

## ECONOMY & CULTURE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

8 DECEMBER 2016

Present: County Councillor McKerlich(Chairperson)  
County Councillors Dilwar Ali, Howells, Hyde, Stubbs and  
Keith Jones

### 28 : APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Elaine Simmons.

### 29 : DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

### 30 : MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Economy and Culture Committee held on 8 November 2016 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairperson.

### 31 : CARDIFF TOURISM STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN: 2015 - 2020

The Chairperson welcomed Councillor Phil Bale (Leader), Terry Stephens (Stephens Associates - (Advising Council on aspects of Tourism Policy) and Heledd Williams (Head of Tourism) to the meeting.

The Chairperson invited the Cabinet Member to make a statement in which he confirmed progress is being made against the Tourism Strategy and Action plan. New initiatives have been introduced, for example, the Cardiff Visitor Card which has been available for sale but clearly there is more to be done to drive the agenda going forward. As a capital Cardiff has a wider role to play, not only for the region but for the whole of Wales.

Members were provided with a presentation by Heledd Williams updating Members on the progress that has been made against the strategy and action plan.

Terry Stephens advised Members that it was important to emphasize the significance of focussing on overnight stays. It is fundamentally important in driving the economy and in achieving the overall objectives. Much has been achieved but there is still a lot to be done. There are tangible benefits, increased occupancy and room rates achieved. There are major events over the next 2 years and those events are platforms for achieving further growth and the promotion of tourism. Whilst levels of growth have been maintained over the last 2 years, it is still below the levels of growth that 3 or 4 other cities are achieving. The competition for the tourist is immense. It is important to keep a focus on the tourism strategy, creating stronger partnerships and collaboration, and stable leadership to carry through the strategy.

The Chairperson invited questions and comments from Members:

- Members were advised that one of the most important things to tackle when moving forward is for there to be clarity as to what Cardiff as a city stands for and what it has to offer.
- The Committee queried the interplay between Officers setting the strategy and Elected Members and were advised that it has been necessary to set an ambitious framework and that does mean taking risks at times but they have to be managed to risks. Cardiff does not have unlimited resources, so when innovative ideas materialise, like the Ball in the Wall, the huge impact from those initiatives is fantastic. There are restrictions on the retention of some of these items, for example the material used in the Ball in the Wall was not long lasting and therefore meant it was difficult to retain.
- Members queried whether there are any gaps in the events in which Cardiff should be involved in and were advised that over the next 3 – 5 years there will be a robust review of the existing list of events. Currently discussions are ongoing with Welsh Government in terms of the kind of events. Cardiff does not have the resources to deliver the strategy alone, it is necessary to work with others to create the best opportunities and returns.
- Members asked to be updated on the present position bearing in mind the dissolving of the Capital Region Tourism. Officers advised that that whilst Welsh Government have brought the teams in house to Visit Wales, there is still regional representation. The funding stream is better; there is a higher investment and less external overheads. It is also necessary to try and ensure that Authorities are not competing with each other. There needs to be a shared vision and strategy.
- Members asked about the impact on figures that an event like the Rugby World Cup would have had and were advised that there is a trend when a major event comes to the city, on, for example, overnight occupancy. However, it is important to assess what events are both relevant and sustainable to ensure that a feast/famine situation is avoided. It is also necessary to ensure there is a balance of events; cultural events statistically result in a 3 – 4 night stay where as sporting events just the one night. Members were keen to know what the underlying trend was in relation to the increase in tourism, when the events figures were taken out. TS advised that the opening of a new hotel had as much of an effect on the figures as did one event.
- The Chair advised Officers that the Committee had received a letter from the Manager of the Royal Hotel, Cardiff. Officers were asked to address those issues. Officers advised that they had had a meeting with the Manager where his concerns were aired, those are being concerned on a case by case basis. Officers explained that it was also noted that hoteliers need to take responsibility with how they compete internally in the market place and ensure that they do not apply the feast and famine approach.

AGREED – That the Chairperson on behalf of the Committee writes to relevant Cabinet Members and officers thanking them for attending the meeting on 8 December and to convey the observations of the Committee when discussing the way forward.

## 32 : PARC CEFN ONN PROJECT

The Chairperson welcomed Bob Derbyshire (Cabinet Member - Environment), Jon Maidment (OM - Parks & Sport), and Rosie James (Principal Landscape Officer) to the meeting.

Members were provided with a presentation on the Project by Jon Maidment and Rosie James.

The Chairperson invited questions and comments from Members:

