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CORRESPONDENCE FOLLOWING THE COMMITTEE MEETING

Committee ECONOMY & CULTURE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date and Time of Meeting TUESDAY, 23 APRIL 2024, 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

8 **Correspondence following Committee Meeting**(Pages 3 - 12)

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Date: 24 April 2024

Councillor Burke
Cabinet Member – Culture, Parks and Events

By Email:



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Public Letter

Dear Councillor Burke,

GLL - LEISURE CENTRE MANAGEMENT PARTNERSHIP DELIVERY UPDATE and AUDIT WALES RECOMMENDATIONS UPDATE

Our thanks to you, Jason Curtis and Joanne Smith from GLL, and Chris Hadfield, Jon Maidment and Sarah Stork, Cardiff Council, for attending our meeting to present on the above and to answer our questions. Members appreciate the metrics and other information provided in our papers.

GLL - LEISURE CENTRE MANAGEMENT PARTNERSHIP DELIVERY UPDATE

Membership & Usage

Members were pleased to see the positive trajectory for membership numbers and usage across Cardiff, albeit that the impact of the pandemic is still being felt, with membership numbers circa 90% of pre-pandemic levels. Members note the importance of understanding non-users' demographics and needs so that, where appropriate, GLL can reach out and encourage them to use services.

Members welcome the variety of work underway, including with partners, to meet the terms of the contract via specific schemes for specific demographics and needs, to boost accessible and inclusive service provision. Members were particularly interested to hear about the new sessions exclusively for men and boys and **request** further details of where and when these are held. Members also noted that the metrics provided in the meeting seemed to indicate that circa 13% of GLL members are BAME; Members are aware the 2021 Census indicates that circa 21% of Cardiff's population are BAME. This suggests a lower uptake of GLL services from our BAME

communities. Members wish to accept the offer from GLL to provide a more detailed breakdown of BAME membership and usage, overlain with the 2021 Census information, and **request** this be provided in the response to this letter.

In addition, Members were pleased to hear the GLL website is undergoing an upgrade to make it easier to navigate, which Members believe will assist in increasing usage as it will be easier to find out details of service availability.

Schools Swimming

Members were concerned to learn that Cardiff is the worst performing local authority in Wales in terms of the percentage of children that swim – 50% - and pleased to hear that GLL has worked with the Council, Swim Wales, Cardiff Metropolitan University and other providers, to develop a new approach to school swimming provision, aimed at boosting performance over the next few years. Members recognise the importance of learning to swim and also learning to be safe around water.

Pentwyn Leisure Centre

Members sought clarification on when this leisure centre would reopen to the local community and note that 'dry-side' activities will be available from June 2024 and the swimming pool should be reopened June 2025. Members were pleased to hear their previous recommendation of liaising with Swim Wales regarding the pool design has been accepted and actioned, with several meetings taking place with Swim Wales on this matter. Members are also pleased to note that GLL intend and expect to operate the pool, which will also include therapy sessions offered in partnership with the NHS.

Members were pleased to hear GLL intend to engage with the local community regarding the activities to offer at the leisure centre and were also pleased to hear their offer to involve local ward members in the design of this engagement, to ensure that ward members are able to direct GLL to relevant local groups to engage with; we welcome this approach.

Penylan Library and Community Centre

Members are aware of the changes that have taken place recently at this centre and sought clarification of the rationale for this. Members note that market research regarding soft play was undertaken by GLL and that this indicated that provision of this would significantly boost usage of the centre, thus increasing income levels and assisting GLL, alongside other measures, to meet the contract requirement to reduce the leisure centre deficit.

At the meeting, Members **requested** that GLL provide the capacity % for the lessons that used to take place in the space now occupied by the soft play and note GLL's agreement to provide these alongside the expected full usage figures for the soft play provision. We **request** that these be provided in the response to this letter.

Members also explored the communication with customers and engagement with local ward members undertaken in this instance - the replacement of lessons by soft play - and note GLL and officers' explanations that, whilst this option had been discussed for some time, it was only recently realised that the timeline for installing the soft play this financial year was tight as the installation company only had a small window of time available. Members note GLL and officers' acceptance that communication and engagement could have been better and their commitment to ensuring that, moving forward, local ward members will be engaged in a timelier manner and communication with customers will be better planned and executed.

Boys Need Bins

At the meeting, Members highlighted the ongoing campaign to provide sanitary bins in male restrooms. Members were pleased to note GLL will support this initiative and understand that council officers will be in touch with them regarding this.

AUDIT WALES RECOMMENDATIONS UPDATE

Members were interested to hear about the work undertaken to address R5 and R6 of the Leisure Services Follow Up Review Report - Audit Wales (October 2022). Members **request** the consultant's option appraisal report be shared with them so that they can see the full breadth of performance and financial information currently available, in line with R6.

