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SUPPLEMENTARY PAPERS

Committee	CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Date and Time of Meeting	TUESDAY, 28 FEBRUARY 2023, 5.00 PM
Venue	CR 4, COUNTY HALL - MULTI LOCATION MEETING
Membership	Councillor Bridgeman (Chair) Councillors Boes, Davies, Ferguson-Thorne, Hopkins, Joyce, Melbourne, Simmons and Singh

The following papers were marked 'to follow' on the agenda circulated previously

- 3 Minutes (13.12.22 & 16.01.23) (Pages 3 - 18)**
- 4 Draft Corporate Plan 2023 - 2026 & Draft Budgetary Proposals 2023 – 2024 (Presentation) (Pages 19 - 38)**

Davina Fiore

Director Governance & Legal Services

Date: Wednesday, 22 February 2023

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CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

13 DECEMBER 2022

Present: Councillor Bridgeman (Chairperson),
Councillors Boes, Davies, Ferguson-Thorne and Hopkins

Co-opted Members: Carol Cobert (Church in Wales Representative),
Bridgid Corr (Parent Governor Representative) and Celeste Lewis
(Parent Governor Representative)

29 : APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Patricia Arlotte (Roman Catholic Church Representative), Councillors Joyce, Melbourne and Simmons.

30 : DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct.

31 : COVID-19 RECOVERY IN SCHOOLS

The Chairperson welcomed Councillor Sarah Merry (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Education), Melanie Godfrey (Director of Education and Lifelong Learning), and Mike Tate (Assistant Director of Education and Lifelong Learning to the meeting). He also welcomed Patrick Brunnock (Headteacher, Corpus Christi RC High School), Claire Skidmore (Headteacher, Radyr Primary School) and Michelle Jones (Headteacher, Lansdowne Primary School).

The Chairperson invited Cllr Merry to make a statement, during which she referenced the long term impact of Covid-19 particular on disadvantaged pupils how have missed a range of experiences.

The Director of Education and Lifelong Learning referred to the changes in the handling and scrutinisation of data, the data now sits with schools and felt that the Committee would benefit from what the three Headteachers speak about their own schools.

The Committee were provided with a [presentation](#) by the Assistant Director, a copy which had been circulated with the agenda.

Members were asked to comment or raise questions on the information received. Those discussions are summarised as follows:

Members asked why, when disadvantaged pupils returned to school, their play was very physical and whether there is any information as to why this has happened. Members were advised that the information is mainly anecdotal however there has been an increase in the referrals for speech and language and communication, particularly in Years 3 and 4 which is related to the physical nature of play.

Members discussed covid anxiety leading to a lot of absences and sought clarification as to how widespread and persistent it still is. Members were advised that there are no specific figures however, when looking at persistent attendance below 50% our EOTAS team works specifically with them. The anxiety issues are surfacing when we look at the increase numbers of those young people who have elected to be educated at home; they are withdrawn by parents because of anxiety levels. Work is ongoing with those families to ensure those pupils are not forgotten.

With reference to EOTAS pupils Members sought clarification of the steps taken to encourage those pupils to go back to school. Officers explained that for some pupils, education other than at school is an appropriate education, and there would therefore be a range available outside of school but linked to schools provision. They will remain on the roll. There will be links to provision, maybe through ACT, CAVAC or various different sorts or provision. We are looking to build provision.

Members referred to attainment levels and queried with the difference in marking over the years and the assessment methods, are the figures comparable. Officers advised that it is not possible to use data for comparable reasons which is why individual schools data is not shared. It is used by schools to inform their self-evaluation.

In response to questions from Members, officers provided information about the level of support from Welsh Government (WG) during the pandemic; Headteachers came together extremely quickly to develop a consistent approach, WG quickly worked with Directors of Education to utilise some of the approaches in Cardiff. A consistent voice was provided for the Headteachers. Officers commended WG in terms of the grant funding provided – it was appropriate and it has added value to schools.

Members asked about attendance as most school attendance has decreased. Officers advised that intermittent attendance, a day a week or a week at a time and non attendance has significantly impacted the school attendance figures and moved the attendance figures down. Those that have attended well in the past have probably continued to attend. The importance of good attendance is a formal conversation that is had with parents, although at the present attendance is affected by the outbreaks of Strep and Scarlet Fever as parents are taking their children out of school and they do not want the impact of that before Christmas. Headteachers are trying to get parents to bring their children to school; in some classes there are only 11 and 12 pupils because of the current sickness levels. Families with more than one child are being told to isolate because one child is ill. Parents whose health conditions make them more vulnerable are also keeping children home as they do not want them bringing illness into the home.

Members queried whether there was any financial support going forward with attendance issues, bearing in mind Council budgets are tight. Members were advised that schools are working on cluster attendance policies that helps when breaking down the reasons for the non-attendance. The Association of Directors of Education across Wales are involved in a working group looking specifically at education and are sharing best practice so that there is a consistent approach across Wales.

Members discussed the impact of more viruses on children's education and asked whether there were any means of managing the anxiety of both the children and the

parents. One of the headteachers outlined to Members that it is not just a problem in Cardiff, it is all across Wales. As a group of headteachers they have arranged to share good practice but it is felt that it is going to be a big issue for the future.

Members noted the increase in referrals to speech and language therapists but wondered whether there was any whole school or whole cohort interventions that we are using. Members were provided with information about an assessment called WELCOM in nursery. It assess where the pupil is at with speech and language; 9 of 26 are at age appropriate. Training is being put in place for the teaching assistants, teachers and through the foundation phase. A lot of children coming to the school have communication difficulties.

Members queried the structure of the school day and whether the pandemic had changed this. One of the headteachers provided information about their introduction of 'well being time' throughout the school day – it was done during the pandemic. There was also more down time. This has continued, it is not structured, the children decide what they want to do, for example reading in the library, walking or running outside (Victoria Park or Thompson Park). There are more frequent movement breaks and more flexible timetabling.

Members asked about resourcing, whether WG recognise that there are ongoing resourcing challenges which are over and above schools operating normally, and whether is there any optimism that there may be some additional resourcing found, during what is still a difficult period. The Cabinet Member stressed the importance of investing in the education and wellbeing of our young children in this city. It is more important than ever whilst coming out of Covid. It is understood WG will prioritise spending for the Council as a Local Authority and hopefully invest in young people. The Director advised that there were ongoing and frequent conversations taking place between officers, WG officials, Councillor Merry and her fellow politicians; the settlement is still awaited. The point was made that it is not always about the money, but the terms and conditions in which it is received. It is also about how, as a City, the Council draws on all the resources in the City to put that help and support around schools.