- Members asked what work will be done with local schools across the City. Officers advised that the plan is to have an open air/forest school arrangement and to provide materials that can be used by schools. Work is also being done with the Community Ranger Service who are already providing some activities in the park. The Education Officer at Bute Park is also involved in the project, and she has forest school training.
- Members were pleased to see that the Friends of Parc Cefn Onn were still heavily involved in the project and queried whether Diverse Cymru are involved also. Officers advised that at this stage they were not; there were a number of partners involved and whilst there had been contact with the Chair of the Group, they were not involved at this stage but that could change in the future.
- Members wanted assurance that it would not just be children from local schools and local families that benefit from the park, but also those from the more deprived areas of Cardiff. The Cabinet Member advised that Parc Cefn Onn is different from others, accessibility being one of the differences. The aim is that this it provide facilities for the citizens of Cardiff and beyond. This should be a destination park.
- Members queried whether enough 'dog bins' are being provided and were advised that if footfall increases, as is anticipated, there will be a need to ensure that the provision is made. It is important that people with dogs have the correct facilities - perhaps provided with dog bags at the site. Members were advised however that it is one of the sites being considered for a Public Space Protection Order. Work is ongoing with Friends of Parc Cefn Onn to develop a code of conduct for use of the park and then encourage people to walk dogs sensibly. Consideration is also being given to designating areas of the park areas where dogs have to be kept on a lead.
- The Committee asked whether the Rhododendron issue has been eradicated and were advised that there was a further outbreak in the summer, however it has been contained. It has not been necessary to restrict access or require dogs to be kept on a lead.
- Members queried whether there would be any need to close the park whilst work is being carried out and were advised that it is hoped that only certain sections will have to be closed when certain work is being undertaken.

AGREED – That the Chairperson on behalf of the Committee writes to relevant Cabinet Member and Officers thanking them for attending the meeting on 8 December and to convey the observations of the Committee when discussing the way forward.

33 : QUARTER TWO 2016/17: MONITORING PERFORMANCE OF SERVICES (COMMUNITIES, HOUSING AND CUSTOMER SERVICES DIRECTORATE)

The Chairperson welcomed Peter Bradbury (Cabinet Member – Community Development, Co-operatives and Social Enterprise), Councillor De'Ath (Cabinet Member – Skills, Safety and Engagement) and Jane Thomas (Assistant Director, Housing and Communities) to the meeting.

Members were asked to note that Appendix G of the Performance Management Report, an update on the Leisure Partnership, had not been received from the Directorate and therefore Members were unable to consider it as part of their papers. The Cabinet Member assured Members that information was not being withheld by the Politicians. The Committee expressed disappointment that the Appendix referred to was not available at this time but noted that it was not planned for a presentation to be made on this topic at the meeting.

Members were provided with an overview of Quarter 2 performance.

The Chairperson invited questions and comments from Members:

- Members queried whether the target dates for the opening of the hubs were met, and were advised that had been other than some ICT issues at Llandaff North and Gabalfa.
- Members asked for details of any strategy for dealing with issues raised via social media. Officers indicated that they used the Council twitter account however each Hub had its own Facebook account which was used to update information as it is a popular source of information. It is important however to ensure that sensitive issues are not raised on social media, but some of responses to not have to so bland. It is important to note that the Cardiff Twitter account is monitored by a member of staff and is not designed to deal with sensitive casework and the information provided is not always detailed enough. Elected Members have had training on the benefits of using social media.
- Members quired the length of contract given to the voluntary greoup running the café in Llandaff North Hub. Officers advised that the contract for the licence of this café, as with all others, have break clauses and initially the licences have been for a 12 month period.
- Members queried the information being provided to the public to ensure that they are aware of the services offered by the Hubs. Members were advised that with particular reference to the Star Hub flyers were distributed before the launch and at the foot of both Benefit and Housing letters the recipients are

advised to go to the Star Hub. The benefit letter will promote the hub nearest to the recipient of the letter.

AGREED – That the Chairperson on behalf of the Committee writes to relevant Cabinet Members, Directors and officers thanking them for attending the meeting on 8 December and to convey the observations of the Committee when discussing the way forward.

#### 34 : INTO WORK SERVICES AND VOLUNTEERING

The Chairperson welcomed Councillor De'Ath (Cabinet Member – Skills, Safety and Engagement), Jane Thomas (Assistant Director Housing and Communities) and Helen Evans (Advice Manager) to the meeting.

The Chairperson invited the Cabinet Member to make a statement in which he reiterated these are important services, they are universal and can be accessed across the city.

Members were provided with a presentation by Helen Evans.

The Chairperson invited questions and comments from Members:

- Members were advised that Butetown, Grangetown and Riverside are a close geographical cluster. Originally it was an ESF funded project with the idea that it would be run through the 4 Communities First clusters but has since been passed back to the Council to run.
- Members queried what is being done to address residents concern that this is not a genuine attempt to help but that they will continue to be pushed into applying for inappropriate jobs. Officers advised that the Into Work Advice service is voluntary; footfall is increasing and that people are realising that this is a genuine attempt to help. Feedback from Jobseekers has been good.
- The Committee queried whether work is being undertaken with Diverse Cymru and were advised that work is being undertaken with a whole range of partnership organisations.
- Members felt that it was important to recognise Volunteers and were advised that there were awards, dinners, they are provided with uniforms and expenses.
- Members asked for information in relation to the greatest current challenge over the next 12 month period. The Committee were advised that the benefit cap would probably be the biggest challenge with over 1000 families being affected and trying to get them into work, they are often a long way from the job market. There will also be other issues, such as complex needs.
- The Committee queried the ESOL provision with specific reference to the number of Syrian families arriving in the area. Officers indicated that the provision of ESOL is a major problem in Cardiff, provision is not keeping pace with demand at the current time.

AGREED – That the Chairperson on behalf of the Committee writes to relevant Cabinet Members, Directors and officers thanking them for attending the meeting on 8 December and to convey the observations of the Committee when discussing the way forward.

35 : DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Economy & Culture Committee is on Thursday 12 January 2017 at 4.30 pm.

The meeting terminated at 6.50 pm

***This document is available in Welsh / Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg***