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GOHEBIAETH YN DILYN CYFARFOD Y PWYLLGOR

Pwyllgor PWYLLGOR CRAFFU ADOLYGU POLISI A CHRAFFU PERFFORMIAD

**Dyddiad ac amser
y cyfarfod** DYDD MAWRTH, 3 TACHWEDD 2015, 4.30 PM

Gweler isod gohebiaeth anfon gan Gadeirydd y Pwyllgor ar ôl y cyfarfod , ynghyd ag unrhyw ymatebion a gafwyd

Am unrhyw fanylion pellach, cysylltwch â scrutinyviewpoints@cardiff.gov.uk

9 **Gohebiaeth yn dilyn y Cyfarfod Pwyllgor** (*Tudalennau 3 - 10*)

Mae'r dudalen hon yn wag yn fwriadol

My Ref: T: Scrutiny/PRAP/Comm Papers/Correspondence

Date: 5 November 2015

Councillor Phil Bale
Council Leader,
Cardiff Council,
County Hall
Cardiff
CF10 4UW



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Dear Councillor Bale,

**Policy Review & Performance Scrutiny Committee: 3 November 2015
Non Operational Investment Property Estate**

On behalf of the Policy Review and Performance Scrutiny Committee my sincere thanks for facilitating consideration of the Council's proposals for dealing with its Non Operational Property on 3 November 2015. Members welcomed the opportunity for pre-decision scrutiny of the proposed governance of our estate, and following their discussion at the Way Forward have asked me to pass on their comments and observations.

Firstly, the Committee wishes to highlight the risk to income of disposing of capital assets. Members were reassured that the new strategy is focussed on generating more money, and the new Investment Estate Board will dispose of a property only where its yield is currently poor. They note the key principles, that where the Council sells a non operational property the proceeds will be ring fenced to remodel existing properties, or purchase new properties with the potential to generate higher rents; and where the yield on a property is good the Investment Estate Board will retain it. Members were also particularly reassured to hear that all Council owned buildings with a community value will be retained within the Operational Estate.

Members wish to take up your offer to report annually on the performance of the Investment Estate Board to this Committee. It is clear that accountability for decisions taken by the Board will sit with professional officers advised by commercial advisers, reporting to yourself, with an annual report of its activities included in the Council's Asset Management Plan programmed for Cabinet consideration. As these properties will be assessed to have no ward Member or community implications, the

Committee's interest will be in the performance of the Board in maximising income from the Council's estate. We would therefore expect to have sight of an annual cash flow statement that details all sources and allocation of funding on Non Operational Property.

When the Committee scrutinises the Investment Estate in the future it will be seeking reassurance that an ethical and community focussed framework for investment has been implemented, and will be looking for a fuller explanation of how the new Investment Estate Board is identifying new assets. It will also seek to consider disposal case examples from the list of investment properties, to reassure itself that the framework is being adhered to.

The Committee feels it is important to preserve the quality of the public realm in prominent locations. It urges that all opportunities for the Council to control development on such sites the Board decides to sell seeks to prevent over development with bland options, as often characterised by student accommodation developments. Members take on board that most property is sold as an investment in a going concern, and any constraints the Council impose will impact on the income generated. They were therefore pleased to hear you are committed to protecting future opportunities to preserve quality of life in Cardiff and maintain the City's liveability profile.

Similarly they feel Cardiff is still short of hotel space, and when you consider selling such property would urge you to preserve some control over the site's future use. The Committee fully endorses the retention of some public houses for income purposes, and others for community benefit.

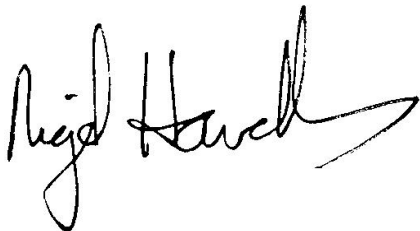
The Committee is pleased to hear that the estate is currently generating a good income, and that the new proposals will refine the Council's ability to develop its property portfolio to a point where it makes money. However it feels the timescales for implementation remain unclear and will retain a close watching brief.

To re-cap, the Committee will be pleased to receive:

An annual report to the Policy Review & Performance Scrutiny Committee on the performance of the Investment Estate Board; supported by a cash flow statement outlining all sources of income and allocation of funding.

Finally, on behalf of the Committee, I wish to thank you and the officers for your continued support for the internal challenge of important issues.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nigel Howells', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

**COUNCILLOR NIGEL HOWELLS
CHAIR, POLICY REVIEW AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

cc

Members of the Policy Review & Performance Scrutiny Committee;
Neil Hanratty, Director of Economic Development
Helen Jones, Corporate Property and Estates Manager
Gareth Newell, Head of the Cabinet Office;
Joanne Watkins, Cabinet Business Manager;

Mae'r dudalen hon yn wag yn fwriadol

Date: 13 November 2015

Councillor Graham Hinchey,
Cabinet Member, Corporate Service & Performance,
Cardiff Council,
County Hall
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Dear Councillor Hinchey,

**Policy Review & Performance Scrutiny Committee: 3 November 2015
Review of Disciplinary Policy**

Following your attendance at the Policy Review and Performance Scrutiny Committee on 3 November 2015 to present the Council's policy development work on Disciplinary Policy, Members wish to thank you for your time in facilitating the scrutiny. They found the presentation from Lynne David and Cath Synan most interesting and have asked that, as Chair of the Committee, I relay how pleased they are to be a planned part of the consultation.

The Committee recognises the Council's work over a number of years toward simplification of its policies for the management of staff. In line with this ethos they welcome the reduction in the Disciplinary Policy from 72 to 32 pages, supplemented by five more informal branded guidance booklets as a positive change in supporting senior managers to discipline staff. They are pleased that following an 18 month review, having consulted all Welsh Authorities and 8 large English cities, you are proposing improved management information reporting, and the creation of a bespoke Investigations Team to undertake complex investigations. Particularly pleasing is that Cardiff are considered to be blazing a trail with this revised approach to disciplinary policy.

Members are pleased to hear the Employee Assistance Programme offering staff a twenty four hour, seven day a week, counselling support service will be launched before Christmas; and that the new Resolution Policy recommends a 'preliminary assessment' to determine 'major' and 'minor' disciplinary incidents so that minor incidents can be assigned to the new Fast Track Disciplinary procedure.

Members are united in their view that the number of suspensions reported over the 18 month period covered by the Disciplinary Review is surprisingly high. They note with some concern the finding that a high proportion of disciplinary to grievance cases indicates a heavy reliance on the implementation of formal proceedings to resolve matters. As such they wish to endorse your view that Operational Managers need instruction to address the figures, and may require compulsory training in the new policy.

The Committee feels that the new policy's downward shift in permission to suspend, to Operational Manager level is appropriate, given that investigations are mostly undertaken within Directorates by managers with an understanding of the issues. They consider this shift has the added benefit of retaining an appeal mechanism to Director/Chief Officer level.

Members feel the new proposals are certainly a step in the right direction; however feel there is an opportunity to set clear targets to be reported upon in quarterly performance monitoring reports, in the same manner as sickness absence targets. Such performance indicators should be developed for: the number of grievances logged; the number of actual suspensions as an outcome of disciplinary action; and the length of time taken to resolve disciplinary cases. Members aspire to reduce resolution time to 4 weeks.

The Committee accepts your suggestion that it monitors how implementation of the new policy is impacting on levels of disciplinary cases. They will factor this into future work programming, and wish to monitor the change in management culture through a disciplinary indicator as a part of quarterly Council performance reports.

For future reference, the Committee notes that certain Directorates have high levels of disciplinary cases relative to headcount, which is largely due to the immediate escalation to formal proceedings, and will monitor to establish that the new Fast Track approach is assisting in reducing the number of formal cases.

Finally, the Committee feels very strongly indeed that, where schools personnel are under disciplinary investigation, governing bodies require more solid advice in undertaking Disciplinary action.

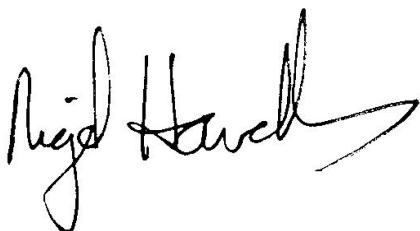
To re-cap, the Committee wishes to monitor:

A disciplinary performance indicator developed with clear target, and progress reported as a part of quarterly Council performance reports for:

- the number of grievances logged;
- the number of actual suspensions as an outcome of disciplinary action; and
- the length of time taken to resolve disciplinary cases.

Finally, on behalf of the Committee, I wish to thank you and the officers for your continued support for the internal challenge of important issues that can improve the quality of services the Council is delivering to its customers.

Yours sincerely,



**COUNCILLOR NIGEL HOWELLS
CHAIR, POLICY REVIEW AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

cc

Members of the Policy Review & Performance Scrutiny Committee;
Lynne David, Operational Manager, Centre of Expertise;
Chris Synan, Operational Manager.
Joanne Watkins, Cabinet Business Manager;
Gareth Newell, Head of the Cabinet Office;
Matt Swindell, Principal Administrative Officer

Mae'r dudalen hon yn wag yn fwriadol