Members noted that it is clear that the core purpose of assessment is rightly for schools to have the tools to intervene and support children and recognise their progress and so forth, but queried how WG is going to assess how the Welsh system is performing, particularly in light of all the disruption over the last few years. Officers advised that the direction of travel over the last 4 years has been a move away from high stakes data. Schools still have data available and they will use that to self-evaluate as well. There is also the new accountability framework and the responsibilities of different stakeholders within that framework. It is important to move away from the bar use of data and actually understanding what the data is telling us. There are wider conversations to be had and reported back to the Committee.

Members queried why if a child is late and misses registration why they are then marked as absent. Officers advised that there was an Attendance Policy which goes out to schools; it deals mainly with persistent absenteeism, an element of flexibility and discretion would be expected however, the headteacher would have knowledge of the families background. Officers did not believe it was a consistent practice. In

this particular instance Officers confirmed it would depend on the length of the absence, and the knowledge of the family's background.

Members made reference to teams still working in the Recovery Board, and asked how much longer it was like to continue and what other roles it has. The Director advised that across the authority there is wider integration which is important and needs to happen because of the impact of the pandemic. The Recovery Board will continue until it is no longer needed but its work is ever growing; it is not a finite board and will probably continue into the medium to longer term future to enable that wider and necessary integration of services.

Members referred to the increase in home learning since the pandemic and asked about what is done to ensure that the level of learning is consistent, or to get them back into school, and also an increase in counselling. Members were advised that those in elective home education (EHE) are tracked, work is undertaken with the families directly to encourage a return to education, again, there are a number of reasons for this, in particular the anxiety element. The Council does have a responsibility in terms of safeguarding to maintain contact and encourage reengagement. In terms of counselling, it was explained to Members that the increase in counselling was a national issue, hence the use of online services so that pupils can use those services rather than face to face counselling. It is also about ensuring that trained counsellors are available and like Children's Service with Social Workers, consideration is being given as to how different forms of practitioners within the Council can be used.

The [presentation](#) also provided Case Studies referred to by the Headteachers; Michelle Jones (Lansdowne Primary at page 23); Claire Skidmore (Radyr Primary at page 32); and Patrick Brunnock (Corpus Christi RC High School at page 38).

Members were asked to comment or raise questions on the information received. Those discussions are summarised as follows:

The Headteachers were asked about the well-being of staff, and Members were told that the huge anxiety level with pupils and parents and the safeguarding concerns were really the issue. It was an unprecedented time and staff were working 24 hours a day 7 days a week. They were effectively permanently "on call". They would be emailing and ringing families regularly, dropping off food parcels and knocking on doors so that they got sight of the children. It was a very difficult time. Members discussed the importance of supporting staff going forward.

Members commended the presentations by the Headteachers.

Members asked about the first hand contact with families and face to face contact and whether that contact from the relevant partners is happening as it should, and also noted that there was still a delay in the response to referrals. Members were advised by the Headteachers that care and support meetings and child protection conferences are still online and currently it is only if a family is persistent that they are happening face to face. Improvements still need to take place. An example of the delays in relation to referrals was provided, the neurodevelopmental pathways currently as a 30 month waiting list, as schools it is therefore important for us to look at what can be put in place to support those children during that period, but schools

do not have that level of specialism particularly if there is then a diagnosis of autism or ADHD, it does make it more difficult to support those children.

Members enquired whether there were areas that the headteachers felt that the Council had not done well and what areas did they think we should learn from to protect children's education should there be a similar situation in the future. Headteachers advised that it was a team effort, everyone was in it together. No one was personally making cuts or changes. No one could pre-empt what happened. Things were being dealt with on a daily basis. It was very fast paced. The communication was very strong.

In relation to the learning, Members were advised that there will be learning from the process, which will be evaluated, there is a lot to learn, there are positives, there are areas of development. I was unprecedented. Schools are constantly evolving and updating practices on the basis of what they have learned.

Members sought clarification surrounding staff exits, members were advised that some staff found returning to school difficult; they have seen the impact of Covid on their families. There are teachers who also cannot access support for their own children so have to consider their priorities.

Members asked about occupational therapy services in schools, and were advised there can be referrals and reports and support for individual cases but there is not focussed involvement in schools.

Members noted the importance of not stigmatising children and queried whether it had been raised as a concern and how was it best addressed. Members were advised by the Headteacher, Corpus Christi that the cohort of pupils he had were amazing, they took it on the chin, they did as they were told and the teachers were trusted with the assessed grades. Stigmatisation he could not really comment on, as his results were almost a straight line through the pandemic.

Members queried the challenges of online learning and were advised that those who taught the practical subjects more difficult, they are more hands on, but the other departments were brilliant. They were prepared and well resourced and made it fun. Primary schools are finding, as an example, that the use of online learning and digital learning means that they can provide more modern language education for their children.

Members referred to the lack of toilet facilities which had been referred to by the Headteacher, Corpus Christi which results in queues for the toilet as only 2 pupils were allowed in at any one time. Members were advised that funding has been and still is an issue particularly bearing in mind the funding that has been needed to support the pupils pastorally, for example well-being and inclusion, care, support and guidance. There were in excess of 100 safeguarding incidents in a term, that has not been taken into account in the schools budget.

Members referred to the mask mandate in schools and asked whether it impeded learning in any way. Members were advised that the masks were hated, it was difficulty to support children, particularly those language difficulties. Staff did not want to wear them, children were frightened of them. It was a huge challenge.

Members asked further about remote learning, it was noted that pupils missed teaching assistants, as they really make progress in the classroom, but overall, the online learning was a real success. Teachers and pupils were trained before they left school.

The Youth Council representative sought clarification about mixed ability classes and were advised that initially it was for years 7 and 8 and now year 9 has been added. It is going well, but they still set in Maths but across the rest of the school it is calm, there is good teaching.

As a result of a question, members were advised last year there was not a reduction in grades in Year 11. They all engaged with the online learning, there had been training and resources made available to all which helped.

The Chair thanked all for their attendance but particularly the Headteachers for their presentations which have been emotional and inspirational.

RESOLVED: That the Chairperson writes to the Cabinet Member on behalf of the Committee expressing their comments and observations captured during the way forward.

32 : SCHOOL ORGANISATION PLANNING TASK & FINISH GROUP REPORT

The Chair outlined his meeting with Councillor Hopkins and the SOP Team on 7 December to discuss the proposals relating to Moorland Early Years Unit and Replacement Flying Start: Procurement of Contractor for Construction ahead of its consideration at Cabinet on the 15 December.

He advised that their views and observations are set out in the report. He also referred to one query that was outstanding; whether any of the buildings earmarked for demolition in the proposal were listed. An update has now been received, none of them are earmarked for demolition or are listed.

RESOLVED: To note the comments and observations made by the Task & Finish Group, and that the Chairperson writes to the Cabinet Member on behalf of the Committee.