Members also **request** assurance that, if the contract with GLL fails and the Council needs to enact contingency measures, the consultant's report will be updated to reflect prevailing market conditions and that this updated report, other relevant performance and financial information, and the report to Cabinet would be made available to scrutiny members to enable timely pre-decision scrutiny.

Finally, Members **request** an update of progress against all the recommendations in the Leisure Services Follow Up Review Report - Audit Wales (October 2022), so that Members are aware which recommendations are closed and which are still in progress.

My thanks again to you, Jason and Joanne from GLL, and officers for attending Committee and answering our queries.

This letter contains requests for further information and so requires a response:

Requests:

GLL:

- Further details of where and when the new sessions exclusively for men and boys are held
- A detailed breakdown of BAME membership and usage overlain with the 2021 Census information
- Penylan Centre - the capacity % for the lessons that used to take place in the space now occupied by the soft play and the expected full usage figures for the soft play provision.

Council:

- The consultant's option appraisal report be shared with Economy and Culture Scrutiny Committee Members
- Assurance that an updated consultant's report, other relevant performance and financial information, and the report to Cabinet would be made available to scrutiny members to enable timely pre-decision scrutiny of any contingency decision, if and when this is required
- an update of progress against all the recommendations in the Leisure Services Follow Up Review Report - Audit Wales (October 2022).

Yours sincerely,

P Wong

COUNCILLOR PETER WONG
CHAIR, ECONOMY & CULTURE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

cc Members of the Economy & Culture Scrutiny Committee
 Group Leaders - Cllr Lancaster, Cllr Berman, Cllr Gibson
 Gavin McArthur – Chair, Governance & Audit Committee
 Chris Hadfield Jon Maidment Sarah Stork
 Jason Curtis – GLL Joanne Smith – GLL
 Louise Mead
 Chris Pyke Tim Gordon Jeremy Rhys

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Date: 8 May 2024

Councillor Bradbury
Cabinet Member – Supporting



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By Email

Public Letter

Dear Councillor Bradbury,

EMPLOYMENT SERVICES SHORT SCRUTINY: PART ONE

Members have asked that I pass on their thanks to you, Hayley Beynon, Khalid Osman, Ken Poole, Victoria Poole, and Tracey Thomas for the briefing reports and presentations provided and for attending committee to answer our questions.

Overall, Members were very impressed and agree with you that this is an area with successful service delivery, built on cross-directorate and partnership working to maximise funding and service provision opportunities, and aiming to ensure intersectional needs are met.

Members can see that the Council is meeting its performance indicator targets, including the commitments to meet the Race Equality Task Force recommendations, and helping people across Cardiff. Members note the intention to work with the Race Equality Task Force to set an appropriate target for the new BAME key performance indicator. Members further note your explanation regarding many of this year's targets being similar to last year's targets, namely that this is to do with the uncertainty regarding funding and in recognition that last year was a particularly stretching year economically, with a significant increase in the number of people seeking advice due to economic challenges, including the cost of living, and that it is not clear this year will see the same number of people seeking advice.

Members recognise the sustainability of funding is key and that it is difficult to plan without longer-term knowledge of funding availability. It is clear that clarity on post-Shared Prosperity Funding is needed, alongside a longer period for other grant funding.

Members were particularly pleased to hear all three areas at the meeting – Cardiff Commitment, Into Work services, and the HR Corporate Apprenticeship and Trainee Programme – are taking on board and addressing the needs of those with neurodiverse traits, including raising awareness and understanding of employers about neurodiversity and the benefits those with neurodiverse traits bring as part of the workforce. Members note your point that, following this meeting, you will reflect

on whether there is more that could be done, particularly to help support people who may have only recently realised they are neurodiverse or are not aware they have neurodiverse traits.

Members sought to understand how Cardiff Commitment, Into Work services, and the HR Corporate Apprenticeship and Trainee Programme are ensuring they meet the agreed CEDAW motion to Council, in March 2023, and note your response that you are happy to have a constructive dialogue about the work underway to assist those most at risk of falling through the gaps, including intersectional girls and women. Members also thank you for directing their attention to the Cabinet's response to the motion, taken to the May 2023 Cabinet meeting; we will ensure we include this in our future scrutiny. During our scrutiny, Members asked specific questions on CEDAW for each area, and these are set out below.

Cardiff Commitment

Members were very impressed with the work of Cardiff Commitment, particularly its partnership working and outreach to offer support for those harder to reach. Members note that Cardiff Commitment would like to be able to work with all the primary and secondary schools in Cardiff, building on the learning to date, and that they would like to secure increased Corporate Social Responsibility commitments to support the needs of children and young people across Cardiff.

