

POLICY REVIEW AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

8 MARCH 2016

Present: County Councillor Howells(Chairperson)
County Councillors Hunt, McKerlich, Murphy and Sanders

76 : APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor Huw Thomas

It was noted there were currently 3 vacancies on the Committee, including Councillor Caro Wild who was appointed to Assistant Cabinet Member on 18 February 2016 and had therefore come off PRAP. A report would be going to Council in March 2016 on current vacancies and group nominations would be made ahead of the meeting.

77 : DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were advised that they had a responsibility under Article 16 of the Members 'Code of Conduct' to declare any interests and complete Personal Interest Forms at the commencement of the agenda item in question.

78 : CORPORATE ASSESSMENT FOLLOW ON - WALES AUDIT OFFICE

The Chairperson welcomed the following witnesses to the meeting:

Wales Audit Office

- Alan Morris, Group Leader, Wales Audit Office
- Non Jenkins, Local Government Manager (South East), Wales Audit Office
- Chris Pugh, Performance Audit Leader

Cardiff Council

- Phil Bale, Leader Cardiff Council
- Paul Orders, Chief Executive
- Christine Salter, Corporate Director Resources

The Chairperson advised Members that the Wales Audit Office cycle of formal assessment of the Council's arrangements to secure continuous improvement means the Council had recently received its Follow On report to the Corporate Assessment it received in September 2014. The Committee had been closely involved in monitoring the organisation's response to the Corporate Assessment, and welcomed Wales Audit Office to present their findings following a review undertaken in the autumn of 2015..

The Committee received a presentation from the Wales Audit Office and addressed the following:

- The Conclusion " *The Council has put in place better arrangements to support improvement and to address longstanding issues, but is now at a critical point*

in embedding them if it is to achieve a step change in delivering improved outcomes”

- The Wales Audit Office recognised the progress, the Council was tackling its issues but there was more work to do. This was expected and a further review could be undertaken in 12 months.
- *Overall the Council had responded positively to the Corporate Assessment findings and put better arrangements in place to support improvement and address longstanding issues.*
 - The Wales Audit Office was of the view the leadership and management of the Council had developed a more cohesive approach.
 - The Committee noted there were proposals for improvement in the following areas:
 - Corporate Enablers
 - Performance management
 - HR
 - Assets
 - Financial Planning
 - IT
 - Information governance
- *The Council is yet to demonstrate a step change in improvement in some key service areas and does not consistently report performance measures effectively.*
- *Corporate enabler functions are not operating in a sufficiently cohesive way to drive improvement*
 - The Wales Audit Office explained that more work was required to develop change in the organisation. A consistent approach was being realised and improvement was progressing.
- *The Council must ensure that it addresses the proposals for improvement as set out in this report to deliver improved outcomes within the next 12 months.*
 - The Wales Audit Office drew attention to timescales for the response.

The Committee drew attention to the Proposals for Improvement and noted the suggestions for improving Governance. It was recognised that Committee agendas, minutes and decision logs should be strengthened, along with greater visibility for the role of the Standards & Ethics Committee.

The Committee asked questions on the report.

Members drew attention to the Enablers and Outcomes and asked what mechanisms were place to support improvement.

The Wales Audit Office explained that it was vital for the Council to develop its own mechanisms to challenge and assess its progress and improvement. Internal challenges would produce outcomes and contribute to performance management and development. Mechanisms were currently in place to support this but needed strengthening along with internal challenge tools. The Council should be self-reliant and self-sufficient to move forward and sound corporate enablers would support this.

The Wales Audit Office indicated they would be working alongside the Council for the next 12 months assessing how procedures were implemented. There were implications in the Local Government Wales Measure for the Standards & Ethics Committee to have a more predominant role and support councillors to develop and promote a culture of change.

The Committee drew attention to scrutiny cross cutting issues and Member engagement in the scrutiny process. The Wales Audit Office was of the view that engagement in scrutiny would be seen as a contribution to developing outcomes. The Corporate Plan had been agreed and it was the role of scrutiny to ensure that the Plan's objectives were the basis of developing their work programmes.

The Chairperson invited Councillor Bale, Leader of the Council to make a statement.

Councillor Bale drew attention to the work undertaken in order to engage and promote the values of the Council. The priorities supported the Corporate Vision, were outward facing and ensured the development of internal relationships. Benchmarking against other Core Cities was vital to measure performance and improvement, and to compare and learn from similar local authorities. Performance challenge mechanisms had been put in place with the establishment of the Challenge Forum and Star Chamber. The formation of easily accessible data was imperative to support progress along with the introduction of the Balance Score Card. The development of the Cardiff Academy was being promoted to support and train staff. Public engagement was improving at a significant pace with the introduction of the Cardiff Debate and What Matters Agenda.