33 : COMMITTEE BUSINESS REPORT

Members were provided with a summary of the Committee's business and updated on the Correspondence received.

RESOLVED to:

- note the progress in relation to the Task & Finish Group and the EOTAS Inquiry Task & Finish Group;
- note the progress of those items distributed informally and the verbal updates
- approve the latest CYPSC Forward Work Programme for January to April 2023.

34 : URGENT ITEMS (IF ANY)

None

35 : WAY FORWARD

Members discussed the information received and identified a number of issues which the Chairman agreed would be included in the letters that would be sent, on behalf of the Committee, to the relevant Cabinet Members and Officers.

36 : DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting of the Committee is to be confirmed, although at the present time is due to be 21 February.

The meeting terminated at 7.50 pm

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CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

16 JANUARY 2023

Present: Councillor Bridgeman (Chairperson),
Councillors Boes, Davies, Ferguson-Thorne, Hopkins, Melbourne,
Simmons and Singh

Co-opted Members: Patricia Arlotte (Roman Catholic representative),
Carol Cobert (Church in Wales Representative) and Celeste Lewis
(Parent Governor Representative)

Emily Gao (Cardiff Youth Council)

37 : APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Joyce, Brigid Corr (Parent Governor Representative) and Councillor Simmons has advised that she would be late in attending the meeting.

The Chair gave a personal tribute to Dan Wilson, who passed away in December.

38 : DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest in accordance with the Members Code of Conduct were received.

39 : MINUTES

The minutes of the meetings held on 19 October 2022 and 14 November 2022 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairperson.

The minutes of the meeting held on the 13 December 2022 will be considered at the next meeting.

40 : CHILDREN'S SERVICES STRATEGY

The Chair advised the Committee that the item allowed Members to undertake pre-decision scrutiny in relation to the Children's Services strategy, covering the time frame 2023-26. The strategy covers progress to date, as well as how the Council and its partners will meet its main aims in the three key areas of focus: people; place; and practice.

The Chair welcomed Cllr Ashley Lister, Cabinet Member for Social Services, Children's; Sarah McGill, Corporate Director for People and Communities and Director of Social Services; and Deborah Driffield, Director of Children's Services.

The Chair invited Cllr Lister to make a statement, during which he outlined the vision behind the strategy and the challenges of budgetary pressures, case complexity, sufficiency of places, and social worker recruitment and retention.

Sarah McGill made a statement introducing the report, during which she told Members that the steps outlined in the strategy were practical, pragmatic and deliverable, and that the plans were based on evidence and data.

Deborah Driffield gave a presentation, during which she outlined the achievements during the course of the previous strategy and the challenges to be addressed by the new strategy. The workforce strategy sets out key principles and an implementation plan will be put in place with clear timelines. The commissioning strategy sets out how the Council will meet demands both corporately and with partners; and the accommodation strategy sets out the provision necessary to achieve the Council's aim of ensuring children's needs are met closer to home. An outline of staff recruitment and accommodation plans was provided.

Members were invited to ask questions and make comments, and the discussion is summarised below:

Members wished to know whether it was easier to recruit social work assistants than social workers. Officers advised that it was easier to recruit social work assistants and social care practitioners, and that a new qualification is being developed by Social Care Wales. Many applicants have a relevant degree and experience, and the Council trains them in placements before they go to university and become qualified social workers. There is anecdotal evidence that recruitment of social work assistants is becoming more difficult.

Members discussed lowering the required professional qualification for a social worker to a diploma. The view was expressed that the high level of qualification required was a disincentive to recruitment. Officers advised that the Council was developing a trusted adult model, where a skilled social care practitioner is assigned to each family and social workers move in and out of cases. A two-pronged career pathway for managers and expert social workers on the same pay scale is also being examined. Members were advised that there could be conversations with Welsh Government about conversion routes for people without relevant degrees. Conversion degrees with placements are available in England and it was difficult to see why they could not be offered in Wales. Work is also required on retention and ensuring social workers have safe caseloads. The number of people applying for social work degrees is falling and innovative solutions are required.

Members discussed the possibility of making employment with Cardiff Council more attractive to prospective social work recruits, by offering more leave and rest time in the week for physical activity or mindfulness. Officers advised that there had been pilot sessions with psychologists supporting social workers experiencing second-hand trauma and compassion fatigue, and the workforce strategy would examine employing psychologists. Social workers are encouraged to attend wellbeing sessions and to take breaks, work reasonable hours and take their leave. It was suggested that recruitment advertisements could advertise Cardiff's attractions as a place to live, and consideration be given to the reintroduction of a relocation fee.

Members were concerned that there was no possibility for people to be paid a fair salary while retraining as social workers. Members were advised that the Council wanted to make it as easy as possible for people to become social workers in order to attract a wide range of applicants. The Council is also concerned that there should be a level playing field for social worker recruitment across Wales.

Members wanted to know whether the Council had contact with Parents' Voices in Wales, which advocates for children with neurodiversities and learning disabilities. Members were advised that there was a recognition that there was more that could be done regarding children with complex needs and disabilities, including afterschool and summer holiday provision. Officers advised that they were unaware if that organisation was one the Council worked with, but would investigate.

Members expressed concern that it was difficult for the Council to compete with the salaries paid to social workers by agencies. Officers advised that a national approach to the use of agency staff was under consideration. The hope was expressed that consideration of the parallel career progression pathways could allow the Council to offer attractive salaries to agency social workers.

Members sought clarification on the North Yorkshire model. Officers advised that it was an accredited model developed in North Yorkshire, and was considered to fit well with the service provision in Cardiff. The Council has gone through a rigorous process to be accepted as a partner and be accredited by North Yorkshire.

Members wished to know whether the Council is looking at best practice in other places, and whether Cardiff has been used as best practice anywhere. Officers advised that best practice is shared across Wales. Cardiff is the hub for the drug and alcohol court pilot, and there has been interest in the Council's practice lead work and development of newly qualified social workers and social care practitioners.

Members sought information on the Council's partnership work with South Wales Police on knife crime. Officers advised that there was support across the public sector for the Community Safety Partnership and results were being seen from the focus on violent crime with police partners. There was a welcome reduction in the number of young people entering the criminal justice system, but it is important to ensure there are the appropriate interventions for when they come to the attention of Children's Services. The hope was expressed that a briefing on the safe model could be shared to make Members aware of the work being done to prevent criminal exploitation of young people.

Members sought clarification on whether the Covid pandemic was responsible for the rise in referrals and wellbeing assessments, and whether the numbers were now stabilising or declining. Officers confirmed that the increase was linked to the pandemic. There had not been a significant decrease immediately following the end of the pandemic, but numbers are now beginning to stabilise.

