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AGENDA

Committee	POLICY REVIEW AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Date and Time of Meeting	TUESDAY, 15 SEPTEMBER 2020, 2.00 PM
Venue	REMOTE MEETING VIA MS TEAMS
Membership	Councillor Walker (Chair) Councillors Ahmed, Berman, Bowen-Thomson, Henshaw, Lister, Mackie and McKerlich

Time approx.

1 Apologies for Absence

To receive apologies for absence.

2 Declarations of Interest

To be made at the start of the agenda item in question, in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct.

3 Minutes (Pages 5 - 20)

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meetings held on 19 February and 11 March 2020.

4 Financial Strategy - to follow

2.00 pm

Monitoring & pre-decision scrutiny

- Month 4 monitoring
- Budget Strategy

Comfort Break - 5 mins

5 Annual Wellbeing Report 2019-20 - to follow

3.05 pm

Pre decision Scrutiny.

- 6 **Equalities Plan - to follow** 3.50 pm
Pre decision Scrutiny
- 7 **Senior Management Arrangements - to follow** 4.20 pm
Pre decision Scrutiny
- Committee Business**
- 8 **Annual Report 2019/20** (*Pages 21 - 58*) 4.35 pm
- 9 **Work Programming 2020/21** (*Pages 59 - 66*) 4.40 pm
- 10 **Urgent Items (if any)**
- 11 **Way Forward**
- a) Financial Strategy
 - b) Safe Re-start of Services
 - c) Homeworking
- 12 **Date of next meeting - TBC**

Davina Fiore

Director Governance & Legal Services

Date: Wednesday, 9 September 2020

Contact: Kate Rees, 029 2087 2427, kate.rees@cardiff.gov.uk

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POLICY REVIEW AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

19 FEBRUARY 2020

Present: Councillor Walker(Chairperson)
Councillors Berman, Bowen-Thomson, Henshaw, Lister, Mackie
and McKerlich

57 : APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor Bowen-Thomson advised that she may be late arriving to the meeting.

58 : DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Mackie declared a personal interest as a family member is the Head of the Integrated Centre.

59 : CORPORATE PLAN 2020-23 - TO FOLLOW

The Chairperson advised Members that this was an opportunity for the Committee to undertake pre-decision scrutiny of the final draft Corporate Plan 2020-23. To place in context the Leader engaged informally with the Committee's Performance Panel and chairs of all scrutiny committees last week, focussing on the target setting process for the Corporate Plan. Following the discussion the comments, observations and concerns of scrutiny (attached at Appendix 2) were relayed to the Leader, prior to publication of this final draft of the plan.

The Chairperson welcomed Councillor Huw Thomas, Leader of the Council; Councillor Chris Weaver, Cabinet Member Finance, Modernisation and Performance; Paul Orders, Chief Executive; Chris Lee, Corporate Director, Resources; Gareth Newell, Head of Policy & Partnerships; and Dylan Owen, Head of the Cabinet Office to the meeting.

The Chairperson invited the Leader to make a statement in which he said that he was grateful that the performance panel had convened, it was detailed in the Corporate Plan in supporting performance and governance arrangements that were in place and it was good to include wider governance. 33 comments had been captured, many had been agreed and the rest were being considered. Going forward, there was a role for the Panel to develop and the Leader stated he was committed to strengthening the function of Scrutiny for Council in the Local Government Election Bill requirements.

There was a new version of Capital Ambition which translates to the ambitions in the Corporate Plan. There had been meetings with each Cabinet Member and Senior Officers to ensure the Corporate Plan includes KPI's which are robust and realistic; this is an important document for the City.

The Chairperson invited the Chief Executive to make a statement in which he wished to echo the Leaders comments; he considered that had been a good exchange between Cabinet and Scrutiny year on year which had led to more robust arrangements.

The Chairperson invited Officers to give an oversight of the Plan and changes that have been made as a result of scrutiny engagement, after which the Chairperson invited questions and comments from Members;

Members noted the aspiration to bring foster carers in house and considered this a great idea, asking how this would be achieved. Officers explained that currently there were 31 facilities being assessed, this takes around 6 months to complete but at the end of the financial year there should be 12 facilities ready. This has been significantly more successful by having a focussed team in place for assessment and support. The CEX added that they were significantly increasing the in-house capacity and capability with dedicated managers, this was a multi-disciplinary project by nature and there would be a strong communications programme. Members considered that improvements could be made by developing a good package with a better offer than the commercial sector and competing with the suppliers. Officers stated that the main objective was to increase the overall pool as there was a need for more foster carers; the package is what is important, including the level of support, the now focussed resource will make the difference.

Members noted the detailed response to climate emergency and asked if there was a budget for this. The Leader explained that it would amount to millions and Officers were working on it, there are references to the One Planet Cardiff Strategy in the Corporate Plan which would provide granular detail.

Members noted that the version of the Corporate Plan provided to the performance panel was different to the version before Committee. The Leader explained that they wanted a non-glossy working draft to go to the performance panel; the version before Committee was near final.

Members referred to Wellbeing objective 2 – Cardiff is a great place to grow older and noted that in a Wales comparison, Cardiff was second from the bottom and below the Welsh average for performance figures in recycling amongst other comparators. The Leader explained that they are not trying to hide data; Cardiff is fairly exceptional in the Welsh context as it has major city issues which are very different to the rest of Wales; if compared to Core Cities then Cardiff is well placed.

Members asked if Cardiff is learning from the best proactively and the CEX stated that with regard to recycling specifically, they are actively engaging with the Welsh Government to promote recycling and taking into account the best authorities' performance. He added that it has to be put into context, areas such as social services and independent living services in Cardiff need high levels of support.

Members referred to the performance panel's comments on exploitation and reiterated the importance of a need for a promotion/campaign to make sure people are aware of exploitation and how to report it. The Leader said he would be happy to continue the conversation around this and take it forward.

Members referred to Waste and the target for recycling. Members considered more could be done such as, uncooked food placed in garden waste; separating out higher value items such as large milk cartons and allowing electrical items to be placed in black bins to be incinerated. This was considered a valued point but it was noted

that the quality of recycling is very different in different parts of the City and the contamination was different. There was a need to educate on the direct impact of proper recycling and re-use needs to be promoted. There was a priority to tackle contamination in the recycling scheme and Hubs were also going to become drop off points.

Members considered that the reference to Cardiff being world leading was ambitious as the figures show Cardiff doesn't even lead in Wales with regard to recycling. The Leader explained that this was in reference to Waste in general and not Lamby Way in particular; it was looking at Cities worldwide and Cardiff was third best and wants to do better and improve the status in Wales. Officers added that the reference was to the whole system review in Lamby Way to ensure the best decisions are made on use of resource and improving recycling and Health and Safety. There was a need to understand what data is telling us on productivity. With regard to recycling Cardiff is the only LA in Wales with a Trade Service, which is expensive to deliver and negatively impacts on target figures and wouldn't show on comparative data. Members considered this should be made clear.

Members made reference to the sickness and absence situation and considered that the measures to reduce are not working and a new creative, innovative approach is needed. The Leader accepted this was a fair challenge but was confident in the measures that were in place. He stated there were increased pressures on staff which has in turn increased levels of stress. He stressed though that 60% of staff do not take a single day of sickness, the challenge was with a small number of staff and long term sickness. The CEX added that there was no immediate rationale to change the policy position, there had been a significant margin of improvement in relation to long term sickness cases and it was about managers applying themselves with support from HR and Occupational Health.

Members discussed sickness absence further noting that generally across the UK figures were reducing; the CEX stressed that in relation to large public sector organisations, there was significant room for improvement; there was a particular problem of non-work related stress which needed to be grasped. Members considered it was very difficult to differentiate between work and non-work related stress and it was important to have good preventative measures in place. Members reiterated the importance of risk assessments in relation to stress. Councillor Weaver explained that HR and Health and Safety are looking at HSE tools to understand causes and look at preventative work.

Members asked if any work had been carried out to determine the effect of austerity on employee's health and wellbeing. The CEX said there had been no specific work regarding austerity but the employee survey was conducted year on year which contained qualitative information. There was also a Stress Action Plan launching, SMT had been briefed on this recently and there was a specific commitment to this work.

The Chairperson read out a letter from the Chair of Cardiff Civic Society and sought responses. The Leader felt there was a need to correct some of the information, stating that some pockets of land were not for sale and those that are, are agreed at public Cabinet meetings so were very open decisions, for example the £40 million capital receipt to fund the capital programme in the school estate, was all in the

public domain. It was also added that the Cabinet Member meets the Cardiff Civic Society on a regular basis.

RESOLVED: The Committee AGREED that the Chairperson writes to the Cabinet Members on behalf of the Committee to convey their comments and observations.

(a) Draft Corporate Budget Proposals 2020-21 - to follow

The Chairperson advised that in line with this Committee's Terms of Reference Members have responsibility for taking an overview of revenue and capital budget proposals from a corporate and strategic point of view. In addition we will have a brief overview of budget implications for specific services that fall within our Terms of Reference within the Resources, Governance & Legal, Economic Development, Central Transport Services and Performance & Partnerships budgets.

Scrutiny of this budget item will be split into two parts:

- a) An overview of the 2020/21 corporate wide budget proposals from Cllr Weaver, Chris Lee and Ian Allwood; which will include a summary of the implications for Chris's Resources directorate, Governance and Legal Services, and elements of Economic Development, for which Neil Hanratty will join the table. Members will have an opportunity for questions before moving on. This will then be followed by:
- b) Scrutiny of the Capital Strategy, which Anil Hirani will join the table for.

Draft Budget Proposals 2020-21 - Overview

The Chairperson welcomed Councillor Chris Weaver, Cabinet Member Finance, Modernisation and Performance; Chris Lee, Corporate Director Resources; Ian Allwood, Head of Finance; Gareth Newell, Partnership and Community Engagement Manager, joined later by Neil Hanratty, Director of Economic Resources.

The Chairperson invited Cllr Weaver to make a statement on the 2020/21 budget, in which he said that the settlement was later than usual and final settlement was due 2 days before Council; whilst better than expected there was still a requirement to make savings to balance the budget in the amount of £10 million. It was good that they are able to reduce the efficiency from schools from 1% to 0.5%. Overall the 4.5% increase in Council Tax was in line with the Budget strategy published last summer, as was the £750k draw from reserves. Welsh Government had been explicit in saying that austerity was not over and there still remained a significant degree of uncertainty.

The Chairperson invited Ian Allwood to give a corporate overview of the budget.