Regarding CEDAW, Members thank you for your offer to provide data disaggregated by protected characteristics, for Cardiff Commitment. Members request that the data for girls be provided by intersection with other protected characteristics, for example BAME categories and disability categories, as well as with deprivation, so that Members can see data for the intersection between categories.

Into Work

Again, Members were very impressed with the work of Into Work services and note that they are able to provide support across Cardiff and for all residents, due to changes in funding criteria, ranging from light-touch support through to full support packages. Members were pleased to hear that Into Work services are working with Economic Development officers to develop suitable packages of employment and training opportunities for the Atlantic Wharf site and that this approach will be replicated on other major project sites, including the International Sports Village.

Members note that Into Work services are seeing an increase in clients needing wellbeing and mental health support before they are able to access employment services and that these services are overstretched.

Members note that Into Work services will work with other employers to see if they will take on the anonymised and standardised CV approach adopted by Cardiff Works, which led to significant increase in BAME people employed, to see if this success can be replicated with other employers.

Members note that more support for people with disabilities would be welcome, including more commitments from employers regarding placements.

Regarding CEDAW, Members note your comment that it is key to keep the lens focused on women and girls to ensure intersectional needs are met, for example women aged 50+ who are impacted by the pension changes who will be in poverty and will need help. Members thank you for your assurance you will look at the CEDAW motion and make sure Into Work services are meeting the commitments agreed by Full Council, and for your offer to provide disaggregated data. Members request that the data for women and girls be provided by intersection with other protected characteristics, for example age categories, BAME categories and disability categories, as well as with deprivation, so that Members can see data for the intersection between categories.

HR Corporate Apprenticeship and Trainee Scheme

Members were interested to learn more about this scheme, which strikes them as a very good scheme, particularly as it stresses, throughout the placement, the development of a career path for participants, whether that is via Into Work or in the Council. Members were pleased to hear there is a good relationship with the Trades Unions regarding this scheme, with the approach taken by Cardiff Council seen as an exemplar.

Regarding CEDAW, Members were pleased to hear that data is available on the progression of participants, including drop-out rates, conversion to council jobs, conversion to jobs with other employers, and those who finish the scheme with no onward destination. Members request this information, disaggregated by protected characteristics. Members request that the data for women and girls be provided by intersection with other protected characteristics, for example BAME categories and disability categories, as well as with deprivation, so that Members can see data for the intersection between categories.

Employment Services Short Scrutiny: Part Two

In our way forward discussion, Members agreed to study the disaggregated data requested in this letter before finalising their decision on which areas to select for a deep dive. However, it is highly likely that one of the deep dive areas will be the provision of employment services for women and girls, which is why our requests focus in on the intersection of women and girls and other protected characteristics and deprivation.

Following our consideration of the data provided, I will contact you, other relevant Cabinet Members and officers to inform you of the decisions made regarding deep dives, and scrutiny officers will work with relevant officers to ensure Members receive the appropriate evidence, including hearing from relevant external witnesses.

Thanks again to all attendees for your time and contributions at committee. Members recognise the dedication, commitment and professionalism required to deliver services to this standard and are delighted that officers continue to develop innovative service provision despite a tough funding regime and challenging economic climate; we commend them and the partners that work with them.

This letter contains three requests, as follows, so requires a response, please:

Request 1

Members request data disaggregated by protected characteristics, for Cardiff Commitment. Members request that the data for girls be provided by intersection with other protected characteristics, for example BAME categories and disability categories, as well as with deprivation, so that Members can see data for the intersection between categories.

Request 2

Members request data disaggregated by protected characteristics, for Into Work clients. Members request that the data for women and girls be provided by intersection with other protected characteristics, for example age categories, BAME categories and disability categories, as well as with deprivation, so that Members can see data for the intersection between categories.

Request 3

Members request data on the progression of participants in the HR Corporate Apprenticeship and Trainee scheme, including drop-out rates, conversion to council jobs, conversion to jobs with other employers, and those who finish the scheme with no onward destination, disaggregated by protected characteristics. Members request that the data for women and girls be provided by intersection with other protected characteristics, for example BAME categories and disability categories, as well as with deprivation, so that Members can see data for the intersection between categories.

Yours sincerely,



COUNCILLOR PETER WONG
CHAIR, ECONOMY & CULTURE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

cc Members of the Economy & Culture Scrutiny Committee
Group Leaders - Cllr Lancaster, Cllr Berman, Cllr Gibson
Gavin McArthur – Chair, Governance & Audit Committee
Hayley Beynon Khalid Osman
Ken Poole Victoria Poole
Tracey Thomas
Chris Pyke Tim Gordon Jeremy Rhys