Members sought clarification on whether the figures for the number of vacancies contained in Appendix B of the report covered the time of the last Scrutiny meeting. Officers advised that at the time there were 20 Grade A experienced social worker posts that were vacant, and most of them are now covered by social work assistants or social work resource posts. Officers apologised for the way in which the information was presented in the Appendix.

Members sought information on whether there was a delivery plan and whether the Committee would be updated on progress. Officers confirmed that there was and that the Committee would be updated if desired.

Members sought information on the work of new statutory partnerships, particularly involving the LA and health boards, in relation to the closer to home strategy. Officers advised that there were examples of good practice, for example in the development of integrated services for children experiencing mental health issues, but there was more that needed to be done. Members were advised that there had been a lack of clarity until recently about what different services did, and that there had been significant work in developing that understanding and making progress in partnership working. Analysis has revealed significant duplication of effort and work is in progress to simplify arrangements and ensure the most effective use is made of limited capacity.

Members discussed the problem of recruiting foster carers and the lack of placements, and sought information on how it was hoped to overcome these issues. Members were advised that work was being done to recruit more inhouse foster carers and reduce reliance on independent foster agencies. The importance of having different options available for children becoming looked after is recognised. Officers advised that the management team had been restructured to allow a senior manager to spend more time on the fostering service. More detailed performance information is available and the Council has been successful in supporting younger children into inhouse foster care, although less so in finding inhouse provision for teenagers on the edge of care. Officers are confident there will be improvement in the statistics.

Members sought information on how the Council copes with the placing of unaccompanied children asylum seekers at very short notice by the Home Office. Officers advised that under the National Transfer Scheme the Council is given a quota of unaccompanied children asylum seekers, but that others arrive unannounced. There is a multi-agency arrangement in place and there is a facility for assessing the needs of young people and linking with other services. There is pressure on staff resource across the whole of Wales and additional training provision has been made by Welsh Government.

Members discussed whether it might be better sometimes to take more young people into care to break the intergenerational cycle of care dependency. Concern was expressed that if there was a focus on reducing numbers going into care, opportunities for helping individuals might be missed. The importance of treating cases individually was highlighted, as was that of keeping families together when it is safe to do so. It was noted that Cardiff University has complimented the Council on the When I'm Ready scheme. Confidence was expressed in the frontline work of staff and the management support for social workers. Officers stressed there was no pressure to comply with targets. The measure should be what is in the best interests of the child.

RESOLVED:

That the Chairperson writes to the Cabinet Member on behalf of the Committee expressing their comments and observations captured during the way forward.

41 : WELSH GOVERNMENT SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT GUIDANCE: A
FRAMEWORK FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

The Chair advised the Committee that the item provided members with a presentation by the Central South Education Consortium on the Welsh Government's School Improvement Guidance Framework for Evaluation, Improvement and Accountability, including an overview of the purpose and expectations arising from the new guidance, and a summary of the implications and accountability for schools, the Council and the consortium.

The Chair welcomed Cllr Merry, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Education; Melanie Godfrey, Director of Education and Lifelong Learning; and Geraint Lewis, Principal Improvement Officer for Cardiff Secondary and Special Schools, and Kate Rowlands, Principal Improvement Officer for Cardiff Primary and Special Schools, both from the Central South Education Consortium.

The Chair invited Geraint Louise and Kate Rowlands to make a presentation, during which they provided an overview and summary of the implications of, and major changes required by Welsh Government guidance; the role of governing bodies, LAs and consortia in accountability; the timeline for implementation; and planned CSC support.

The Chair invited Cllr Merry to make a statement, during which she expressed scepticism about the changes in terms of accountability and data.

The Chair invited Melanie Godfrey to make a statement, during which she emphasised the change in culture from accountability at LA level to support and collaboration with head teachers, and that accountability would lie less with the LA and more with school governing bodies and Estyn. The guidance sets out the roles and expectations for the LA, and the LA needs to develop a relevant scrutiny programme with the Committee.

Members were invited to ask questions and make comments, and the discussion is summarised below:

Members expressed the view that there was a lack of clarity in some aspects of the guidance, in particular around commonalities and comparisons between schools, public availability of outcomes, and data sources.

Members expressed concern about transparency and accountability in regard to governing bodies under the guidance.

RESOLVED:

To note the report.

42 : SCHOOL ORGANISATION PLANNING - ANNUAL REPORT ON INVESTMENT IN THE EDUCATION ESTATE

The Chair advised the Committee that the item provided Members with an update of progress in relation to school organisation planning.

The Chair welcomed Cllr Merry, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Education; Melanie Godfrey, Director of Education and Lifelong Learning; Richard Portas, Programme Director for School Organisation Programmes; Michelle Duddridge-

Friedl, Operational Manager, School Organisation Programme Strategy; Brett Andrewartha, Schools, Organisation Programme Planning Manager; and Jennie Hughes, Senior Achievement Leader, Inclusion.

The Chair invited Cllr Merry to make a statement, during which she gave a brief introduction to the report and invited feedback on its format.

Richard Godfrey gave a presentation, during which he gave an overview of progress in the SOP strategy, including the wider strategic context; funding streams; the Band B context; changes in the Sustainable Communities for Learning programme; Band B and LDP progress made; Band A and Band B spend 2022/23; asset renewal; planning of ALN places; independent/out of county placements; One Planet Cardiff progress; strategic planning considerations; growth in specialist placements; Sustainable Communities for Learning anticipated investment objectives; condition of assets; and next steps and engaging with stakeholders.

Members were invited to ask questions and make comments, and the discussion is summarised below:

Members sought clarification on the reasons for the work on the roof of the Court School, and officers advised that it was because it was unsafe.

Members suggested it would be useful to have more detailed information on the areas of the city where population was growing or falling. Officers advised that this was taken into account and correlated with the schools that are perceived as more popular in certain areas. New schools will have low numbers in the first instance as people go to trusted schools with established reputations. The Council looks at how many places will be needed in an area and how many children in an area are choosing local schools.

Members sought clarification on the reason for the increase in numbers of ALN children. Officers advised that it was not directly linked to population growth, but that there was a national increase in ALN populations, partly due to a higher number of children with certain disabilities surviving old enough to attend school. There has also been an increase in complexity of needs and demand for specialist provisioning. The presence of the National Children's Hospital for Wales in Cardiff attracts families of children with significant needs. In addition, there has been an increase in the number of children with mental health and emotional difficulties due to the special circumstances of recent years.

Members wished to know whether there were any predictions on how the Council would meet the clinical needs of children with ALN. Officers advised that the health board appoints a designated Educational Clinical Lead Officer. The Council is in discussion with special schools and therapy services about working collaboratively to further enhance services in schools.