The Chairperson invited Members' questions on the corporate overview of the revenue budget;

Members asked if the reserves put into the budget last year were used. Officers said they were for 2019/20, £2.750 million were used, so £2 million less this year.

Members noted the big figures in the realignments and asked if realistic budgets were being set if realignments of this size were needed. Officers explained that there were more conversations with Directors and their teams to ensure the robustness of savings etc. Officers understood that some services were demand led and the importance of understanding the blend of the offer to get meaningful assumptions; there is more resilience confidence about getting the right base budget going forward. Officers discussed issues around market supplement for social workers and the balance back from reduced agency use going forward and stated that they have already delivered £1 million of savings in year so were more confident that with the realignments it balances the budget.

Member sought clarification that income generation for non-schools was £200k less than last year. Officers said they look at the figures overall and just reflect the level of increase; there was more detail in the fees and charges section and they were still looking to take opportunities to maximise income.

Members considered that it looks like a non-controversial budget with lots of green/amber, but looking at the detail the figures are huge. Officers said it was more realistic, with resilience in there to ensure transformation projects can be delivered. In relation to green/amber, finance had worked with service areas to get more robust savings plan, some have already been delivered.

Members referred to recent extreme weather and issues caused, asking if this was paid for by external funding or if it impacts Cardiff Council's budget. Officers explained it was the Emergency Assist Scheme that was used for the immediate aftermath, which was small compared to infrastructure costs; there would be a need for more capital expenditure and this would be over and above what was set aside, the Council would work with Welsh Government on this.

In relation to the contingency fund, Members considered it should be reduced so it is not relied upon, and it could be used for other purposes if the Cabinet Member was confident in the budget. The Cabinet Member said this could be reviewed this year, and brought back to Committee in the Autumn. Officers added that although it was a better situation, they wanted to see the discipline achieved and the savings met; there was still uncertainty around grant funding, Brexit and the UK Budget; a 2% pay increase had been assumed and the Trade Unions had asked for 10%. There is a reason why the council needs a contingency, it increased the resilience of the Authority; if future settlements are better, then the conversation could be had.

Members considered that some Service Area's had been cut to the bone of staff and asked if this was genuine efficiency, if there was an impact on service delivery, the impact to staff and what analysis had been done. Officers stated that the Cabinet report included the risk matrix and mitigation assessment in which post reductions had been flagged; there was reference to workforce planning and internal audit stress testing it; there had been assurance that many posts were vacant posts.

Members asked which Service Areas were missing savings targets this year, by how much and what would the consequences be. The Cabinet Member said that at month 9, Children's Services were the most overspent. It was noted that Facilities Management had been realigned to address issues identified at month 4. Members were concerned that the overspend in FM cost the service area as a whole. Officers

said that there was provision in the budget to address historic issues and comments from the last PRAP letter regarding Security and Energy targets.

Members asked for overspend figures for Social Services. Officers advised these were £5 million, of which £725k was Adults and the rest was Children's. Members noted that Adults were overspent by £725k this year but were expected to save £2.6 million next year. Officers stated that they had built up resource, identified efficiencies, the bottom line had increased by 4% and there were still growth areas. Members wondered why the area couldn't be given what it needed to save and the Cabinet Members stated that this wouldn't identify efficiencies and they were driving the changes.

Members were pleased to see creation of posts but were concerned about vacant posts in areas such as the Youth Service and asked if the Cabinet Member was confident in the timing to deliver the budget. The Cabinet Member said he was and that it was part of the budget planning process and extended time had been allowed for recruitment in this area.

Members discussed agency spend, it was noted that at month 9 this was just over £15 million. The Cabinet Member said it was down from £16 million last year. Officers added that it was mainly in Children's Services and the market supplement should help. It could be difficult to track agency spend as some of it is spent against existing staff budget; it could be tracked over time but ideally there will be a reduction in agency spend as the Council attracts and retains its own staff. Members were concerned there was no visible action plan for this and the Cabinet Member said that there were plans in place to address the issues with recruitment and subsequently reducing agency spend. Members asked if it was a disincentive relying on agency for staff sickness, Officers said it depends on the role; for the front line it addresses the immediate need.

The Chairperson invited Chris Lee to briefly outline the implications for those services for which Committee have direct Scrutiny responsibility within its terms of reference.

The Chairperson invited Members' questions on the service implications within the revenue budget;

Members stated that in relation to CTS, they had previously asked for Cost/Value Analysis. Officers explained that on value analysis, they were doing work around productivity which was around 50-80%. Further information on this analysis would be brought to a future committee.

Members asked how much it would cost for the fleet to be totally electric and were advised that the market was not quite there yet to require electric waste vehicles, there was an opportunity to bid for WG funding for a Green Fleet which would be explored. The Cabinet Member said that there was £124k revenue in Capital Budget; £1 million in Capital Programme next year and there were 90 vehicles planned over the next 2 years.

Members referred to Information Governance and the numbers of FTE's lost referenced as TBC. Members asked if this meant that they haven't been identified or

if there was a potential for compulsory redundancies. Officers explained that there was a turnover of staff in this area and they were looking to lose the right vacant post.

In relation to Digital Services, Members asked for more information on growth. Officers explained it was £80k growth, with 2.19 more members of staff; 1 grade 5 and 1 grade 6. These would work on the Digital Strategy, Mobile app and Chat Bot for customer services through the website; this was a channel shift for customer contact and more development work was needed.

Members considered that the presentation was useful and that in future it should be circulated to Members in advance.

RESOLVED: The Committee AGREED that the Chairperson writes to the Cabinet Members on behalf of the Committee to convey their comments and observations.

61 : CAPITAL STRATEGY 2020-25 - TO FOLLOW

Capital Strategy and Programme 2020/21

The Chairperson welcomed Councillor Chris Weaver, Cabinet Member Finance, Modernisation and Performance; Chris Lee, Corporate Director Resources; Ian Allwood, Head of Finance; Anil Hirani, Operational Manager Capital, Corporate & Treasury for this item.

The Chairperson advised that during this item Members should refer to Appendix F of their budget papers particularly.

The Chairperson invited Ian Allwood to give his presentation, after which he invited questions and comments from Members;

Members discussed the repayment of debts and were advised that the debts would be paid an equal amount over the life of the asset which was 40/45 years maximum. Members asked if there was an option to pay more or less and Officers advised that it would be kept under review, but the debts/costs are not charges to tax payers beyond the life of the assets and there had been external advice from treasury advisors on this. Members expressed concerns over high interest rates in the future and Officers explained that this had been looked at as part of the Treasury Management Strategy and at Audit Committee and it was considered that they were not adverse risks, they were prudent and affordable.

Members discussed the debt over the next 5 years, including revenue and expenditure; with rates likely to go up during this time they considered they would likely have to flex the Capital Finance figures by refinancing existing debts as they mature. Members asked if this flex was on unfavourable assumptions, what the cost of the Capital Financing would be. Officers explained that it was a 30 year plan and the Council Rent Policy pays for the HRA. Assumptions around future RSG look favourable to support Capital Financing. Assumptions are made on interest costs and are built into plans, there are risks and Capital Programmes are reviewed annually. Rates are favourable now to invest, medium term costs are built into plans which also capture and monitor all activity, there are a range of indicators which are reviewed to ensure limits are not exceeded.

Members asked for more information on the £1.5 million for the completion of the Coal Exchange. The Cabinet Member this was funding from a Welsh Government programmed funnelled through the local authority for regeneration. It is a loan to regenerate that part of the City. Members considered that those who bought bedrooms expected a return on their investment and the Cabinet Member stated that they are expecting a desirable outcome

RESOLVED: The Committee AGREED that the Chairperson writes to the Cabinet Members on behalf of the Committee to convey their comments and observations.

62 : URGENT ITEMS (IF ANY)

None received.

63 : DATE OF NEXT MEETING

11th March 2020 at 4.30pm.

The meeting ended at 16.10

POLICY REVIEW AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

11 MARCH 2020

Present: Councillor Walker(Chairperson)
Councillors Ahmed, Berman, Bowen-Thomson, Henshaw, Lister,
Mackie and McKerlich

65 : APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Lister, Councillors Ahmed, Berman, Mackie and Bowen-Thomson may have to leave the meeting early due to prior commitments.

66 : DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

67 : MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 January 2020 were agreed as a correct report and signed by the Chairperson.

68 : DIGITAL STRATEGY

The Chairperson welcomed Councillor Chris Weaver (Cabinet Member Finance, Modernisation & Performance with portfolio responsibility for human resources), Isabelle Bignall (Chief Digital Officer), Chris Lee (Corporate Director, Resources) and Emlyn Nash (Corporate Customer Services Manager – Digital Services) to the meeting.

The Chairperson advised members that an introduction to the Digital Strategy had been provided previously, it had been developed to deliver a 'Digital First' approach as set out in the Corporate Plan. A great deal had been planned to enable the Council to work more efficiently, reassign resources to more critical services, manage rising costs and demand pressures whilst becoming a more agile and flexible organisation.

The Chairperson invited Councillor Weaver to make a statement in which he said that the launch of the strategy had been 2 years ago, however, it was still at an early stage but a very exciting project.

The Chief Digital Officer provided Members with a presentation after which the Chairperson invited questions and comments from Members:

- The Committee were advised that the Digital team were more than happy to provide a 'Bobi' demonstration during the course of another meeting.

Members asked whether there are digitalisation plans which are

not going so well. It was explained that there is support from a very good team and there has been a level of investment in Bobi which has enabled incredibly good progress. The organisation has come a long way. Bobi is limited at the present time but is still learning. It is a process being done every day. For example there were 50 conversations today 16 of which were not understood by Bobi, that figures is reducing all the time.

Members sought reassurance in relation to the default language and were advised that it immediately asks your language preference.

Members were advised that currently there was no competition from other authorities, other projects have been abandoned due to the difficulties with the Welsh language. Microsoft were challenged to build something that worked correctly in Welsh. People use Welsh to different levels and the Council now owns the language capabilities.

- Members noted the huge challenge of agile working particular given the present health scares and how performance management would be monitored. The Committee were advised the people have to be right, the process has to be right and then the technical backing needs to be right. The authority is technically prepared, lessons from other service areas have been learned, for example the trip undertaken to Amazon. People need to feel empowered and not to feel isolated whilst agile working. A strategy will be forthcoming in December.

Members commented that Office 365 is certainly better than the previously system but were concerned that due to the high level of security on the system, which is often being accessed out of hours, there was no facility to access out of hours support. It was noted that unfortunately, as a result of financial considerations, out of hours support will not be made available. Both the Council and Welsh Government are held to high standards in terms of cyber security. 51% emails received into the organisation are either spam or phishing.