The Chairperson thanked Councillor Bale and invited the Committee to ask questions.

The Committee drew attention to the engagement of staff, enquiring at what level did this engagement of staff begin, was it promoted at grass route level? Results of the staff survey indicated that some service areas were disengaged and the Committee asked how this was being dealt with.

The Committee was informed that the Council was promoting staff engagement with the introduction of the Employee Engagement Programme, the Ambassadors Programme and the Make the Difference Campaign. These initiatives were making a significant contribution to staff awareness and engagement, including the development of sounder relationships with the Trade Unions.

The Employee Engagement Programme had been running for over 15 months, with the introduction of Staff Road Shows enhancing employee engagement and awareness. Issues in relation to employee concerns had been identified and mechanisms were being developed to support these issues. Middle Managers were being developed through the introduction of the Cardiff Managers Programme for

Grade 7 managers and above. Improved communication channels had been introduced, supporting the development of engagement and awareness.

Members of the Committee felt there were some inconsistencies in performance management and enquired what procedures were being developed to resolve this.

The Committee was advised that Joseph Raey, Head of Performance & Partnerships had been appointed . Consistency was required to support data management, support Communities and to roll out Balanced Score Cards. There was a clear line of sight across the organisation to address wider performance management issues, ensuring Quarterly Performance reports were more streamlined. Target setting was essential for improvement including SMART mechanisms and tools. Mechanisms were in place, however it was recognised there was room for improvement.

The Committee was keen to see the Performance Management Framework. Members were advised of the data support mechanisms in place, including the role out and use of the CRM system.

Members of the Committee were concerned with the number of vacancies on scrutiny committees. A contributing factor Scrutiny Members being appointed to Assistant Cabinet Member positions, however, there was a general concern regarding the lack of member engagement in the process.

The Wales Audit Office drew attention to the constructive Task & Finish approach , contributing towards member engagement. Benchmarking and analysing how the Scrutiny function was being supported in other local authorities would support this process.

The Committee discussed how the Council could improve commitment to scrutiny amongst elected Members, to sustain a stable and consistent membership across all five scrutiny committees. The Council currently webcasts the Planning Committee and there was a proposal to webcast Scrutiny Committees to develop both member and public engagement.

RESOLVED: That the Chairperson of the Policy Review and Performance Scrutiny Committee write to the witnesses to thank them for attending the meeting and set out the comments made by Members (letter attached)

79 : QUARTER 3 PERFORMANCE 2015/16

The Chairperson welcomed:

- Councillor Graham Hinchey, Cabinet Member Corporate Services & Performance;
- Christine Salter, Corporate Director Resources
- Joseph Raey, Head of Performance & Partnerships

The Chairperson reminded Members that performance reports were made available to the Committee quarterly and Members had decided that for the time being all

consideration of Performance would be undertaken at full Committee, a minimum of every other quarter. This Committee was responsible for overarching consideration of the Council's performance and for monitoring whether the Council has effective performance management in place.

The Chairperson invited Councillor Hinchey to make a statement.

Councillor Hinchey welcomed Joseph Raey to the organisation. It was recognised that a higher level of engagement was required in order to ensure that employees felt part of the organisation. Training and development programmes were in place to support staff progression and this was being channelled through the Cardiff Academy.

Across all Directorates 69% of Corporate Plan commitments were Green and 58% of Performance Indicators were Green. Members attention was directed to the following key issues arising from the corporate overview of performance:

- Customer Contact
- Staff & Agency Costs
- Sickness Absence

(The current end of year 2015/16 forecast was 9.2 FTE days lost against a target of 9.0 FTE days lost.

The Chairperson invited the Committee to ask questions.

Members of the Committee asked what mechanisms were put in place to address poor quality performance in some areas.

Councillor Hinchey drew attention to the Star Chamber Actions in place designed to support and strengthen performance. The intention was to investigate issues arising from Social Services, financial management and Asset Management alongside the Medium Term Financial Plan.

The Committee was advised that procedures would be established to identify where the areas of concern lay. Trends in performance would be analysed to develop improvement based processes to support higher results.

Members of the Committee drew attention to the Star Chamber Actions that addressed the results of each quarterly performance report. The Committee was concerned that the performance information provided did not allow Members to assess whether the actions identified at the previous quarter's Star Chamber had resolved the poor performance as Star Chamber actions related to current issues and in the following quarterly report there was no way of checking if those Star Chamber actions had helped.