RESOLVED:

That the Chairperson writes to the Cabinet Member on behalf of the Committee expressing their comments and observations captured during the way forward.

43 : BRIEFING REPORTS

The Chair advised the Committee that the item provided Members with an update on reports on: Children's Services Quarter 2 Performance 2023; and Childcare Sufficiency – 12-month update.

The Chair advised that Quarter 3 Performance will be provided to the Committee at the meeting in April.

44 : URGENT ITEMS (IF ANY)

No urgent items were received.

45 : WAY FORWARD

Members discussed the information received and identified a number of issues which the Chairman agreed would be included in the letters that would be sent, on behalf of the Committee, to the relevant Cabinet Members and Officers.

46 : DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting is to be confirmed.

The meeting terminated at 7.55 pm

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Cabinet 2023/24 Budget Proposals Scrutiny February 2023



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Corporate Plan Alignment



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- The Council's key strategy financial documents are framed by Capital Ambition and the Corporate Plan.



- This ensures resources are allocated in a way that supports the Council's priorities.
- Given the link between the Corporate Plan and wider Well-being goals, it helps ensure the Budget supports long-term sustainability - in line with the Council's duties under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.
- Detail on how the Council's Budget supports Corporate Plan Priorities is set out in Appendix 1 to the Budget Report



Current Year Context



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Directorate	£000
Corporate Management	(3,377)
Economic Development	1,646
Recycling & Neighbourhood	1,756
Education & Lifelong Learning	4,582
Housing, & Communities	(2,378)
Performance & Partnerships	(464)
Adult Services	(1,820)
Children's Services	6,577
Planning, Transport & Environment	(2)
Governance & Legal Services	620
Resources	(56)
Total Directorate Position	7,084
Capital Financing	(1,700)
General Contingency	(2,000)
Summary Revenue Account / Council Tax	(344)
Total Net Council Position	3,040

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- The Month 9 Monitoring Position is being presented to Cabinet on 2 March 2023
- The Monitoring Position continues to project an overspend of £3.040 million in the event of no further interventions by the end of the year.
- The summarises the Directorate Positions for Month 9



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Provisional Settlement Overview



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Provisional Settlement - Timing

- Provisional Settlement - issued 14 December 2022
- Final Settlement – anticipated post publication for Cabinet , pre Council
- Material changes not anticipated
- Changes (if there are any) anticipated to be managed by an adjustment to/ from Reserves
- Cabinet Recommendations would give authority to Section 151 Officer to issue a Budget Addendum to this effect.

Provisional Settlement – Content and Impact

- Cardiff increase is 9.0%, Welsh average is 7.9%
- Settlement is better than planned for (indicative was 3.5%)
- Comes with additional pressures – Real Living wage, pay increases, rising / high levels of inflation, need to manage the legacy of the pandemic (income impact).



Contents



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Resources Required	£000
Base Budget Brought Forward	743,746
Employee Costs	31,094
Price Inflation	27,126
Commitments, Realignment & Capital Financing	10,547
Demographic Pressures	7,651
GROSS PRESSURES	76,418
Impact on CTRS Budget of 3.95% Council Tax	1,383
Savings	(17,666)
Total Resources Required	803,881

Resources Available	£000
AEF	(593,592)
Council Tax – 2023/24 Tax Base and 2022/23 Rate	(200,856)
Council Tax (before impact on CTRS)	(7,933)
Use of Reserves	(1,500)
Total Resources Available	(803,881)

Red lines are the aspects of Budget Strategy that address the £24.216 million budget gap



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Gross Pressures - £76.418 million



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Pay Inflation £31.094m: Includes 2022/23 pay award shortfall, Updated LGPS and NI Rates, assumed awards for 2023/24 (6% NJC), Teachers per IWRPB recommendations plus a margin in recognition of ongoing industrial action

Price Inflation £27.126m: Includes energy price increases (£11.8m), Commissioned Care costs (£9.4m), Fire Levy (£2.4m), Fuel (£0.7m), Home to School Transport (£1.4m), plus ICT, Taxi costs (care), Member Remuneration, Butetown Tunnel

Commitments: £3.677m: Includes capital financing, painting of structures & maintenance of public realm, SRS pay contribution, vehicle replacement increase to Voluntary Redundancy budget

Realignments: £6.870m: A net figure comprising £16.780m realignments offset by release of £10m Covid-19 Budget

- **Realignments** - inflationary & demand pressure inherent in current year's monitoring position. Includes £8.120m Children's Services, £1.000m School Catering, £3.095m HTS Transport, £1.4m Out of County Ed. & £1.7m for Recycling and NS
- **£10m Covid-19 Budget** - created in 22/23 (fall out of WG C19 Hardship Fund). Has been important in managing pressure in 2022/23 - but combination of further recovery, realignments (above) and earmarked reserves - appropriate to release in 2023/24

Demographic Pressures (£7.651m): £3.975m Adult Social Services, £0.850m Out of County Education Placements and £2.826m schools



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Savings



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Savings	£000
Efficiency Savings	(10,090)
Corporate Savings and Measures	(3,000)
Reduction in Financial Resilience Mechanism	(1,800)
Service Change Proposals	(2,776)
TOTAL	(17,666)

Efficiency Savings	£000
Review of Staffing Arrangements	(3,385)
Reduction in Premises Cost	(197)
Reduction in External Spend	(2,813)
Increase in Income	(3,695)
TOTAL	(10,090)

Efficiency Savings

- Achieving the same output (or more) for less resource, with no significant impact on the resident / customer.

Corporate Savings and Measures

- £1m reduction in general contingency (from £2m to £1m)
- £1m reduction in Adult Services contingency (from £3m to £2m)
- £1m savings to corporate budgets – including CTRS and Insurance

Reduction in FRM

- Proposed to reduce the FRM by £1.8 million in 2023/24 – leaves £2m
- Reduction is specifically linked to minimising the impact of energy price increases that may prove to be temporary in nature.
- FRM will be reinstated if prices subside in 2024/25 and beyond
- One off use of FRM in 2023/24 (see further slide)

Service Change Proposals

- See next slide



Service Change Proposals - £2.776 million



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Dir.	Service Change	£000
ECD	Events Management – Reduce Support for Events	25
ECD	Saint David’s Hall Operating Model (reflects part year)	500
ECD	Cardiff White Water Operating Model (reflects part year)	50
RNS	Recycling Centres – reduce operating hours (one day)	60
EDU	Education – Regional Services	50
P&P	Reform of Third Sector Infrastructure Grant	65
H&C	Volunteers in Hubs and Libraries	90
ADU	Internal Supported Living – transition to Third Sector	300
CHD	New Trusted Adult Model	100
CHD	Future development of model to deliver residential – to manage the market and increased demand	549
ALL	Pay Award avoided through implementing above	137
TOTAL		1,926