Multi factor authentication has to remain to enable the Council to retrain the necessary certification. Whilst frustrating it is a requirement.

- Members queried the financial impact and impact on staff of the various digital items. Members were advised there is a business analyst and project manager and work is undertaking with the service delivery team and with the public before a process is added to the app or website. Fly tipping was a very challenging area bearing in mind the information that was provided for the return for Welsh Government. The process has to be right for all of those involved.

Members were interested to know whether the increase in reporting has affected the response/return time, whether staff have been overloaded and whether staff to be redeployed. It was noted that the data is on the return to Welsh Government, there has to be information as to how long each report takes. There was an increase when the service was digitised but it has now settled. People will report more, ie, fly tipping if it is easy to report. It helps to understand where resources need to be focussed.

Members were advised that even though there has been an increase in fly tipping report, the number of teams collecting the rubbish has not increased. The nature of the information obtained via the app enables routes to be planned, reports are condensed and the geo tag provides precise details of the location.

- Members commented that there is still information missing from the presentation including impacts, outcomes, benefits and the downsides of the various activities and whether or not those activities are managing the rising costs and demand pressures and increasing productivity. It was explained that at the current time the technology is still being put in place to allow the efficiencies to come through. Whilst calls to C2C in some areas has reduced, it has increased in other areas. For the first period it was not going to reduce costs but overall it would. Reporting increases have not reached the point that it is costing the Council money.

The agile working pilot with social services provided both positive and negative material. The technology worked however the processes failed. As a technologist we are ready as an authority not quite.

Members asked whether information is collected from the app in relation to its use, the areas in which people are using and whether there is shifts in areas where fly tipping is being reported – particularly areas where historically there is an issue with fly tipping but there are less frequent reports from areas where people may not be in a position to engage in use of the app. Whilst Members were told that heat maps are created showing areas of fly tipping and reports are run on a regular basis, there is not requirement to provide personal details. However, consideration would be given to accessing historical information as to fly tipping areas to see whether there have been any shifting in areas so that the question of whether engagement with the app is the reason for the shift.

The CD, Resources advised that there is a business to deliver savings in the longer term. As the tool bed in, there will need to be a return to the business case. The first years saving against the Chat Bot has been realised.

Members sought information in relation to Smart Parking, the

awareness of parking sensors in parking spaces and how they are accessed? Members were advised that it is a 2g app which the Council did not develop. On the whole it is being downloaded by people coming into the city. It does need upgrading as it is not quite where it needs to be.

RESOLVED: The Committee AGREED that the Chairperson writes to the Cabinet Members on behalf of the Committee to convey their comments and observations.

69 : PROCUREMENT STRATEGY

The Chairperson welcomed Councillor Chris Weaver (Cabinet Member Finance, Modernisation & Performance with portfolio responsibility for human resources), Chris Lee (Corporate Director, Resources) Steve Robinson (Head of Commissioning and Procurement) and John Paxton (Strategy and Development Manager) to the meeting.

The Chairperson advised members that the recently refreshed Corporate Plan includes a procurement focussed step to deliver the Modernising and Integrating procurement focussed step to deliver the Modernising and Integrating Our Public Services Well-being objective – to strengthen social partnership arrangements in Cardiff by updating the procurement strategy by 2020.

Steve Robinson provided Members with a presentation after which the Chairperson invited questions and comments from Members:

- The Chair asked for a brief outline of the Foundational Economy to be provided. The outline provided Members with information that it was about the core industries that are used by the public; social care, food and hospitals being examples. Those core industries need to be in a particular place to support everyday life. Through the delivery of those services the spend can be kept local. It was noted that a local provider would not get a weighting for being local; they are not looked on any more favourably. There will be a standard evaluation model.
- Members commented that £435m is an enormous amount of expenditure some of which will vary for year to year and queried what of that amount is day to day expenditure. Officers indicated that ultimately the responsibility for managing budgets sits with the Directors and their staff but SMT gets quarterly reports on the overall spend. Particular areas of spend can then be targeted depending on when spend is increasing or decreasing.
- Members asked what the figure spent on repetitive expenditure was and whether it was either growing or dropping year on year. Officers advised that in terms of first 9 months of this year, overall spend had fallen due to a decrease in construction projects spend but there was an increase of revenue spend of £11.8m. It will vary by category. The single biggest area of recurring spend is on Children's Services, it is being tracked against the reporting.

- Members discussed the £103m spent on building and estates, much of which must be on maintenance projects where there is reliance on a trusted supplier, and how that the quality of work and value for money is monitored. It was noted that management of the contracts sit within the Directorates that have responsibility for those services. The procurement teams then provide support and challenge.

Members raised previous issues with the quality and performance of work carried out by contractors and were advised that a set of performance measures are written into the contract which is part of the early management planning and that management of those contracts sit within the relevant Directorate.

With a view to being able to provide assurance to SMT in respect of the quality and performance of contractors a new approach to contract management is being introduced which will be rolled out across all contracts. The measure will be contained within the new Directorate Delivery Plan which is being redeveloped which will establish and overall understanding about the position of performance and contract.

Members noted that the current monitoring of quality and performance is inconsistent and inadequate.

- Members discussed delivery of Core, Non-Core and Voluntary Contractual Community Benefits and the changes referred to within the strategy which seeks to deliver Community Benefits across all appropriate Council contracts and utilises Community Benefits clauses in the tendering process. Members queried whether the 10% weighting figure could be higher.
- Members asked for further information in relation to other priorities namely the real living wage and the foundational economy and how is that going to help with ethically based procurement practices and decisions. Officers referred to the significant increase in terms of the pre-qualification, an example being the increase in questions about modern slavery. It has to be balanced with keeping the document straight forward to allow smaller businesses to be able to respond. There are limitations on the questions that can be asked. Consideration has to be given to the differential between the organisation versus their tender which is about how they will deliver the contract.

Members discussed the issue of whether there should be a mandatory requirement in respect of the real living wage. Officers advised that Welsh Government has currently consulted and is developing legislation, expected in July this year. They are grappling with the issue of employment legislation and are looking to be stronger in terms of the real living wage, although

employment legislation is not a devolved power.

Members queried whether a difference in the weighting could be applied to those that do pay the real living wage. The Cabinet Member and Officers felt that that suggestion was worth evaluating.

- Reference was made to previously conversations regarding the speed of contract replacements when a contractor has either been dismissed or has quit voluntarily. The urgency and continuity of work needs to be addressed, interim arrangements can be made whilst a tender is being run. The threshold figures will often dictate the length of time the contract takes to deliver. There can be procurement by way of restricted procedure which allows for a series of questions to be returned and considered. Those questionnaires have to follow the relevant procedure. It would be hoped to complete that particular progress within 3 months.
- Members enquired as to how we can help smaller local suppliers participate and engage in the process including those within the 3rd sector. Officers explained that they work closely with larger contractors to encourage use of the local supply chain. Some of the Social Value Measures are centred specifically around rewarding social value for those who commit to work with 3rd sector organisations.

RESOLVED: The Committee AGREED that the Chairperson writes to the Cabinet Members on behalf of the Committee to convey their comments and observations.

70 : SCRUTINY IMPACT ASSESSMENT MODEL

The Chairperson reminded Members that a Committee Task and Finish Inquiry had been ongoing to review the impact of the Council's Scrutiny function to date, and to develop a model to capture the benefits of scrutiny activity. A proposed model has been developed from two in depth pieces of primary research.

The model and recommendations were outlined by Nicola Newton (Principal Scrutiny Officer). Gladys Hingco (Research Officer) was also present at the meeting. The Chairperson invited questions and comments from Members:

- Members discussed the time frame for the pilot and the quantifiable elements and the fact that there needs to be a level of review. It is accepted that the preliminary evaluation can be undertaken once a response is received from Cabinet, however, there needs to be review.

RESOLVED: To agree the report and forward for consideration by Cabinet at its earliest opportunity.

71 : FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

RESOLVED: That the Forward Work Programme be noted.

72 : URGENT ITEMS (IF ANY)

There were no urgent items reported.

73 : DATE OF NEXT MEETING - 5 MAY 2020

The next scheduled meeting of the Policy Review and Performance Committee is on Tuesday 5 May 2020 at 4.30 pm.

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**CYNGOR CAERDYDD
CARDIFF COUNCIL**

POLICY REVIEW & PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

15 September 2020

ANNUAL REPORT 2019/20

Purpose of Report

1. This report seeks Committee's approval of the Committee's draft Annual Report 2019/20, at **Appendix A**, prior to it being laid before Council.

Background

2. The Cardiff Council Constitution requires all Scrutiny Committees to '*report annually to the Council on their workings and make recommendations for future work programmes and amended working methods if appropriate*'.¹
3. Attached at **Appendix A** is a copy of the Policy Review and Performance Scrutiny Committee's draft Annual Report 2019/20. This report lists all items considered from June 2019 – March 2020, when this Committee last met prior to the Covid-19 lockdown, and provides examples of the various types of scrutiny undertaken. The report concludes by setting out topics that the Committee has indicated a future scrutiny committee may like to include in its 2020-21 work programme.

Way Forward

4. During their meeting, Members may wish to consider the draft Annual Report, attached at **Appendix A** and suggest any amendments required.

Legal Implications

5. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this

¹ Part 2, Article 6.3 (d), Cardiff Council Constitution, as at 9 March 2019

report are to consider and review matters, there are no direct legal implications. However, legal implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet/Council will set out any legal implications arising from those recommendations. All decisions taken by or on behalf of the Council must (a) be within the legal powers of the Council; (b) comply with any procedural requirement imposed by law; (c) be within the powers of the body or person exercising powers on behalf of the Council; (d) be undertaken in accordance with the procedural requirements imposed by the Council e.g. Scrutiny Procedure Rules; (e) be fully and properly informed; (f) be properly motivated; (g) be taken having regard to the Council's fiduciary duty to its taxpayers; and (h) be reasonable and proper in all the circumstances.

Financial Implications

6. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters, there are no direct financial implications at this stage in relation to any of the work programme. However, financial implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet/Council will set out any financial implications arising from those recommendations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is recommended to consider, if necessary amend, and approve the Policy Review & Performance Scrutiny Committee draft Annual Report 2019/20, attached at **Appendix A**, to be laid before Council.

