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## GOHEBIAETH YN DILYN CYFARFOD Y PWYLLGOR

**Pwyllgor** PWYLLGOR CRAFFU GWASANAETHAU OEDOLION A CHYMUNEDOL

**Dyddiad ac amser y cyfarfod** DYDD LLUN, 13 CHWEFROR 2017, 2.30 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](mailto:scrutinyviewpoints@cardiff.gov.uk)

6 **Bydd gohebiaeth yn dilyn cyfarfod pwyllgor** (*Tudalennau 1 - 6*)

Mae'r dudalen hon yn wag yn fwriadol

My Ref: Scrutiny/Correspondence/Cllr McGarry

14 February 2017

Councillor Phil Bale  
Leader  
City of Cardiff Council  
County Hall  
Cardiff  
CF10 4UW



Dear Phil

### **Community & Adult Services Scrutiny Committee Meeting – 13<sup>th</sup> February 2017**

Thank you for attending the above committee. This letter captures the agreed comments, observations and recommendations of the Committee with regard to the draft Corporate Plan 2017-19 and 2017-18 draft Budget Proposals. The structure of this letter reflects the structure of the meeting, commencing with general comments on the draft Corporate Plan, consultation and the overarching budgetary position before moving on to comments and observations for each portfolio, as determined by the terms of reference of this committee.

#### **Draft Corporate Plan 2017-19**

Members recognise that the Corporate Plan has improved significantly over recent years, to reduce its volume and make it more focused on clearly setting out the Council's priorities. To assist this improvement, Members recommend some further refinements, as follows:

- Ensure that there is enough information in the commentary to make the context clear for the targets set e.g. it is not clear whether the target to assist 144 rough sleepers into accommodation will require existing performance to improve, decline or stay at its current level.
- Similarly, where percentages are used, it would sometimes be useful to provide a baseline or overall figure, to make the quantum clear to the reader.

Members are pleased to see inclusion of the following commitment: '*Ensure that Domestic Violence Support Services meet the requirements of new legislation, including the recommissioning of the service*'. This helps to demonstrate our corporate responsibilities and raise awareness across staff, partners and the public of the role we need to play. However, Members feel it is important also to include a

measure and target for this commitment, in the main body of the report, to strengthen this message. Therefore, Members recommend that a suitable measure and target that shows progress in delivering the commitment is included in the final Corporate Plan 2017-2019. This should be in addition to the Welsh Government measure and target currently included in the Appendix to the Corporate Plan.

Members are pleased to see measures and targets included in the Corporate Plan regarding tackling rough sleeping. Members believe that it is also important to keep a close eye on performance in other areas of tackling homelessness. Members therefore recommend that the Corporate Performance report also include measures and targets that show performance re preventing homelessness and time spent in temporary accommodation.

### **Consultation Processes**

Members are pleased that the description and analysis of the consultation results has improved in recent years and is now more measured in tone. In order to refine this further, Members recommend that the consultation report contextualises the responses received by stating the overall population figures and acknowledges that receiving approximately 6,000 responses, many self-selected, from a population of approximately 340,000, whilst an improvement on previous years, counts as qualitative feedback rather than statistically valid responses. This is not in any way to denigrate or downgrade the feedback, as qualitative data is meaningful and useful.

### **Overarching budgetary position**

Members thank Councillor Hinchey, Christine Salter and Allan Evans for providing information on the overarching budgetary position. Members note that the proposed budget includes a 3.7% increase in Council Tax, use of £1.5M reserves, a 30% cap on schools non-demographic growth and £17M savings, in order to bridge the gap between resources available and resources required.

Members note that the proposed Capital Programme does not include City Deal projects or School Band B projects at this stage as more information is awaited on these and that therefore it is likely that the Capital Programme will be amended 2018/19 onwards.

With regard to the Capital Programme, Members note Christine's comments that the revenue funding of capital financing is at a higher level than in previous years and officers are aware that they need to keep a close eye on this.

Members note Christine Salter's point that 93% of savings proposals have detailed planning status, and that therefore it is proposed to reduce the £4M corporate contingency fund to £3M for 2017/18.

### **Economic Development and Partnerships**

Members thank you and Sarah McGill for being available to answer questions on the budgetary proposals for this portfolio. Regarding the budgetary proposals for this portfolio, Members have the following points to make:

- **Capital Programme, Line 74** – Members are reassured by the responses received that the Investment Review Board has taken a rigorous look at the proposal to check investment return levels and are content with this.
- **Capital Programme, Line 5** – Members wish to restate the point made at the meeting that it is essential for there to be alternative plans made for these regeneration schemes, to ensure viability when commercial tenants are not forthcoming or sustainable. This is an area of concern for the Committee and we shall recommend to a future Committee that this area is prioritised for further scrutiny.

### **Community Development, Co-operatives and Social Enterprise**

Members thank Councillor Bradbury and Sarah McGill for being available to answer questions on the budgetary proposals for this portfolio.

Members have a number of concerns regarding the proposals to review Neighbourhood Partnerships and the associated **saving, Line 18**. Members do not think that there should be policy changes of this magnitude with such little information available or opportunity to undertake more detailed scrutiny than can be afforded during budget scrutiny. Members do not feel the information provided is sufficient to enable understanding of the proposals; at our meeting, Members had to seek an explanation of what is proposed and what this would look like, rather than this being self-evident from the information provided. As the meeting progressed, it became clear from our questions that these proposals also link to budget savings line 91 'locality based service delivery' listed under Social Services, Councillor Elsmore's portfolio. This is not clear in the budget report papers and is something that pre-decision scrutiny would have been able to explore. From the information available at our meeting, Members are not convinced that one annual roadshow will be sufficient to replace the valuable work undertaken by the existing neighbourhood partnerships. However, Members note the commitment not to lose the good practice and data analysis used by the existing neighbourhood partnerships. Members note the commitment to utilise community focused schools as part of the neighbourhood partnership approach; Members believe that this should be integrated from the

planning stage onwards and not be bolted on at the end when silo working would not have been addressed.