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Dir.	Increase Fees and Charges	£000
ECD	Municipal Sports Pitch and Facility Provision in Parks	7
PTE	Bereavement	90
PTE	CPE – Parking Tariffs	447
PTE	Residents’ Permits	306
TOTAL		850



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Employee Implications of Budget



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Employee Implications of Budget	FTE
Voluntary Redundancy	50.9
Vacant Posts	55.3
Potential Transfer of Posts	48.2
Retirement / Flexi Retirement	1.5
TBC / Redeployment	22.5
Total FTE posts deleted	178.4
Total FTE posts created	(5.5)
Net FTE Reduction	172.9

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Consultation



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Aspect of 2023/24 Budget	Citywide Consultation Response
Protection of Schools Budget	73% agreement
<u>Income Proposals</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sports pitch fee increase Pay & Display fee increase Bereavement charges increase School Meal prices - 5% increase Parking permit increases (£24 first permit & £54 second) 	63% support 66% support 64% support 30% support (35% supported higher Increases, 35% supported no increase) 51% felt first permit about right level, 39% felt second about right level (43% felt second too high)
<u>Service Change Proposals Accepted</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New partner to run Saint David's Hall Cardiff International White Water One day closure of recycling centres Hubs – deletion of vacant posts & recruitment of volunteers 	59% support (26% against) 77% support (8% against) 46% support for closure, (40% for reduced opening hours) Highest support of 4 options (37%)
<u>Service Change Proposals Not Taken Forward</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hubs – reduced hours Hubs – one day closure Mobile operation of museum of Cardiff 	17% (compared with 37% above) 21% (compared with 37% above) 57% support (43% keep where it is)

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Ask Cardiff

- Budget Priority Question - 3,856 responses
- Top three priorities both short and long term were
 - School & Education including Youth Services
 - Supporting vulnerable children & families
 - Supporting vulnerable adults & older people
- Revenue Budget and Capital Programme support these areas

Citywide Consultation - 5,932 responses

- Built on findings of Ask Cardiff
- Ran between 23 Dec 2022 to 29 Jan 2023
- Measures included in the 2023/24 Budget are consistent with the outcomes of citywide consultation



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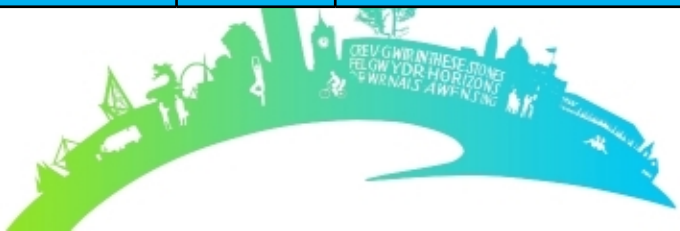
Financial Resilience Mechanism – One off Sums



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	£000	
Stronger	565	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £150k Youth Festivals • £75k Little Gigs talent contest for children and young people • £10k blood pressure monitor loan scheme • £100k Community Events • £100k Sport Development Grants • £130k Grassroots Music / Art
Fairer	715	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £100k Targeted youth work projects to create opportunities to enhance informal learning, • £100k Programme of internships for young people with additional learning needs • £130k Gender equality project to engage and empower young girls in Cardiff, • £165k in total to increase children’s access to leisure and recreation activities with priority for Children Looked After and those on the edge of care • £200k Neighbourhood and Community Regeneration • £20k for the Age Friendly Cardiff website and its promotion.
Greener	720	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £0.270 million for carbon reduction schemes • £50,000 One Planet youth and summit events • £0.300 million for the taxi clean air scheme • £50,000 to enhance cleansing education and enforcement • £50,000 to explore opportunities in relation to e-cargo bikes – last mile delivery.
TOTAL	2,000	



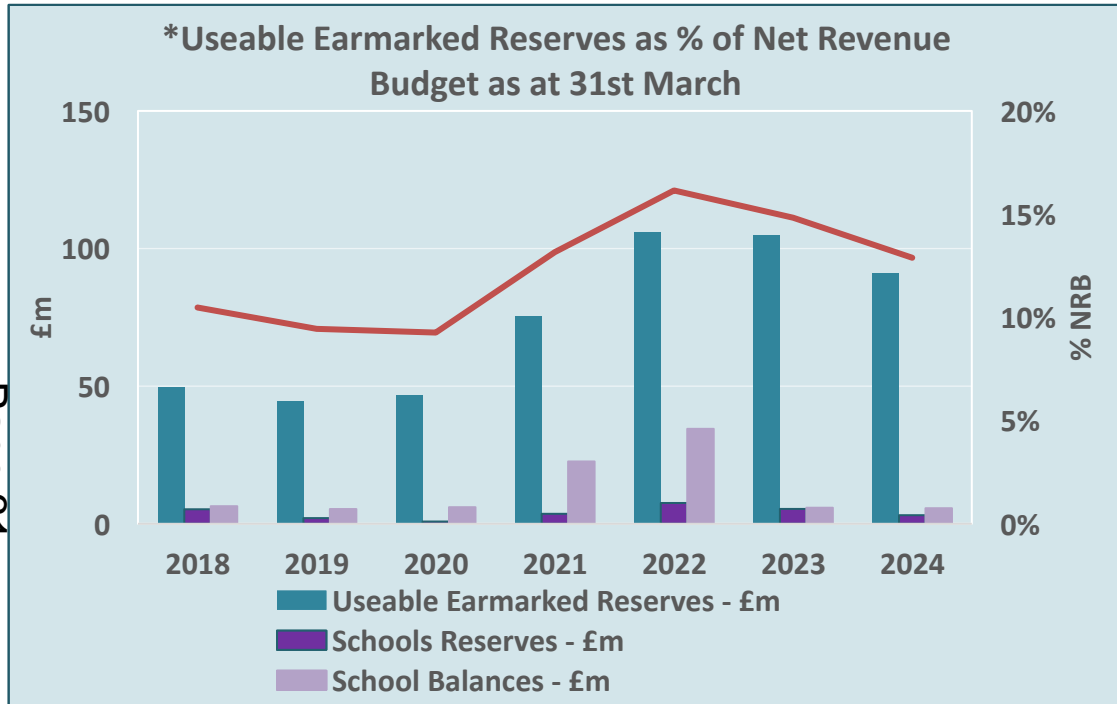
Reserves



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	Projection at 31 March 2023 £000	Projection at 31 March 2024 £000
General Fund Reserve	14,255	14,255
General Fund Earmarked Reserves	110,332	94,245
HRA General Reserves	10,200	10,450
HRA Earmarked Reserves	15,502	15,502

- The 2023/24 Budget assumes £1.5 million use of reserves as budget funding
- The S151 officer is content that the level of reserves is sufficient to enable this drawdown and remains adequate to March 2024.