Davina Fiore
Director of Governance & Legal Services
9 September 2020



Policy Review and Performance Scrutiny Committee

Annual Report 2019–2020

June 2020



Cardiff Council

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

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Committee Terms of Reference

- ❖ To scrutinise, monitor and review the overall operation of the Cardiff Programme for Improvement and the effectiveness of the general implementation of the Council’s policies, aims and objectives.
- ❖ To scrutinise, monitor and review the effectiveness of the Council’s systems of financial control and administration and use of human resources.
- ❖ To assess the impact of partnerships with, and resources and services provided by, external organisations including the Welsh Government, joint local government services, Welsh Government Sponsored Public Bodies and quasi-departmental non-government bodies on the effectiveness of Council service delivery.
- ❖ To report to an appropriate Cabinet or Council meeting on its findings and to make recommendations on measures which may enhance Council performance in this area.

Committee Membership 2019-20



Councillor David Walker
Chair



Councillor Ali Ahmed



Councillor Rodney Berman



Councillor Bernie
Bowen Thomson



Councillor Jane Henshaw



Councillor Norma Mackie



Councillor Ashley Lister



Councillor Rod McKerlich

Chair's Foreword – 2020 - a challenging year

Few would disagree that 2020 has been a challenging year for all organisations. The Council has faced the **challenge of delivering frontline services** with decreasing budgets during the COVID-19 crisis whilst implementing remote working for staff wherever possible. This year the Committee, as have all, faced **challenges in delivering some of its programmed meetings**, due to unexpected and unavoidable events. It is important that decisions are made quickly and efficiently in unpredictable times, and strong governance requires that scrutiny continues to play its critical friend role in times of emergency. We know that the effects of this year's crisis will be felt for years to come and this committee will no doubt find itself asking questions about the Council's response, its impact and how it is preparing for crises which will inevitably lie ahead.

The importance of scrutiny in challenging times leads me to reflect on the **challenge of resourcing the committee**. I sincerely thank those that have participated for bringing their expertise and experience in representing their constituents. The work captured in this Annual Report has been achieved with a reduced compliment of back bench Members over the whole year and I wish to take this opportunity to implore all political parties to use their full allocation of scrutiny seats if they wish to influence policy. If that fails then a further look at how constitutionally these gaps can be filled by others may well be a necessary way forward.

Our work has covered many topics that are the foundation to delivering effective council services in challenging times. The Committee's Performance Panel has continued to consolidate its innovation of introducing cross committee interaction with **Corporate Plan** target setting at a policy development stage, with the support of the Leader. This has helped secure impact for all five scrutiny committees within the Corporate Planning process. Such progressive interaction demonstrates the valuable impact that effective scrutiny can have on the Corporate Plan, the Council's highest level strategic document.

This year we have seen clear evidence that the organisation is taking the development of a **Customer Service** culture seriously by positively implementing the recommendations made by the PRAP report on this topic. We have also been fully engaged in policy development to progress the **Smarter Working** project of the Capital Ambition Delivery Programme and have been encouraged by progress of the **Digital Strategy**. We consider strategies such as these are the potential foundations

in improving the quality of services the Council is delivering to its customers and are crucial elements of its emergency response. We continue to monitor how well partner organisations are working together, having scrutinised the first Annual Report 2018/19 of the **Cardiff Public Services Board** against the Cardiff Well-Being Plan 2018-2023.

Finally, those Councillors and officers who have dedicated time to scrutiny over the year will recognise its value in enriching the decision-making of the organisation. We feel its value needs to be understood and evidenced both by the function itself, by the service areas it scrutinises and by the Council as a whole. For some time I have felt that there needs to be a process in place to monitor the implementation and outcomes of agreed scrutiny Task and Finish report recommendations. Following substantial high level research and committee work we have published our inquiry report on **Scrutiny Impact**, making recommendations for capturing the value of scrutiny through monitoring its impact both quantitatively and qualitatively.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Walker". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Councillor David Walker
Chair, Policy Review & Performance Scrutiny Committee

Overview and Statistics 2019-20

This Annual Report covers the work of the Committee between June 2019 and May 2020. At the time of writing the Council is delivering highly visible front-facing and essential local services against the backdrop of a world pandemic that will become a part of history. Our responsibilities under our terms of reference and work over the past year have challenged many areas of the organisation, some front facing, most the back office foundations that support good service delivery. We hope our internal critical friend challenge has helped the Council to prepare to deliver services successfully alongside its partners in times of emergency.

Throughout 2019-20 the Committee has held 8 formal public meetings and one informal joint meeting together with the Environmental Scrutiny Committee. The committee meetings programmed in December 2019 and May 2020 did not take place due to an unexpected General Election and the Covid-19 pandemic respectively. We sent 18 letters to the Cabinet and Senior Management Team, sharing the Committee's comments, concerns and recommendations following the scrutiny of 21 topic areas in line with our Terms of Reference. In response the Committee received 12 letters from the Cabinet.

The webcasting of formal meetings remains a feature of this Committee's proceedings and has steadily increased from 18% in 2018-19 to 66% of meetings in 2019-20. The highest number of views was 87 in January 2020 and the underlying average was 58 views per meeting. The Committee looks forward to continuing its contribution to improving transparent democratic engagement.

It continues to be the case that Scrutiny is as successful as the capacity, skills and development of Members that volunteer to sit on Scrutiny Committees. In June 2019 we welcomed Councillor Jane Henshaw to the committee, and

Councillor McKerlich returned following his year as Deputy Lord Mayor, replacing Cllr Hudson. However, following a change in the political balance of the Council in June 2019, the Committee has carried two vacancies for a large part of the year. Councillor Boyle was unable to retain his seat on the committee, and a seat allocated to the Welsh National Party remains vacant. Councillor Ali Ahmed joined the committee in February 2020. Councillor Boyle's departure has meant the two remaining members of the Committee's task and finish inquiry have delivered its final report on *The Impact of Scrutiny*. The Committee has also continued to support its Performance Panel, which has a growing corporate planning and performance remit, for which four Members volunteered. To support its work the Committee continues to benefit from one full time principal scrutiny officer, a proportion of the scrutiny research post, and a committee clerk. High level oversight of its work is through the Head of Democratic Services.

The Committee uses a variety of recognised scrutiny approaches (*as listed above in Contents*) to examine the topics it agrees for its own work programme at the start of the year. Highlights that particularly illustrate the Committee's impact this year include: the ongoing informal collaborative joint scrutiny of the Corporate Plan, illustrated by a number of changes to the Corporate Plan embraced by the Cabinet put forward by all five scrutiny chairs; our engagement in the re-shaping of performance and governance frameworks to gear up for the requirements of the forthcoming Local Government Elections (Wales) Bill, which proposes taking self-assessment and peer review to another level; and completion of a task and finish inquiry to evaluate the impact of the scrutiny process on the delivery of Council services.

The following pages describe the Committee's key activities in 2019-20, capture the comments, observations and recommendations made by Members, and also the Cabinet's response to our work.

Work Programme Impact 2019-20

Task & Finish Scrutiny - *Where the Committee considers there is an opportunity to examine in detail the issues and wider options available, to assist the Council in improving the way a service is delivered.*

The Impact of Scrutiny

March 2020

This year the Committee has completed its task and finish inquiry to evaluate the impact of the scrutiny function on the delivery of Council services. A task group set out to address the absence of a mechanism for capturing the impact of the work of all scrutiny committees, and the value of the scrutiny function to the organisation resulting from the implementation of its recommendations.

The key output of the inquiry was the development of a practical model that, if applied, will collect data and evidence throughout the municipal year. This evidence will provide the basis for performance assessment of the scrutiny process and an evidence based annual report to Council.

Members agreed to a primary research heavy approach, firstly to establish the impact of scrutiny in Cardiff Council since 2012; and secondly to establish options for developing the model following reference to organisations such as the National Assembly for Wales, UK Parliamentary Select Committees, the Centre for Public Scrutiny, the Association for Public Service Excellence, the House of Commons Communities and Local Government Committee, the Constitution Unit of University College London, and the Welsh Local Government Scrutiny Officer network.

The model will capture quantitative and qualitative impact in 3 parts. Firstly a quantitative assessment of output based on monitoring the number of recommendations made and the immediate outcome achieved, as demonstrated by the acceptance or rejection of these recommendations. This part introduces the concept of '*substantiveness*' as a key measure in

determining the level of influence or impact that recommendations have on policy. Secondly, the self-assessment process outlined in the proposed model extends beyond the scrutiny function to service areas, requiring self-assessment of the implementation of accepted scrutiny recommendations and a report to the relevant scrutiny committee on a 6 monthly basis. Thirdly, the model broadens the concept of capturing scrutiny's impact by recognising that its influence is not always quantifiable, and yet it can make a tangible qualitative difference to the way in which the Council delivers its services.

The Committee is therefore recommending that Cabinet adopts the model for capturing the impact of scrutiny, acknowledging that it represents early compliance with the self-assessment requirements set out in the forthcoming Local Government Election (Wales) Bill; and that the scrutiny function pilots the model to provide a framework and database on which a quantitative assessment of its impact on Council services can be captured and reported to Full Council annually. It also recommends an extension of the governance arrangements currently in place for responding to the recommendations of a scrutiny inquiry, to those generated by the committee in correspondence.

The inquiry further recommends that the Cabinet office and service areas make arrangements to track and report on the implementation of accepted scrutiny recommendations for presentation to the scrutiny committee within 6 months of approval, integrating with the Council's planning and performance framework; and that directors are accountable for reporting such progress;

Following the pilot it is proposed to develop and brand the model for potential sharing as best practice with other public bodies and local authorities.

Monitoring Improvement - *Where the Committee has undertaken monitoring of the Council's improvement progress.*

Sickness Absence

June 2019 & January 2020

Once again the Committee has focussed on the Council's progress in tackling Sickness Absence, programming scrutiny in June 2019 (2018-19 outturn) and January 2020 (2019-20 mid-year).

The Committee continued to offer its comments in constructive vein given an 11.53 FTE outturn for 2018-19 against a target of 9.5 FTE. We commented on adjustments to the Council's Employee Attendance and Wellbeing policy for 2019; on the widely differing levels of sickness across service areas despite bespoke action plans; and we requested that analysis of quarters 3 and 4 data providing significant insight into the reasons for the final 2018-19 outturn be shared. We were particularly interested in the sickness absence levels recorded for 45-64 year old employees, noted initiatives such as the review of the Carers Policy, the active Carers Network, and the option for carers to register as such. We felt strongly it was difficult to separate stress into work-related and non-work related sickness absence.

Concluding that measures undertaken in 2018-19 hadn't delivered the Council's sickness target, we felt strongly that there was an opportunity for the analysis of the outcomes to inform greater proactivity in tackling sickness absence with more preventative approaches. As mental health and muscular-skeletal sickness continues to increase, along with occupational health referrals, we consider it is important to proactively examine the underlying causes as to *why* injuries are occurring.

In summary, at the end of the 2018-19 performance year the Committee expressed concern that the considerable analysis and data the Cabinet had

undertaken was not informing a more preventative, and thereby proactive, approach to tackling sickness absence in the Council.

It was therefore encouraging in January 2020 (2019-20 mid-year) to hear of new initiatives in place to address sickness levels, particularly that policies on annual and special leave had been reviewed. We heard about the many complimentary health services now available and new services introduced to support mental health.

However, despite these new initiatives, a mid-year outturn forecast of 11.09FTE days lost in 2019-20 against a 9.5FTE target was discouraging. Quarters 1 and 2 absence levels for the year were exceeding levels for the same quarters in 2018-19 and long term sickness absence remained the primary cause. The forecast was even more discouraging given the fact that an increasing number of local authorities in Wales appeared to have improved their levels of sickness absence to levels below 10 days per employee a year.

In response the Cabinet Member Finance, Modernisation, and Performance reassured us that a significant amount of work is underway to try to turn the current performance around. Efforts are concentrated around long term sickness and specifically around those ailments which cause the highest levels of absence and it may take time to see the impact of the interventions recently introduced.

This Committee has monitored sickness absence over many years, noting the falling outturns from 2013 have started increasing in recent years. Factors in the recent rise were considered to include organisational changes, smaller staff numbers and an increase in non-work related stress. We recommended a closer look at those Welsh authorities with sickness outcomes of less than 10 days to assess the measures taken. In response we were reassured that the intention was to contact a variety of organisations, both in the public and private sectors, to request their sickness information, and to include a request for data regarding stress related absences and the actions that they are taking to reduce this.

The Committee, on both occasions it has scrutinised sickness this year, urged the Council to lift its vision on sickness from an individual level to an organisational, preventative picture. This requires the Council to perform an organisational stress risk assessment, as required under Regulation 3 of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999. Therefore, while noting the work the Council has already done and the services provided, the Committee considers that if we do not assess and control the risks to employees some will continue to suffer stress related issues. We provided links to useful sites that would assist in undertaking an organisational stress risk assessment and have asked HR and Health and Safety officers to identify what can be introduced over and above the initiatives already in place.

Having heard in June 2019 that sickness absence in Waste Management had improved, in January 2020 the Committee took a case study deep dive into the effectiveness of its action plans and the challenges it faces. High levels of sickness absence in Waste Management are a long standing problem. Long term sickness absence (77%) significantly outweighs short term sickness absence (23%) with a relatively small number of cases accounting for a significant proportion of the overall absence. Disingenuous sickness is present but not a huge issue, though evidence of returning to work prior to the onset of half pay at 6 months is notable.

Waste Management has clearly taken a step change in looking at 'safety' alongside 'health' and there was evidence of the service recognising the benefit of linking Health and Safety to sickness levels. We commend the aspiration to improve sickness absence levels in this specific area by 20-30%. Line management accountability has been reinforced to ensure full compliance with all policy requirements and the overall level of sickness for 2019-20 is predicted to be 3 days less per FTE than for the previous year. A genuinely stretch target of 14.8 days is in place for 2020-21.

a Proposal for Improvement on the Council to strengthen the role of scrutiny in engaging with the CADP programme and increase accountability to increase momentum. Following discussions with the programme manager, in September 2019 the Committee sought early engagement to shape and agree a 6 monthly report to scrutiny, and how best to ensure the committee could measure future progress.

We offered clear guidance that the same portfolio dashboard reports should be made available to Scrutiny as are prepared for CADP Programme Board and Senior Management Team. However, the scrutiny report should also include a one page overview of each programme, progress achieved, risks currently under discussion by the Programme Board, and timelines going forward. We suggested a qualitative narrative that captures what has been learned from experience and supports critical reflection as well as quantitative monitoring of progress and RAG ratings. This would assist us in the selection of deeper dives and enable the Committee to refer concerns and recommendations to the other four Scrutiny Committees where projects of concern fall within their Terms of Reference. It would also address and satisfy the Proposal for Improvement in respect of Scrutiny raised by WAO in their recent review of the governance of the Programme.

The Committee has since considered in depth a number of projects that sit within the programme and looks forward to an overview of the programme on its future work programme.

This Committee has traditionally aimed to strengthen the links between internal scrutiny and external auditors, believing their Proposals for Improvement are a useful steer for the focus of our work during the year. It was therefore regrettable that the WAO relationship manager felt unable to accept our annual invitation to consider the Wales Audit Office Annual Improvement Report to the Council for 2018-19. The Cabinet Member Finance, Modernisation and Performance has since asked the Chief

Executive and Assistant Director for Performance and Partnerships to pass on the Committee's concerns to the Council's WAO relationship manager.

The Committee heard the 2018-19 Annual Improvement Report was broadly in line with the key challenges and priorities identified by Cabinet, *looked after children and outcomes for vulnerable children, waste management and street scene services, sickness absence, corporate landlord, and financial pressures*. We will ensure these five priorities are a focus of scrutiny work programmes going forward.

We requested that scrutiny be an effective part of the internal peer review developed in response to any mandatory self-assessment proposals within the Local Government Elections (Wales) Bill. In response the Cabinet Member stated that the Council is already well positioned to meet many of the requirements of the Bill, currently exemplifying some of the practices it seeks to establish, most notably through the role of the Performance Sub-Group and the development of the Corporate Plan. In responding to the Bill he is clear that the Council's Scrutiny function is a major stakeholder within its Planning and Performance Framework and gave his commitment to work in partnership to ensure that the Committee (and Scrutiny in general) play an effective part of the self-assessment proposed within the Bill.

In respect of the auditors Proposals for Improvement following a review of the CADP, we were informed that a management review seeks to improve the allocation of resources to specific programme projects and would be concluded by the end of the year. We requested an opportunity to be involved in discussion around improvements to the performance framework aimed at strengthening the links between financial and performance management, which was acknowledged by the Cabinet Member.

Finally, we requested that Cabinet's ongoing refresh and review of the Capital Ambition Delivery Programme factors Scrutiny into the governance arrangements at the outset, specifically supporting our proposal for 6 monthly scrutiny oversight and monitoring of the Programme. This request too

received commitment from the Cabinet Member that officers would make appropriate arrangements for ensuring that scrutiny has regular oversight over the delivery of Capital Ambition, and that Scrutiny oversight is built into the Council's revised Capital Ambition delivery framework.

Customer Services

November 2019

Since the Committees 2018 inquiry report on Customer Leadership we have championed the importance of developing a corporate-wide culture that has customer service at its heart. The November 2019 presentation to Committee showed real commitment and clear progress since that scrutiny report was published. The Council is in the process of developing a customer service strategy and this is year one of a five year plan, clear evidence that the organisation is taking the development of a customer service culture seriously. We will continue to endorse the message that customer service is everyone's responsibility whether frontline or back office.

Further evidence of the impact since the committee's inquiry is the Council's 5 year membership of the Institute of Customer Services (ICS). We remain keen to establish how the outcomes of a customer strategy will be measured and have asked for more evidence of plans when we next consider progress. Cultivating a relationship with the Institute of Customer Service in the initial 12 month period has strengthened customer service culture as they have specialist understanding of the complexities that facing a large organisation.

The Committee's original report recommended *ensuring each member of staff understands who their internal or external customers are* and re-enforcing this within the Personal Development Review conversation. We were advised that a customer service competency now features in all Personal Development Reviews.

We welcomed evidence of growing corporate support to move the Council's culture towards appreciation and response to customers and their needs. We will continue to monitor leadership commitment to delivering the corporate

focus on customer culture, and we encourage the formal celebration of customer service success such as the Customer Service Hero award nominations

The Committee heard innovative ways would be sought to ensure that excellent customer service training is available and delivered to all staff across the authority. We welcomed the positive staff response to training and established that it will be necessary to revisit training resources in the future.

Monitoring Performance - *Where the Committee has undertaken monitoring of the Council's performance.*

Workforce Strategy 2018-21

June 2019

A progress update on the Workforce Strategy 2018-21 resulted in comments and observations on agile working, the integration of council policies, the Health and Well-being programme, how well the workforce reflects its customer base, zero based budgeting and monitoring performance.

The Committee was interested in the challenge of smarter, agile working and its resource implications for employees, accommodation and technology, and later in the year considered the Smarter Working project. When we first considered the Workforce Strategy in May 2018 we understood that it aimed to strengthen the links between business, financial and workforce planning, with the intended outcome of improving overall performance including delivery of higher customer service standards. In June 2019 we re-iterated that we consider it important to ensure that the Council's PPDR system has strong links to the Workforce Strategy and is included in its documentation and processes.

We requested attendance figures for activities organised under the Health and Well-being programme. We were also keen to establish progress in respect of the Council's levels of BME employees within the workforce, being particularly

interested in the size of the increase and the percentage of BME applicants that are successfully appointed having applied.

The Committee highlighted that over the past 10 years the number of FTE employees has decreased by 20%. We consider it important to establish existing and future budget and staffing needs by taking a fundamental look at the resources required to deliver essential services. We therefore suggested taking a zero based budgeting approach to arrive at the correct number required. Similarly members considered it important to be clear about the outcomes the Council is expecting from its workforce processes and activities, to ensure it is able to measure success. We suggested using productivity to effectively illustrate the outcome of the Workforce Strategy and inform staffing projections.

Annual Well-being Report 2018-19

July 2019

In July 2019 the Committee welcomed the new Annual Well-Being Report 2018-19, describing a positive position of council performance for the 2018-19 year. We felt there were a number of opportunities for improvement and requested informal discussion with the Head of Partnerships and Performance to assist in its continual improvement.

The public document contained a variety of inconsistent terminology potentially confusing to members of the public; the variety of information sources and the factors used to determine the self-assessment of objectives were unclear. Approximately 25% of KPI's in the report had no associated data or targets, the justification for which we considered should have been explained in the report. We consider all these are potential areas for improvement in the future.

The Committee considered clarity was needed regarding the financial implications for the capital programme of the backlog of essential maintenance for corporate building, estimated to be approximately £100m. We were advised that key strategies to progress the corporate estate would

be considered by Cabinet in the near future and we would expect to be involved in the decision making on these strategies.

Members proposed that additional performance indicators be developed to include the impact and levels of poverty; the number of new jobs created following a council apprenticeship; and the number of Council contractors paying their employees a living wage.

Budget Monitoring 2019-20

October 2019

Month 4 is the point in the budget year at which pressures can be identified that will enable the Council to plan for action to balance the budget. This year the Committee discovered that by month 4 the Council's directorates had a projected overspend of £7.018million and we made a number of observations to Cabinet.

We consider there should be greater use of trend analysis in setting budgets, particularly in social services. The Council appears not to be learning from previous experience of overspending where upward trending is clear. We urged the Cabinet Member to factor trend analysis into business case discussions, and his response agreed that trend analysis provides understanding of the impact any interventions or mitigations will have alongside of the level of risk involved.

The Committee was concerned that approximately a third of targeted savings for 2019-20 were projected to be unmet. We felt councillors appear to receive advice on potential savings opportunities that are not actually achievable, and a more robust system of detailed savings business cases would be vital in planning 2020-21 budgets. Cabinet's response confirmed work on delivering efficiencies would guarantee savings for 2020-21 and a budget challenge process would ensure that business plans changing the delivery of a service would provide a high level of assurance that savings will be delivered, with a clear understanding of the risk involved.

We feel strongly that there is an opportunity for improved financial reporting to be of greater assistance to managers in delivering services and a more current reporting mechanism on the budget position would enable quicker management response to adverse variances within service areas. We also noted that the Corporate Director Resources agreed that there was an opportunity to improve budget forecasting.

At this scrutiny the Committee took a deep dive into two services with notable overspends that fall directly within its remit, Facilities Management and Fleet Services. In respect of Facilities Management we established there are several challenges ahead, such as the provision of security services, the management of buildings, and a requirement for incentives to decrease the use of energy in council buildings. It was unclear whether overspending on energy at month 4 was a consequence of excessive energy use or increased energy costs. However it is clear that the running costs of buildings is an issue and the Committee will factor this into its forthcoming scrutiny of the new five year Property Strategy.

In respect of Fleet Management the number of vehicles being processed through the workshop has increased, and since the Council has purchased its fleet its maintenance means the productivity of the workshop has needed to increase. We were encouraged to hear that more opportunities are being identified to utilise vehicles across many services.

Digital Strategy

March 2020

The Committee found the Chief Digital Officers progress report on the Council's Digital Strategy encouraging. We consider strategies such as this are the foundation to improving the quality of services the Council is delivering to its customers. However we highlighted some opportunities for improving our monitoring of progress in the future.

There has been a claimed improvement in productivity from the increasing digital agility of the Council and we intend to monitor such improvement over time, therefore we requested that in future we have sight of performance

statistics in advance to inform our scrutiny. We look forward to sight of the annual report of digital progress against planned actions. There has clearly been a notable move in accessing Council services from desktop interaction to mobile device, so we feel it would be useful to understand *who* is using the App, particularly if it is possible to analyse patterns across different areas of Cardiff.

The Committee is interested in the impact on staff of the new digital channels for customer service, and also in Bobi the Chatbot, recently launched as the next step in digital customer service. We note the Director of Corporate Resources view that it will be important to return to the business case when expanding services available through this channel. We have requested a demonstration in the near future and feel Bobi may be attractive to other organisations.

Members took the opportunity to highlight the challenges and frustrations they face when IT support is unavailable out of hours and urged that all councillors are supported in a familiarisation training session to resolve their own password reset.

Pre-decision Scrutiny - *Where the Committee has evaluated and commented on policy proposals before they are considered by the Cabinet, providing the Cabinet with an understanding of Scrutiny Member's views prior to making their decision.*

Draft Corporate Plan 2020-23

February 2020

A fundamental role of the Committee is the pre-decision scrutiny of the Council's draft Corporate Plan each year. This is undertaken simultaneously with pre-decision scrutiny of the draft Budget, to ensure that the proposals support the priorities as set out in the Corporate Plan.

Scrutiny of the final draft Plan followed informal collaboration between the Cabinet and all five scrutiny committees (see p30). Following scrutiny of the final draft the Chair, on behalf of the Committee, its Performance Panel, and

all Chairs of Scrutiny, placed on record that all parties recognised the benefit of informal engagement with the Cabinet during development of the Corporate Plan for 2020-23. The impact of informal joint scrutiny was clear as a majority of the points made during that meeting had been addressed within the final draft and were evident in the Plan brought before the five Committees for formal pre-decision scrutiny.

Members felt that the final published draft Plan was far more accessible and had greatly facilitated their preparations for the formal meetings. The Committee therefore requested that in future this version of the Plan, including significant graphics and benchmarking illustrations, be made available prior to the Performance Panel meeting with scrutiny chairs.

During the scrutiny Members commented with concern on increasing the numbers of Looked After Children fostered by Local Authority carers; the importance of contingency budgets to react to extreme weather; that the Corporate Plan should acknowledge the challenges faced by the Waste Management service around efficiency, productivity, poor supervision and high sickness absence rates; and the forthcoming review of the LDP that would capture Cardiff's low-carbon transition. We welcomed a fresh focus on reducing sickness absence, that work will continue with Directorates to better understand the causes.

Draft Budget Proposals 2020-21

February 2020

Against a backdrop of a better than expected financial settlement from Welsh Government, this year the Committee dedicated its budget scrutiny to its overarching corporate financial remit, taking an overview of Budget Proposals 2020-21, including a focus on the Council's Capital Strategy. Following the scrutiny the Committee swiftly captured its comments and concerns and relayed them to the Cabinet Member, Finance, Modernisation and Performance in time for Cabinet the following afternoon.

The Committee re-iterated its concerns about overspending, particularly in the areas of Children's Services, Waste Management and Facilities Management

We received reassurance that the Finance service considers that the Waste Management service can deliver on its budget, expecting greater resilience in the projections and outcomes for 2020-21. There has been a Waste Management restructure, a new Chief Officer, and a strengthening of finance function support to the service area. Across the Council the section 151 officer was confident that budget estimates are now more robust and overspends can be avoided, There is a long history of large Social Services overspends and each year reassurances are given but we have yet to see annual spending come close to matching the budget for this service area.

We noted the number of red risks shown within the budget statement had reduced from previous years, were reassured there is a move towards more regular monitoring of spending and cost reduction, and we placed a marker that we wish to hear more about what is achieved during the coming financial year. In respect of risk analysis, Members probed whether it is possible to reduce the Council's £3m contingency fund and many considered it an unnecessary insurance against poor budgeting outcomes. We also heard that there will be no compulsory redundancies and Members requested that in future years it would be helpful for scrutiny to have a summary of projected headcount changes as part of its papers which would include the voluntary redundancy and retirement numbers.

A recurring theme of the Committees scrutinies this year has been concern that agency spend across the Authority is growing. One reason is its extensive use within Children's Services. We encouraged Cabinet to undertake an in-depth review of how agency staff are used and can be reduced dramatically from the present £16m level which has been rising in recent years.

The Committee was reassured to hear that there is on-going analysis of the CTS in-house vehicle maintenance service, and that work on productivity and performance improvement is ongoing. We urge that when this work is complete a full value analysis is undertaken and we intend to programme a progress update on CTS.

In relation to the Capital Strategy 2020-21 we sought an explanation of the straight line basis on which capital expenditure is repaid following a review in 2019-20 that determined that such a policy was a prudent way forward. We established that the Council's debt will increase, and that interest rates could rise in the next 5 years. We therefore expressed concern that the Public Works Loan Board is likely to increase the cost of borrowing and that there may be risks within the Medium Term Financial Plan. We were also informed that the £1.5m loan to assist a private developer to complete the Coal Exchange building was secured through a Welsh Government re-generation grant and that the Authority expects to recover the cost in full.

Finally, on behalf of all Scrutiny Committees, a plea to improve scrutiny access to information in future years. We found the presentations given by Financial Services particularly useful for member understanding of the budget proposals and in future would like to receive these with our papers. Secondly, the availability of hard copies of papers, particularly where there are complex A3 tables is an ongoing question that requires resolution.

Policy Development / Consultation Scrutiny *-Where the Committee has contributed to the Council's policy development processes by considering draft policy documents.*

Smarter Working Project

September 2019

The Committee has been fully engaged in policy development to progress the Smarter Working project of the Capital Ambition Delivery Programme. We understand the aims of this project, and its potential to succeed if well designed, supported and implemented. Our observations to the Cabinet centred on culture, the implications for employees, sickness absence, technology, touch down points, leadership and consultation.

We consider achieving the right organisational culture, for the project's success lies in managers planning, designing, implementing and supporting the change process to effect a culture shift. Employees will require a new understanding about roles and expected work output based on increased

levels of trust between manager and staff member. One measure of success could be a positive movement in sickness levels with greater flexibility of working arrangements.

The Committee feels strongly that successful smarter working poses complex leadership challenges. Appropriate levels of contact with work colleagues and managers will be an essential element of the agile working framework. We urge that senior managers listen carefully to staff in setting up this new initiative and that employees must feel they have the option of speaking up if new arrangements are not working for them.

The Committee acknowledges that technology is central to the success of this project and would expect the provision of new technology and training in its use to precede the start of the agile working project. As work continues on mapping out appropriate touch down points it is important that employees have a range of locations where they can complete certain tasks, meet face to face with colleagues and create and consolidate social networks. There is an opportunity for the development of a staff app in relation to the daily availability of space at touch down points, and we were pleased that a conversation was ongoing with our Public Service Board partners with a view to sharing touch down points. We encouraged the inclusion of third sector partners in these conversations.

In two to three years' time we will be looking for evidence of payback for the introduction of agile working with fewer buildings to maintain. Finally there appeared to be limited learning from organisations who had experience of introducing smarter working and we felt that there are opportunities to engage widely in such benchmarking and learning before practical steps for agile working are finalised.

We heard that the Smarter Working project was about employee choice and an employee engagement strategy would address all possible concerns. There is to be a baseline analysis of sickness and follow up exercises for each service area to sustain positive impact on the figures, and the committee's

suggestion of including third sector partners in touch down point conversations was welcomed.

Budget Consultation 2019-20

October 2019

The Committee continues to seek effective engagement with the Council's approach to Budget Consultation, which has long failed to be impactful due to its very late involvement. In October we relayed to the Cabinet that we supported an earlier and fresh approach to consultation. The plan to undertake a mid-point review of the budget preparatory work could inform future consultation and was considered a useful starting point in improving scrutiny of the budget. We endorsed improvements for 2019-20 that recognised the importance and value of a qualitative response to budget proposals alongside the quantitative response. It is important to define both demographic groups *and* sub-demographic groups, to ensure that all groups are accessed, for example the homeless and other underrepresented groups.

