposed District and Local Centre Strategy used to identify further priorities. Members were interested to understand how lessons learnt from earlier projects, such as unexpected costs arising when improving shop frontages on older properties, have been built into these proposed projects, and note that future costings now include contingency for these and that other lessons arising will be assimilated into future plans, to ensure regeneration projects constantly improve.

Members sought clarification regarding savings line HAC E4 and note the digital efficiencies arise from the provision of self-scan stations in each hub, meaning some

staff were able to take voluntary redundancy, and that hybrid mail efficiencies arise from Willcox House and County Hall mailrooms aligning more efficiently in their use of hybrid mail.

### **Economic Directorate**

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

### **Councillor Thomas's portfolio**

Members note that detailed guidance regarding the UK Government's Shared Prosperity Fund is expected by Spring 2022. Members also note that the Corporate Joint Committee (CJS) has met to set its budget, as required, but that further work to resolve outstanding issues, such as tax issues, is required before the full City Deal remit is passported over to the CJC.

### **Councillor Bradbury's portfolio**

Members note the £250,000 one-off funding for lighting in Parks, via the Financial Resilience Mechanism. At the meeting, Members sought to understand how ongoing maintenance and running costs would be met, for example whether the Parks base budget would receive an uplift. Members note the response that individual business cases will be developed for each proposal, which will include how lifecycle costs will be met, and that it is hoped to use solar power for lighting wherever possible.

Members wish to reiterate the points made in our letter to Councillor Bradbury, dated 20 January 2022, following our scrutiny of this issue, namely the need for eco-friendly, biodiverse friendly lighting that is shaped by the principles set out at point 29 of the report to Cabinet (January 2022) and by the findings of work underway by lighting consultants to inform proposals for lighting for cycle superhighway 4.

During the meeting, there was discussion whether there should be a target for the Key Performance Indicators K5.3, K5.4 and K5.5, which focus on visitors to Cardiff. Having considered this issue further during our way forward discussions, Members **recommend** introducing informal targets for these indicators, set at pre-covid levels, which are reported to the Committee periodically over the next 12 months. To be

clear, this means the targets would not be included in the Corporate Plan but held at Directorate level.

Members discussed the need to boost the marketing and promotion of Cardiff's many attractions to maximise the value of visitors stays. Members appreciate many visitors will look at online digital platforms and that digital demand for tourist information is greatest. However, Members believe other channels should also be utilised and that visitors would benefit from posters advertising attractions as well as posters promoting how to access the digital platforms, to assist visitors not as digitally confident as others.

Members are pleased to note the additional five posts for Youth Physical Activity and Sport Inclusion officers and that these will be council staff who work closely with partners, including Sport Cardiff, Youth Services and Play services, helping to implement the Physical Activity and Sport Strategy. Members note these officers will be street-based, working flexible hours responding to local needs and targeting areas where the need is highest.

Members are pleased to note the additional four posts for community engagement and safety in parks officers and that these will be embedded in the park rangers service, one in the Urban Park Rangers team and three in the Community Park Rangers team. As Councillor Bradbury referenced in the meeting, this committee has long called for increased resources for the park rangers' teams, given their outstanding work in ensuring safe and biodiverse parks.

### **Councillor Goodway's portfolio**

Members sought clarification on the £105,000 policy growth for City Centre Management and note that it is for three new city steward posts, who will be council staff working with partners and other council teams, such as highways enforcement, to ensure the city centre is managed effectively and to assist the public.

Members note the four new posts for the Business Investment team, funded from policy growth, will work to access UK Government funding and other sources of funding, including private sector funds, to replace the EU funding no longer available.

Finally, as you referenced in the meeting, it became obvious during our meeting that the Committee did not have all the information it should have had to enable it to undertake budget scrutiny, for example, we did not have the detailed information on the uses of the Financial Resilience Mechanism or the Policy Growth areas, nor did we have the information relating to the Community Learning Grant. I believe it would be more straightforward and effective for corporate plan and budgetary proposals scrutiny to follow the model of other pre-decision scrutiny, with the full report to Cabinet plus appendices made available with committee papers. This would ensure scrutiny committee members received the same information as Cabinet and would make referencing information more straightforward for witnesses and members, as we would be using the same pack of information. I hope that this can be implemented for next year's scrutiny of the corporate plan and budgetary proposals.

**Recommendation to be monitored following this scrutiny:**

The Committee makes one formal recommendation, which is set out below.

As part of the response to this letter I would be grateful if you could state whether the recommendation is accepted, partially accepted, or not accepted and summarise the Cabinet's response. If the recommendation is accepted or partially accepted, I would also be grateful if you could identify the responsible officer and provide an action date. This will ensure that progress can be monitored as part of the approach agreed by Cabinet in December 2020.