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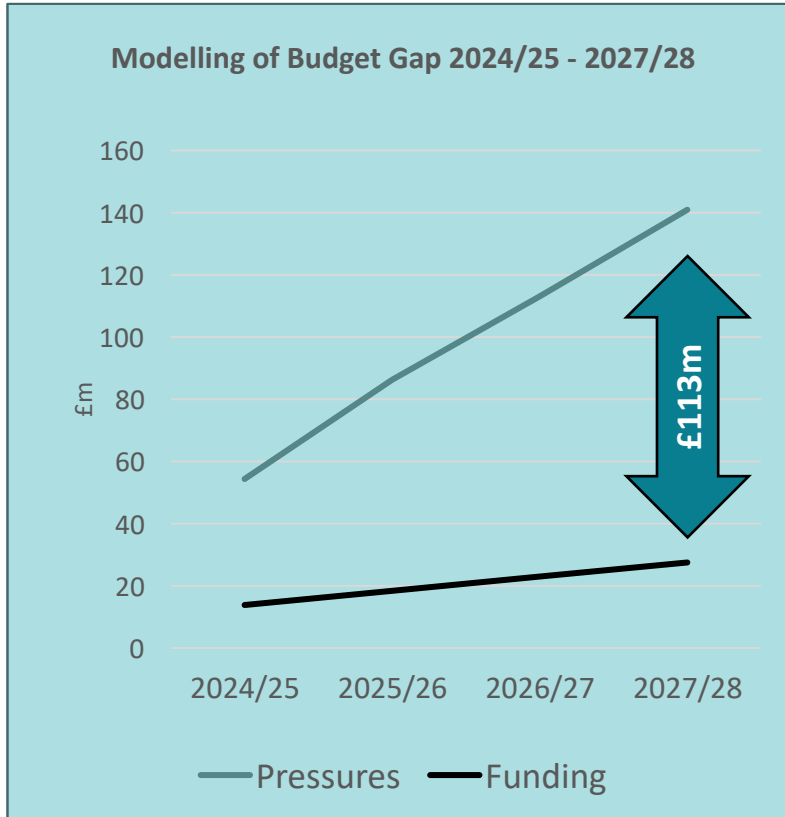
Medium Term Financial Plan 2024/25 – 2027/28



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Directorate	2024/25 £000	2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000	2027/28 £000	Total £000
Total Pressures	54,361	31,918	26,826	27,844	140,949
Funding - AEF & Reserves	(13,840)	(4,563)	(4,597)	(4,521)	(27,521)
Total Budget Gap	40,521	27,355	22,229	23,323	113,428
Council Tax - Modelled at 3%	(5,172)	(5,327)	(5,487)	(5,652)	(21,638)
Savings	(35,349)	(22,028)	(16,742)	(17,671)	(91,790)
Budget Strategy Requirement	(40,521)	(27,355)	(22,229)	(23,323)	(113,428)

- C-Tax assumptions are used for modelling purposes only
- Need to continue work on identifying savings and opportunities for transformation beyond the one-year budget cycle
- Above is a base case – other scenarios are considered in the MTFP



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Housing Revenue Account – MTFP



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Housing Revenue Account

Annex 2

2023/24 Budget and Medium-Term Financial Plan

CARDIFF COUNCIL



- Background, key objectives and service priorities
- Rent policy framework – Average 2023/24 rent increase approved Dec 22 +6.5%: £7.22 per week (£7.67 based on 49 week collection)
- Current WG rent policy of CPI + 1% runs to 2024/25
- Revenue Budget and Capital Investment Programme
- Significant capital investment to meet demand for new affordable housing and regeneration/area improvements
- Key Assumptions
- Affordability and Value for Money
- Financial Resilience
- Risks and Uncertainties
- HRA 30 Year Business Plan to be sent to WG March 2023



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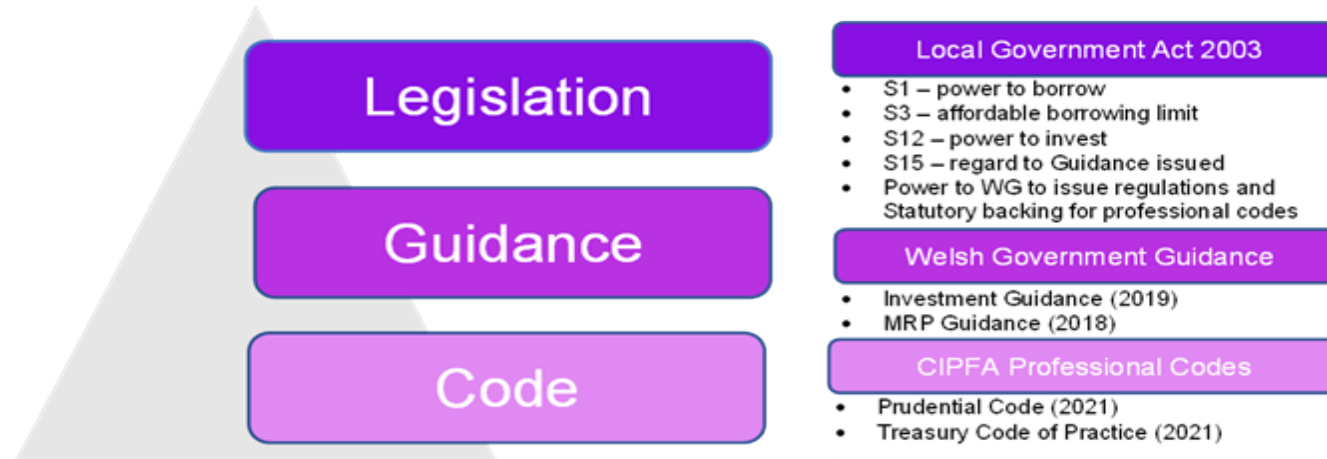
Capital Programme Development 2023/24 – 2027/28



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- Capital expenditure is money spent on an asset being purchased or created that will last for a number of years e.g. schools, buildings and highway infrastructure
- Capital and Treasury Strategy – Informed decision making; compliance with codes and statute.