Importantly, we stressed that Members should have an opportunity to add their voices at an earlier stage to the development and pre-publication testing of the consultation document before requesting engagement with the Committee on final draft budget proposals. The lateness of the financial settlement for 2020-21 from Welsh Government was cited as presenting difficulties in achieving this. Whilst officers circulated online the draft pre-published consultation to be considered by the Cabinet for scrutiny comment, in reality it has not been possible to fully scrutinise the published consultation as the Committee's December meeting was cancelled due to a General Election. The Committee will seek to secure improved scrutiny engagement with draft budget proposals for consultation as part of its forthcoming work programme.

Corporate Planning 2020-23

January 2020

In January 2020 the Committee was afforded oversight of refreshed planning and performance arrangements for 2020 onwards. At the mid-point of its administration, Cabinet reviewed and refreshed its Capital Ambition policy

commitments for translation into the 2020-23 Corporate Plan. The proposal was to introduce a new corporate planning and performance framework based on forthcoming legislative requirements. We were advised there would be fewer, more meaningful, reports and an aspiration to introduce mechanisms that would shorten the time between the collection and reporting of data.

A further commitment was made to strengthen the points of influence for Scrutiny in the corporate planning and performance process. The Committee continues to develop its role in assessing and developing the performance framework, engaging closely with the Head of Performance and Partnerships.

The Committee felt strongly that openness in presenting corporate performance progress was important. Routine performance reports should cite both successes and failures, and the introduction to the Corporate Plan could highlight failures to achieve as well as perceived successes. Such honesty gives the organisation credibility, particularly when there are action plans to show where improvements are being addressed. The Chief Executive accepted these points as a positive challenge acknowledging that the Council's end of year performance assessment would benefit from agreement on performance shortcomings across the Council's committees, panels and boards. The Committee felt more openness about successes and failures would enable scrutiny to test the robustness and accuracy of the corporate planning and performance management process, stating that its aim will always be to facilitate continuous improvement of Council's policies and its performance. No organisation can report only positives if its performance reporting process is to be taken seriously.

The Committee urged that the Council's performance review systems enable clear individual accountability for the delivery of targeted savings and that the overspending of any part of a directorate's budget is considered a red risk. We consider the management and prevention of overspends remain an unresolved challenge and that both senior management and the Cabinet must ensure that there are consequences for those who are accountable for missed targets.

The Committee has been contacted by a number of Councillors, both Cabinet and non-executive Members, requesting that it look into how the Council deals with the procurement and management of large contracts, specifically where an existing contractor opts out or is encouraged out of a key existing contract such as housing maintenance. The Chair liaised with the Head of Procurement and subsequently the Committee conducted policy development scrutiny of the Procurement Strategy 2020-23, as set out in the Corporate Plan. Following the scrutiny our three main concerns centred on monitoring the level of spend, contract management, and community benefits.

Given the scale of the Council's annual external procurement spend (£435m) Members focussed on how effectively the Council is monitoring spend, particularly highlighting agency spend. The Committee recommended that Cabinet undertakes an in-depth analysis of the Council's £15.5m per annum agency spend, the sources of agency demand, and justification for the value for money it offers against other employment options.

Central to the Committee's concerns is the quality of contract management across the Council, particularly a directorate's capacity and skills to manage contracts effectively. We established that senior management recognise that contract management is currently inconsistent across the Council, and we strongly support the need for effective performance management of contracts to be built in up front with clear management accountabilities. This is likely to involve a reassessment of the roles and responsibilities of those involved with contract management as well as their individual skill sets. Collaborative working between directorates and the procurement function is important from the very start of the contract planning process. The Committee recommended that Cabinet develops a specific and detailed contract management strategy for the Council, recognising that contract management skills, clear roles and capacity are of vital importance. We have requested that Cabinet return to

committee within a six month period to present the strategy and enable full scrutiny of its content.

The Committee established that the concept of community benefit from procurement can include areas such as the living wage, social value, ethical employment, training and development, use of local suppliers, and tackling modern slavery. We also established that its evaluation is taken into account at pre-qualification stage, and that currently a minimum of 10% of the tender evaluation of a bid for Council work is based on assessing core community benefits and social value. We consider it worthwhile to re-evaluate the weighting of a contractor paying the living wage and the impact that makes on the contract.

Partnership Scrutiny - *Where the Committee has performed the statutory role introduced by the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 and conferred upon it by Council*

Cardiff Public Services Board Scrutiny

July 2020

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 (WFG) conferred upon the Council and its partners a duty to ensure that the governance arrangements in public bodies for improving the well-being of Wales take into account the needs of future generations. Each local authority area in Wales now has a statutory Public Services Board (PSB), the core members of which include the Local Authority; the Local Health Board; the Welsh Fire and Rescue Authority; and Natural Resources Wales. It also conferred a statutory remit for Scrutiny to review decisions made or actions taken by the PSB and to review its governance arrangements.

The Council's Constitution confers the statutory responsibility for upholding the requirements of the Act upon the Policy Review and Performance Scrutiny Committee for scrutiny of the Cardiff Public Services Board (CPSB). This year the CPSB published its first Annual Report 2018-19 against the Cardiff Well-

Being Plan 2018-2023 and to present it, in July, the Committee heard from its Chair, the Leader of the Council, and Deputy Chair, the Chair of Cardiff & Vale Health Board.

Welcoming the positive performance position described for 2018-19, the Committee made a number of observations in a letter to the Board. We were encouraged by the CPSB's overarching view that all parties were stronger by working collaboratively with partners, that its key goal is to tackle some of the big challenges, and the expectation that the work of the Regional Partnership Board will progress life chances within the city, particularly those of vulnerable children, families and older people. Members heard that a significant number of projects and plans would require prioritising, monitoring and funding; that the effective integration of services including transport and the Next bike scheme were making an impact by getting more people active and supported the aim to improve air quality across the city. We also heard that the Get Me Home Plus service, engaging with patients in hospital to assist in transition between hospital and home care, is expected to make a significant difference.

In respect of collaborative asset management the Committee heard that an asset management survey was underway and partners' property specialists were working collaboratively on potential projects. Notably, the Heath Hospital will undergo significant new development work and options for a comprehensive hub involving a range of partners were being considered.

Members repeated their interest in Brexit preparations and were assured that a number of shared issues including supply chains, contracts and staffing issues across South East Wales were part of multiagency contingency plans underway to co-ordinate the City's response to risks from Brexit.

The Committee's key concern was an absence of city level targets that would in future enable it to measure the outcomes of the work of the CPSB. In his letter of response the Chair pointed to the advice of the Public Policy Institute for Wales that "*no single organisation can deliver a well-being outcome...and*

it makes no sense to set targets for well-being objectives”, advice. However he is assured of collective ownership of the Well-being objectives and the CPSB will be publishing performance against the 50 Well-being Plan outcome indicators as set out in ‘Cardiff in 2019’ online. The Committee looks forward to examining that data.

Members noted for future reference that many challenges lie ahead building on preventative work, for example in relation to Looked after Children, and improving the environment with a reduction of Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) levels in city centre. Other challenges include homelessness, substance misuse and knife crime.

Joint Scrutiny - *Where the Committee has joined together with one or more scrutiny committee(s) to examine a topic of a cross-cutting nature to enable collective consideration of the issues.*

Corporate Planning – Cross Committee Target Setting

January 2020

The Committee’s Performance Panel has continued to consolidate the benefit of cross committee interaction with Corporate Plan target setting at a policy development stage of the decision-making cycle. In January the PRAP Panel hosted an informal joint scrutiny including the Chairs of all five Scrutiny Committees. A valuable session ensured effective policy development scrutiny and secured potential impact for all five scrutiny committees within the Corporate Planning process.

The progressive interaction of corporate policy development and scrutiny, as illustrated by these informal engagement sessions, is facilitated by active collaboration by the Leader and cabinet. Such collaboration over the past three years has demonstrated the valuable impact that effective cross committee scrutiny can have on the Corporate Plan, the Council’s highest level strategic document.

The 2020-21 session considered the steps, measures and proposed targets set by the cabinet to achieve the Council's priorities. This provided an opportunity to feed cross committee scrutiny observations into the final draft Corporate Plan 2020-23 before it was presented to formal Cabinet. The final draft, influenced by scrutiny, then formed a part of budget scrutiny papers in February, when all Committees were able to test the budget proposals against cabinet's stated Capital Ambition priorities. At those budget scrutiny meetings Members were once again able to ensure that any changes to the detail of the Corporate Plan, made as a consequence of discussion with scrutiny chairs, were captured and thereby had a strong validating impact of the value of the scrutiny panel process for the Corporate Plan.

Constructive opportunities for scrutiny engagement are not taken for granted. The Committee continues to seek a greater insight and involvement in the Council's performance framework and, with this in mind, discussions have commenced with a view to extending the work of the PRAP Performance Panel further. The Panel has been offered an additional informal mid-year session in late November/early December to review performance against Corporate Plan targets. This session will be used to assess current achievement of the 2020-21 Plan's aims and an early opportunity to engage in 2021-22 Corporate Plan target setting.

Waste Management – Informal Briefing

November 2019

As part of its 2019-20 work programming discussions the Committee agreed to take a closer look at Waste Management matters appropriate to its terms of reference. Areas of interest outlined included waste collection productivity, overall departmental efficiency, absence and sickness rates and efforts to improve them, benchmarking with other LAs, work and new systems under development which aim to improve performance as well as progress in addressing challenges within the workforce culture.

As the Waste Management service falls within the Environmental Scrutiny Committee's terms of reference the chairs of both committees agreed to a

joint informal Member briefing/position statement. In November 2019 the two scrutiny committees received a presentation that focussed on Performance, Challenges and Opportunities. A performance overview covered recycling, budgetary, trade waste, sickness absence and audit inspections. Challenges were outlined as delivering improved recycling performance, workforce culture, management structures, bank holiday working, agency worker employment and health and safety improvements. Opportunities were outlined as improved business intelligence that enables data led decision making, and using the opportunity for utilising data to triangulate performance, customer intelligence and budget to inform decisions.

The Committee subsequently focussed on Waste Management sickness absence performance in January 2020, and maintains its interest in other challenges along with the outcome of an ongoing Wales Audit Office inquiry.