<b>Recommendation</b>	Accepted, Partially Accepted or Not Accepted	Cabinet Response	Responsible Officer	Implementation Date
The Committee recommends that informal targets, set at pre-covid levels, be introduced for the Key Performance Indicators K5.3, K5.4 and K5.5, and reported to this Committee periodically over the next 12 months. To be clear, this means the targets would not be included in the Corporate Plan but held at Directorate level.				



Thank you once again for your attendance at Committee. I would be grateful if you would consider the above 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  
Eshaan Rajesh – Youth Council representative  
Group Leaders - Cllr Robson, Cllr Taylor, Cllr K Parry  
David Hugh Thomas – Chair, Governance & Audit Committee  
Cllr Merry Cllr Thorne Cllr Thomas Cllr Bradbury Cllr Goodway  
Chris Lee Ian Allwood Gill Brown  
Neil Hanratty Kathryn Richards Jon Day Jon Maidment Steve Morris  
Jane Thomas Helen Evans Rebecca Hooper Suzanne Scarlett  
Rita Rohman Christine Brain Clair James  
Cabinet Support Office Rita Rohman Clair James  
Chris Pyke Tim Gordon Jeremy Rhys

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Dyddiad/Date: 24 February 2022

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

Dear Nigel

### **Economy & Culture Scrutiny Committee : 21 February 2022**

Thank you for your letter dated 22 February 2022 and the useful comments raised. I can assure you that Cabinet was able to reflect on the points raised prior to our meeting on 24 February 2022.

As requested, please find attached at Appendix A, a response to the recommendation made by your Committee in respect of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for visitors to Cardiff. In summary, the recommendation is partially accepted, and we will monitor numbers closely, but this has to be set of the context of only now emerging from the pandemic.

In response to the issues raised on consultation, I noted in the meeting that the response rates from young people was disappointing and whilst clearly the pandemic constrained the ability to have face to face meetings, I have asked officers to consider and implement actions that deliver tangible improvements in this area going forward


I note your comments on the availability of some papers in respect of the budget scrutiny. Full details of proposals had been published in the Cabinet papers and as in previous years, the detail provided to Scrutiny was tailored to focus on areas within scope for the Committee. Whilst additional detail was shared with Scrutiny Committees that was not published in the Cabinet papers, I do acknowledge that more information on some aspects could have been better signposted, and I have asked the Corporate Director of Resources to reflect on the complexity and detail of the budget papers and consider any improvements that could be made to the process going forward.

The Committee's view on the opportunities to market the City as much as possible is noted and officers will ensure that all avenues are explored, including reaching those who may not have access to digital channels as the Committee noted.



I hope that this letter captures 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 background, reading "C. Weaver".

**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  
Eshaan Rajesh – Youth Council Representative  
Group Leaders - Cllr Robson, Cllr Taylor, Cllr K Parry  
David Hugh Thomas – Chair, Governance & Audit Committee  
Cllr Thomas  
Cllr Bradbury  
Cllr Goodway  
Cllr Merry  
Cllr Thorne  
Chris Lee  
Ian Allwood  
Gill Brown  
Neil Hanratty  
Kathryn Richards  
Jon Day  
Jon Maidment  
Steve Morris  
Jane Thomas  
Helen Evans  
Rebecca Hooper  
Suzanne Scarlett  
Cabinet Support Office  
Rita Rohman  
Chris Brain  
Clair James  
Chris Pyke  
Tim Gordon  
Jeremy Rhys

## Appendix A

Recommendation	Accepted, Partially Accepted or Not Accepted	Cabinet Response	Responsible Officer	Action Date
<p>The Committee recommends that informal targets, set at pre-covid levels, be introduced for the Key Performance Indicators K5.3 (The number of staying visitors), K5.4 (Total visitor numbers) and K5.5 (Total visitor days), and reported to this Committee periodically over the next 12 months. To be clear, this means the targets would not be included in the Corporate Plan but held at Directorate level</p>	<p>Recommendation Partially Accepted</p>	<p>As set out at the Committee, the Council has agreed to monitor the performance indicators, corporately and at directorate level. However, given the impact of Covid on the tourism sector and the prevailing level of uncertainty, setting targets at this juncture is considered to be premature.</p> <p>The Directorate will continue to monitor performance in the context of previous targets and the work being undertaken to progress Cardiff's post covid tourism strategy.</p>	<p>Jon Day</p>	<p>N/A</p> <p>Quarterly consideration of Corporate Plan Key Performance Indicators.</p>

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