- Indicators required to be considered by Council re affordability, prudence and sustainability based on future income assumptions
- Five year Capital Programme previously set for the period 2022/23 to 2026/27
- The 2023/24 Budget will update the Capital Programme and move it on to 2027/28
- Capital Strategy includes detailed investment programme and funding



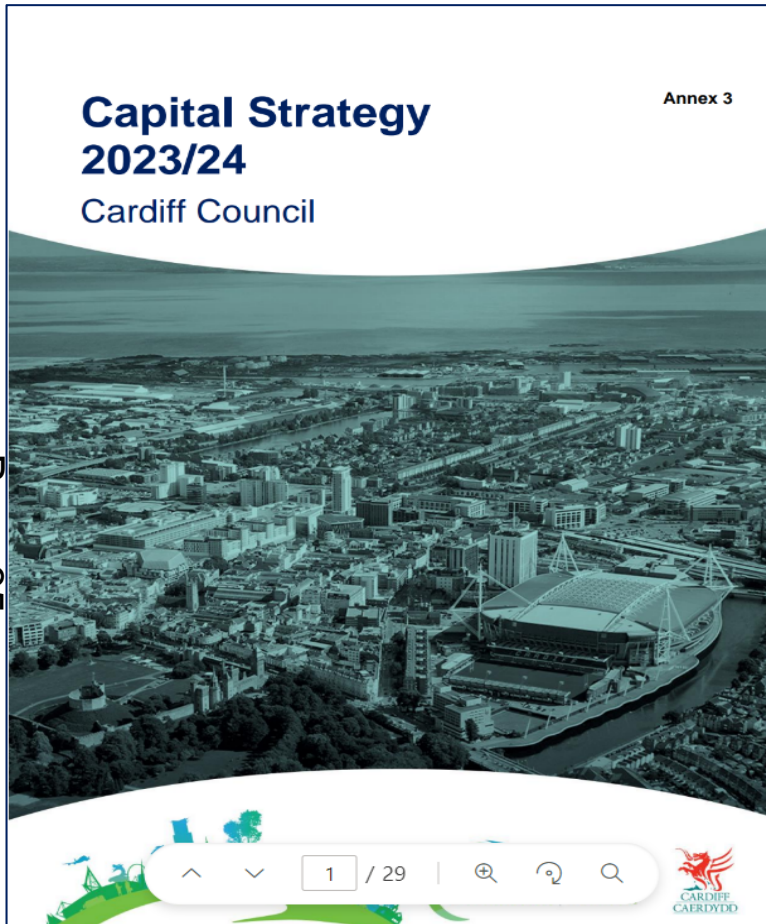
Capital Strategy 2023/24



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Sets out Council's approach to:

- Working with partners
- Asset Management Planning
- Risk Appetite
- Governance and decision-making
- Five Year Capital Investment Programme - General Fund and HRA
- Funding the strategy and investment programme
- Managing the borrowing requirement and link to the proposed Treasury Management Strategy
- Prudent Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy i.e approach to repayment of expenditure to be paid for by borrowing
- Affordability and Prudential indicators.



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Capital Investment Programme 2023/24 – 2027/28

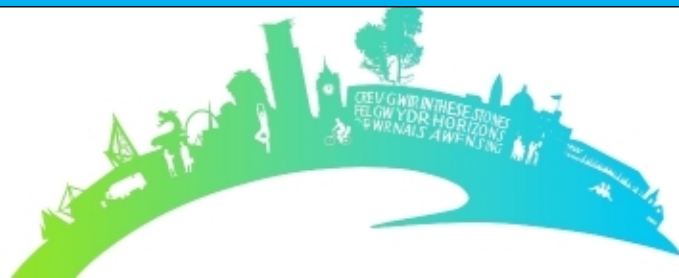


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Capital Programme Expenditure	2023/24 Including Slippage £000	Indicative 2024/25 £000	Indicative 2025/26 £000	Indicative 2026/27 £000	Indicative 2027/28 £000	Total £000
Annual Sums	28,894	24,675	22,315	19,765	19,665	115,314
Ongoing Schemes	36,381	35,935	25,478	8,891	585	107,270
New Schemes / Additional Annual Sums	6,170	4,000	1,000	0	0	11,170
Schemes funded by Grants & Contributions (Further grants subject to approval of bids)	92,084	161,308	72,488	22,123	6,775	354,778
Invest to Save	39,398	122,044	110,284	42,390	3,500	317,616
Total General Fund	202,927	347,962	231,565	93,169	30,525	906,148
Public Housing	111,000	102,260	85,745	88,720	118,820	506,545
Total Capital Programme Expenditure	313,927	450,222	317,310	181,889	149,345	1,412,693

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Capital Programme Funding



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	<u>2023/24</u>	Indicative <u>2024/25</u>	Indicative <u>2025/26</u>	Indicative <u>2026/27</u>	Indicative <u>2027/28</u>	<u>Total</u>	%
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	
General Fund							
WG Unhypothecated Supported Borrowing	(8,925)	(8,925)	(8,901)	(8,901)	(8,901)	(44,553)	4.9
WG General Capital Grant	(9,166)	(9,166)	(6,135)	(6,135)	(6,135)	(36,737)	4.1
Additional General Capital Grant unallocated from 2021/22	(4,670)	(1,300)	(1,000)	0	0	(6,970)	0.8
Additional Borrowing to balance existing capital programme	(36,097)	(36,381)	(28,947)	(10,410)	(5,004)	(116,839)	12.9
Additional Borrowing - Invest to save/earn schemes to be repaid from revenue savings/incidental income or directorate budgets	(39,398)	(122,044)	(110,284)	(42,390)	(3,500)	(317,616)	35.1
Earmarked Capital Receipts	(7,877)	(2,500)	(300)	0	0	(10,677)	1.2
Non Earmarked Capital Receipts assumption	(3,000)	(3,340)	(3,300)	(3,000)	0	(12,640)	1.4
Direct Revenue Financing	(210)	(210)	(210)	(210)	(210)	(1,050)	0.1
Earmarked Reserves	(1,500)	(2,788)	0	0	0	(4,288)	0.5
External grant and contributions estimates	(92,084)	(161,308)	(72,488)	(22,123)	(6,775)	(354,778)	39.2
Total General Fund	(202,927)	(347,962)	(231,565)	(93,169)	(30,525)	(906,148)	100.0
Public Housing (HRA)							
Major Repairs Allowance WG Grant	(9,570)	(9,570)	(9,570)	(9,570)	(9,570)	(47,850)	9.45
Additional Borrowing	(69,250)	(69,215)	(48,543)	(68,050)	(102,750)	(357,808)	70.64
Revenue / Reserves	(5,400)	(1,400)	0	0	0	(6,800)	1.34
External grant and contributions estimates	(24,280)	(21,575)	(27,132)	(10,600)	(6,500)	(90,087)	17.78
Capital Receipts	(2,500)	(500)	(500)	(500)	0	(4,000)	0.79
Total Public Housing	(111,000)	(102,260)	(85,745)	(88,720)	(118,820)	(506,545)	100.0
Total Capital Programme Resources Required	(313,927)	(450,222)	(317,310)	(181,889)	(149,345)	(1,412,693)	



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