The Committee was assured that Star Chamber Actions were supporting the performance issues. These Actions were most recent and it was a matter of timing of the information coming forward in respect of when the reports were drafted captioning the outcomes in a timely manner.

Members of the Committee drew attention to the Resources Directorate and asked how confident officers were that the Council had the in-house resources to deal with the current issues.

Officers assured the Committee that the Leadership was confident that the Council had the resources to deliver savings this year. The delivery of savings would require alternative ways of working to deliver some services that were out of the Council's comfort zone and therefore the Council may need to buy in expertise to cover gaps in its knowledge created by different ways of working.

The Committee was advised that Departments experiencing a high number of sickness absence issues had received additional HR support to alleviate the problem. This internal expertise would provide advice and assistance to the end stage of the issue. It was vital to develop best practice in relation to sickness and absence across the Directorates to reach a consistent approach across the Council.

The Committee was pleased to hear that Directors and Operational Managers would have mandatory training in respect of the new Disciplinary Policy to raise awareness.

Members of the Committee asked what procedures were being put in place to address the on-going issues experienced in Adult Services. Councillor Hinchey acknowledged there were on-going issues in this area, mechanisms were being established to resolve this. Both the Challenge Forum and Star Chamber were working alongside officers to address these issues. Middle Managers were being given the opportunity to attend the ILM Level 4 programme designed to support and assist managers Grade 7 and above.

The Committee was advised that good progress had been realised on non-operational property. The Council's operational property proposals had not been shared with Committee and therefore it was suggested that the information be reported before the summer.

RESOLVED: That the Chairperson of the Policy Review and Performance Scrutiny Committee write to the witnesses to thank them for attending the meeting and set out the comments made by Members (letter attached)

80 : DRAFT STRATEGIC EQUALITY PLAN

The Chairperson welcomed the following:

- Councillor Dan De'Ath, Cabinet Member Safety, Engagement & Democracy
- Christine Salter, Corporate Director Resources
- Paul Keeping, Operational Manager, Scrutiny & Equalities
- Caryle Alleyne, Equalities Officer

The Chairperson advised Members that they were invited to consider the draft Strategic Equality Plan to be considered by the Cabinet later this week, to test whether the concerns and observations following the previous scrutiny in October

2015 had been addressed; and take the opportunity of reflecting on further scope for scrutiny of the Council's approach to Equalities on the future Work Programme.

The Chairperson invited Councillor De'Ath to make a statement.

Councillor De'Ath advised that Cabinet would consider the Equality Plan. This Scrutiny Committee had looked at the Plan last year and the comments provided had been taken on board. Feedback had been welcomed including responses from community groups and as a result the 10 Equality Objectives had been reduced to 7 to avoid duplication. The next steps were to ensure that all Directorates linked the Equality Objectives into their respective Delivery Plans.

The Chairperson invited the Committee to ask questions.

Members of the Committee were informed of the consultation processes that took place to establish a way forward, including all day networking sessions and the involvement of the Youth Council.

Working in partnership was key to developing the Plan. Even though each organisation had slightly different objectives, the themes and outcomes were similar. Interaction between strategic partners was vital for progress and to receive input from other public sector organisations.

The Committee was advised that all Directorates had received the template in order to link the Equality Plan into their Delivery and Actions Plans. This was also in relation to the Directorates Quarterly Milestones.

Members were pleased that equalities was to be mainstreamed within Directorate Delivery Plans, placing responsibility on Directorates to embrace equality objectives within delivery action plans.

The Committee was concerned with the issues raised by the UNISON representative at the February meeting in relation to the community reflectiveness of the Council's workforce.

Councillor De'Ath assured the Committee that developments towards addressing inequality in the Council were on-going. The Council should be seen as an enabler/facilitator to ensure more was being done for lower paid members of the workforce. Councillor Hinchey had responded to the UNISON representative, confirming the Council would look at what powers it had to challenge the diversity of the workforce.

The Committee was of the view that a simpler version of the Plan could be produced. It would be useful to produce a concise one side A4 document for staff that summarised the 7 equalities objectives.

RESOLVED: That the Chairperson of the Policy Review and Performance Scrutiny Committee write to the witnesses to thank them for attending the meeting and set out the comments made by Members (letter attached)

81 : COMMITTEE BUSINESS

82 : DATE OF NEXT MEETING - TUESDAY 12 APRIL 2016 AT 4.30PM IN
COMMITTEE ROOM 4