On a separate matter, Members note that **Savings Line 21** – Commercialisation – relates to generating income via charging for use of the Hubs.

## **Health, Housing and Wellbeing**

Members thank Councillor Elsmore, Sarah McGill, Tony Young, Amanda Phillips and Jane Thomas for attending to answer questions on the budgetary proposals for this portfolio. Concerning the budgetary proposals for this portfolio, Members have the following points to make:

### **Overall**

Members wish to acknowledge the good work of officers that has increased co-operation between Communities, Housing and Customer Services and Social Services, enabling improvements in services for citizens and savings to be realised.

## **Communities, Housing and Customer Services**

### **Savings Post consultation**

Members note that the Welsh Government has redistributed funding previously available to meet temporary accommodation costs and that this has resulted in Cardiff Council receiving less funding than previously. Members note that the Council has set aside £240,000 to help cover these costs and that discussions are ongoing with Welsh Government with the aim of recouping some of these losses.

### **Savings**

- **Line 22** – Members note that meters are planned to be installed close to the start of the financial year to maximise the full year effect of the saving.
- **Line 25** – Members note that no services will cease because of this saving.

## **Supporting People**

Members note that the budget for 2017/18 remains unchanged from 2015/16 at £16.2M but that there has been some realignment to afford more monies to tackle rough sleeping and homelessness.

## **Fees and Charges**

Members note the proposed rent increase (of 2.5% + £2 per week) is in line with Welsh Government guidance. Members have made space at their meeting 8<sup>th</sup> March 2017 to scrutinise the draft HRA Business Plan.

Members are pleased to note that there is no proposed increase in the cost of Meals on Wheels.

### **Social Services - Adults**

Members note and welcome that an additional £9.2 million has been allocated to Social Services to reflect demographic pressures, cost increases and pressures resulting from the need to implement the Social Services and Well Being (Wales) Act 2014. This, alongside the agreed write-off of savings deemed to be unachievable, means that Social Services is now on a stable footing. Members are also pleased that an additional 59 staff will be employed, which should help to address performance pressure points in Social Services.

Regarding the commitment in the Corporate Plan to make Cardiff a recognised Dementia Friendly City, Members note that the work undertaken to date by the Neighbourhood Partnerships will be taken forward and will not be lost when Neighbourhood Partnerships is reorganised.

### **Savings**

Overall, Members are pleased to see that 100% of savings proposed have detailed planning status. With this in mind, Members query why so many savings remain Red/Amber rated for residual risk and savings achievability. Members note that there is a corporate approach taken to this but are concerned that either the approach is over-cautious, or that planning is not sufficient in these regards, even though it is rated as detailed, or that more information should be supplied to make it clear why the RAG rating is as it is. Members would appreciate your views on this.

- **Line 76** – Members note that this involves adjusting the skills mix of social work staff working in hospitals, recruiting more social work assistants to provide more hands-on help, which should have a positive impact on service users. Members believe that this should have been more clearly spelled out in the narrative for this line, to avoid the impression that this team is being reduced.
- **Line 83** – Members note that this applies across the board, rather than to domiciliary care only.
- **Line 86** – Members note that this savings arises from implementation of the high cost authorisation process, which is resulting in costs being better controlled.
- **Line 87** – Members note that this saving is based on modelling the full year effect of trends in the first point of contact service assisting clients without the need for social service care packages.

## **Skills, Safety, Engagement and Democracy**

Members thank Councillor De'Ath, Sarah McGill, Dave Holland and Joseph Reay for being available to answer questions on the Corporate Plan and budgetary proposals for this portfolio. Our comments on the Corporate Plan are included above.

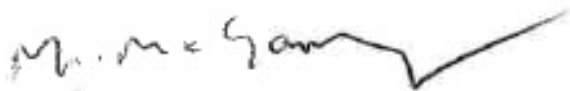
Regarding the budgetary proposals for this portfolio, Members have the following points to make:

- **Savings Line 2** – Members note that the £47,000 saving flows from previous changes to working patterns and usage of ICT, which will lead to reduced mileage costs and reduced ICT costs for Shared Regulatory Services. Members note that this saving is therefore achievable.

Once again, thank you to you and all the witnesses for your attendance and contributions; they are much appreciated. Members trust that our recommendations, comments and observations above are of help when finalising the Corporate Plan and Budgetary Proposals. To this end, please present this letter to Cabinet before the Corporate Plan 2017-19 and Budgetary Proposals 2017/18 are finalised.

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

Yours sincerely,



### **COUNTY COUNCILLOR MARY McGARRY**

#### **Chairperson - Community & Adult Services Scrutiny Committee**

|     |                     |                   |                    |
|-----|---------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Cc: | Councillor Bradbury | Councillor De'Ath | Councillor Elsmore |
|     | Councillor Hinchey  | Christine Salter  | Allan Evans        |
|     | Joseph Reay         | Gareth Newell     | Sarah McGill       |
|     | Tony Young          | Jane Thomas       | Amanda Phillips    |
|     | Dave Holland        |                   |                    |
|     | Matt Swindell       | Alison Taylor     | Claire Deguara     |
|     | Rita Rohman         | Liz Patterson     | Paula Angel        |