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CORRESPONDENCE FOLLOWING THE COMMITTEE MEETING

Committee POLICY REVIEW AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date and Time of Meeting WEDNESDAY, 14 DECEMBER 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

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Date: 15 December 2022

Councillor Huw Thomas,
Leader,
Cardiff Council,
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Dear Huw,

PRAP Scrutiny Committee 14 December 2022: Race Equality Taskforce Response

Thank you for presenting the Council's response to the Race Equality Taskforce (RET) report to the Policy Review and Performance Scrutiny Committee yesterday. As Chair, I wish to pass on the appreciation of all Members of the Committee to yourself, and the officers, Sarah McGill, Gareth Newell, and Charlotte Amoss for supporting effective engagement with scrutiny. The Committee was pleased to hear that diversity is at the heart of the Council's future plans for public services, and very much enjoyed this report and presentation. I am passing on their comments and observations by each theme, as set out in the response.

Employment & Representative Workforce

Training

Members were clear that there are significant training implications within the response for all Council staff. Frontline staff particularly will need to be aware of race equality issues and feel confident in dealing with them. We note there is consequently a need to refresh the Council's equalities training to include elements on *unconscious bias* and *micro-aggressions*. We were pleased to hear that the BAME staff network has been an impressive advocate in informing the response, and as such they will continue to inform bespoke training for frontline staff. We note your intention to review what elements of equalities training should be made mandatory in future, and confirmation that the training offered to staff will be hybrid to maximise participation.

Members also highlighted a need for a bystander element to the training, assisting staff and members in how to handle incidents of racial discrimination viewed first

hand. Members offered a note of caution that the quality of providers of anti-racism training needs to be well researched.

Reporting procedures

The Committee is keen to establish that all staff are aware of the Council's zero tolerance approach to racial discrimination and understand reporting procedures should they encounter such incidents or behaviours. Whilst current arrangements for reporting discriminatory incidents are considered robust, and are supported by Human Resources policies, we note that at this stage you cannot assure us this is the case for incidents of racial discrimination. Officers acknowledged the important question is whether such incidents are reported, that mandatory training should address this, and that you anticipate an increase in referrals following training. Members welcomed your assurance that Council officers are duty bound to report racially motivated incidents through the proper channels. We concur that the monitoring of referrals from all parts of the organisation will be especially important.

Role models

The Committee has previously encouraged the Council to lead in the pursuit of ethnic minority role models for the city, by encouraging its own Operational Managers of ethnic minority groups to become ambassadors and mentors. We were therefore pleased that in addressing medium-long term career development opportunities for ethnic minority staff you are committed to taking a proposal to the Senior Managers Forum and the Cardiff Managers Forum; you will continue to work with the BAME staff network; and you subsequently plan to follow up the proposal with a communications campaign.

It is our view that there may be merit in creating a senior post with responsibility for equality and diversity. We concur with the officer view that equalities and diversity must be owned by all managers but welcome your offer to reflect on our suggestion.

Recording arrangements

The Committee heard that recording arrangements for monitoring discriminatory incidents witnessed by staff are not comprehensive at present. Whilst Police colleagues and the Community Safety Partnership have such recording arrangements in place, the Council's internal procedures are less clear. Members

asked where, for example, would a Councillor report a hate crime? Officers considered this would depend on where the complaint originates from. They also stressed the importance of analysing the intelligence gathered through such recording mechanisms. We are therefore seeking assurance that you will quickly establish appropriate recording arrangements.

Education and Young People

The Committee fully endorses the recommendations '*to support the diversification of the teaching workforce through a teaching assistant 'Step into Teaching Programme' (2.4); and 'increase representation of ethnic minority residents in school leadership through a school Governors entry programme (2.5)*. We consider it important that the leadership and staff within our schools are truly reflective of the communities they serve and provide role models that are culturally reflective of the school community. Members would, however, recommend that you analyse data further by different types of school – English-speaking, Welsh-speaking and special schools, and by geographic area, to understand where there are particular gaps.

Citizens Voice

The Committee was pleased to hear of your fresh, ongoing programme of work to improve consultation and engagement with minority communities who often fall into hard-to-reach categories. We note the work underway as part of the Participation Strategy to deliver a baseline assessment, collaborating with community groups and learning from partner bodies with existing access routes. It is comforting to hear that response levels from ethnic minority groups in some areas are beginning to mirror communities.

We note that Cardiff has signed up to the WLGA Diverse Council Declaration and an action plan is under development to deliver the Diverse Council Commitments. It is reassuring that the Council's Cabinet has already achieved a good level of diversity. We urge the Council to encourage member representation from minority groups

Health

Members were keen to establish whether the Council has explored with its Health and Police partners the matter of ensuring appropriately trained responders attend

mental health crisis incidents. We note that our partners recognise this is an issue that must be tackled, and that work is underway to offer a *sanctuary* safe space. Given the multidisciplinary working opportunity to deal with such incidents we urge you to discuss this matter further with the PSB. Similarly, we urge that you pick up with the PSB the issue of minority ethnic access to GP's. We are interested to know whether the health training on racial discrimination will extend to local GP surgeries.

The Committee was pleased to note you are working with Health colleagues to develop accurate data on the vulnerability to specific illnesses amongst ethnic minorities and will be appointing a community engagement officer for the Southern Arc of the city.

Criminal Justice

Members welcomed the roll out of Cultural Competency training by the Criminal Justice Board, supported by the Community Safety Partnership, and that minority communities themselves will assist in developing the training.

General Observations

The Committee is fully aware that racism can be ugly. We share your vision that Cardiff Council can lead by example and become an organisation and workplace that staff are proud to be a part of. We recognise that with the RET the Council set out to be an exemplar employer on this issue and have others follow our lead. Therefore, members consider we must promote and foster the right culture in the Council to allow difficult conversations that promote racial justice.

Members observed that Human Resources will be central to the arrangements put in place to ensure staff training, compliance and recording of incidents of racial discrimination. The Committee would therefore welcome at some point in the future to hear from HR and understand how racial discrimination procedures will link to existing arrangements for grievance procedures.

Once again, on behalf of the Committee, thank you for bringing the Race Equality Taskforce Response before the Committee. I commend your work to date. The Committee will retain a close interest in the Council's work on race equality and I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,



**COUNCILLOR JOEL WILLIAMS
CHAIR, POLICY REVIEW AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

cc Members of the Policy Review & Performance Scrutiny Committee.
Leaders of Opposition Parties – Adrian Robson, Rhys Taylor & Andrea Gibson
Sarah McGill, Corporate Director People & Communities
Gareth Newell, Head of Performance and Partnerships.
Charlotte Amoss, Senior Policy Officer.
Andrea Redmond, Committees Support Officer.
Gary Jones, Head of Democratic Services
Chris Pyke, OM Governance & Audit.
Tim Gordon, Head of Communications & External Relations.
Jeremy Rhys, Assistant Head of Communications and External Affairs.
Debi Said, Cabinet Support Officer.
Joanne Watkins, Cabinet Office Manager.

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