Call-ins - *Where the Committee considers a request made by a non-executive Member to review a recent Cabinet decision on a specific subject within the Committees Terms of Reference that has implications for the Council and the City.*

Cardiff Bus Loan

June 2019

In June 2019 the Committee was asked to consider a call-in of Cabinet's decision to grant a loan to Cardiff Bus from the Council for £2.0 million, for the purchase of electric vehicles. Delegated authority was sought to prepare and conclude legal agreements for the Corporate Director Resources in consultation with the Director of Governance & Legal Services and the Cabinet Member for Finance, Modernisation and Performance. A non-executive Councillor had exercised the right of call-in as set out in the Council's Constitution, on the grounds of concerns about the security the Council would be seeking in making the loan, and the importance of scrutiny and questioning around such security in taking the decision.

Following the scrutiny the Committee agreed not to refer the decision back to Cabinet. It was resolved that the Councillor be kept updated in relation to the

loan going forward. The Committee noted the comments of the Councillor and took no further action, however the Cabinet Member and Director of Resources agreed to update the Committee on the position early in 2020.

Briefings post Cabinet - *Where timescales have not allowed for pre-decision or policy development scrutiny, and to ensure the Committee is kept informed of developments, proposals or progress.*

BREXIT

September 2019

The Committee requested a briefing on the Council's preparations for Brexit following which Members were assured that the Council had clearly done its best to prepare.

It was noted that a risk register had been prepared to address the possible shortage/loss of key supplies in addition to a communication plan aligned with PSB partners via the Local Resilience Forum; an extensive gold and silver emergency planning rota and the community cohesion team's involvement of the third sector in a co-ordinated approach to spreading the message on applying to the EU settlement scheme.

The Committee noted the difficulty projecting the long term impact of Brexit on the labour market, particularly for the Council in sustaining services such as social services. We also raised concerns about the budgetary impact of Brexit on the Council, and indeed how much the Council had spent preparing for Brexit. The Committee heard that the Council plans to carry out an exercise post-Brexit to evaluate the preparation costs, whether preparations were adequate and valid, and we will be interested to hear the outcome.

In January the Committee was briefed on the implications of the forthcoming Local Government and Elections (Wales) Bill for the Council. We sought clarity as to how the Council responded to the Welsh Government call for evidence at Stage 1 consultation, and the mechanisms it would use to feed comments into consideration of the Bill progressing through the Assembly.

The Bill makes provision for Corporate Joint Committees (CJC) and Members echoed the Leader's concern that the voting structure within such a body, one vote for one Council irrespective of the number of residents, would not offer a representative or proportionate approach to decision making. The Committee urged that Cardiff Council's view be clearly placed on record as the Bill is considered by various Assembly Committees. Members received assurance from the Leader of ongoing representation to the Minister for Housing & Local Government in respect of CJC's via the Welsh Local Government Association Partnership Council sub-group, and in evidence given to the Equality, Local Government and Communities Committee in respect of voting.

Members also expressed concern about the Bill's proposal to require webcasting of all public Council meetings, given the potential cost implications for the Council and the paucity of viewers for some meetings. The Committee considered there may have been an over estimation of public interest in Council and committee business. In his response the Leader assured Members that the Minister has confirmed to the Assembly's Finance Committee that she expects to produce guidance that is pragmatic and practical as to what the Welsh Government means by 'all meetings'.

The Bill has a Performance and Governance element which proposes taking self-assessment and peer review to another level. Members noted that this implies that the next Council Administration will take part in a peer review during its term, and concurred that such a review would need to be rigorous, and as such should not be confined to Welsh insight and expertise but include peer reviewers from further afield who can offer fresh insights.

Future Work Programming Opportunities 2020-21

Topics commended to the Committee of 2020-21 for consideration in its work planning include:

- The 5 key challenges identified during scrutiny of the WAO Annual Improvement Report – Looked after children; waste management; sickness absence; corporate landlord; and financial pressures.
 - Cabinet response to the Impact of Scrutiny inquiry report
 - Overview/ governance of the Capital Ambition Delivery Programme
 - Planning & Performance framework – including peer review as introduced by the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Bill
 - Customer leadership and culture – action plan
 - Digital strategy – Chatbot demonstration
 - Draft budget consultation proposals
 - Procurement strategy 2020-23
 - Performance Panel mid-year review of Corporate Plan targets
 - Waste management challenges and outcome of WAO inquiry
 - Cardiff Bus – update
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**CYNGOR CAERDYDD
CARDIFF COUNCIL****POLICY REVIEW & PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE****15 September 2020**

DEVELOPING A WORK PROGRAMME 2020-2021

Purpose of Report

1. To consider options and seek Members' approval for the Committee's Work Programme for the remainder of 2020/21.

Background

2. Good scrutiny practice and the Council's Constitution empowers each Scrutiny Committee to set its own work programme for the forthcoming year (Scrutiny Procedure Rule 7). The Committee is therefore tasked with constructing a work programme that ensures the time available to the Committee is used most effectively by considering items in a timely fashion that maximise the impact of scrutiny.
3. Members are reminded that the Committee's Terms of Reference confer upon it two distinct scrutiny roles. Firstly, an overarching responsibility to scrutinise, monitor and review the overall corporate performance and improvement of the Council. Secondly, to scrutinise, monitor and review the effectiveness of specific functions, such as the Corporate Planning and Improvement framework, the Capital Ambition Delivery Programme, Finance, Digital Strategy/ICT, Human Resources, Governance, Legal Services, Property, Procurement, Customer Services and Cardiff's Public Services Board.
4. The current organisational structure means the Committee's responsibilities fall within four of the Council's Directorates. The list below is a good indication

of the Council business within each Directorate that falls within the Committee's Terms of Reference;

- The Corporate **Resources Directorate** falls within the Committee's remit in its entirety and comprises: the Capital Ambition Delivery Programme; Commissioning and Procurement; Finance and Revenue Services; Human Resources People Services; Health & Safety; Digitalisation/ICT and Customer Services (including 24/7 services and C2C); and Information Governance.
- The **People and Communities Directorate** includes Partnerships and Community Engagement; Communications; Corporate Performance and Improvement; Bi-lingual Cardiff.
- The **Economic Development Directorate** includes Corporate Landlord, Strategic Estates (including both the operational and non-operational portfolios), Facilities and Operational Management.
- The **Governance and Legal Services Directorate** falls within the Committee's remit in its entirety and comprises; Committee & Members' Services; Electoral Services; Equalities, Glamorgan Archives; Legal Services; and Scrutiny Services.

5. During the Covid-19 lockdown, standing scrutiny committees were suspended, with Council agreeing to enable measured and proportionate scrutiny via a Covid-19 Scrutiny Panel, consisting of the Scrutiny Chairs. To ensure all previous scrutiny informed the internal challenge of the Panel, all scrutiny committee members were offered the opportunity to pass their comments and enquiries on to Panel Members on reports relevant to their scrutiny committee.
6. In July 2020, Full Council agreed to restart standing scrutiny committees, with a specific remit, within their area of responsibility, to:
 - i. Undertake pre-decision scrutiny of all Cabinet decisions, where appropriate and proportionate to do so;
 - ii. Scrutinise any issues which are time critical and/ or may have a significant adverse reputational impact on the Council; and

iii. Develop priorities for potential scrutiny consideration during 2020/21, in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member/s and Director/s.

7. The report to Council also specified that, in the event of a second peak in Covid-19 cases and further lockdown measures, the Covid-19 Scrutiny Panel would again take on the scrutiny function, until the standing scrutiny committees were able to be supported to resume their functions.

8. Scrutiny plays an essential role in promoting accountability, efficiency and effectiveness in the Council's decision-making process and the way in which it delivers services. The main roles of the Scrutiny Committees are:

- i. Holding to account the Cabinet and officers, as decision-makers.
- ii. Being a '*critical friend*', questioning how decisions have been made, providing a '*check and balance*' to decision makers and undertaking reviews of services and policy.
- iii. Providing a voice for citizens.

Developing a work programme

9. The remit for the restart of Scrutiny Committees provides direction and boundaries to the committee's work programme. The work programme needs to focus on: pre-decision scrutiny; issues that are time critical; items that may have a significant adverse reputational impact on the Council; and priorities identified following consultation with relevant Cabinet Members and Directors.

10. Attached at **Appendix A** is a draft list of possibilities for the Committee's work programme, to be discussed and agreed by Members, based on previously requested items and known scheduled items. In addition, the Chair will liaise with relevant Cabinet Members and Directors to enable their input and ensure they are offered the opportunity to identify priority areas. Information arising from these discussions will be shared with Committee Members with a proposed work programme brought to Committee for amendment and formal approval.

Length of committee meetings

11. In setting their work programme, Members are advised to be mindful of Wales Audit Office advice for scrutiny committees to aim to achieve committee meetings that last no longer than three hours, whilst maintaining robust and appropriate levels of scrutiny across the terms of reference, by ensuring agendas are of a manageable size and that work occurs outside committee meetings. On average, this equates to agendas consisting of no more than two substantial items.

12. This timeframe takes on added significance with meetings held remotely, given advice to keep remote meetings as short as possible. Scrutiny Chairs have discussed the length of meetings and decided to aim to keep meetings to 2.5 hours, where possible.

Proposed Dates of Committee Meetings

13. A report is being taken to Full Council on 24 September to enable Members to consider the calendar of committee meetings, including remote monthly committee meetings for this Committee.

14. To inform the development of the calendar, Members views are sought on the following:
 - i. Time of day to hold remote meeting

 - ii. Whether meetings should be compressed into the week that Cabinet meets or whether meetings should be spread out across the fortnight prior to Cabinet meeting.

Way Forward

15. During their meeting, Members are invited to discuss the work programme for the remainder of 2020/21 and to give their views on factors affecting the timing of future scrutiny committee meetings.

Legal Implications

16. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters there are no direct legal implications. However, legal implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet/Council will set out any legal implications arising from those recommendations. All decisions taken by or on behalf of the Council must (a) be within the legal powers of the Council; (b) comply with any procedural requirement imposed by law; (c) be within the powers of the body or person exercising powers on behalf of the Council; (d) be undertaken in accordance with the procedural requirements imposed by the Council e.g. Scrutiny Procedure Rules; (e) be fully and properly informed; (f) be properly motivated; (g) be taken having regard to the Council's fiduciary duty to its taxpayers; and (h) be reasonable and proper in all the circumstances.

Financial Implications

17. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters there are no direct financial implications at this stage in relation to any of the work programme. However, financial implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet/Council will set out any financial implications arising from those recommendations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is recommended to:

- I. Discuss and agree the approach to developing the Committee's work programme for the remainder of 2020-21, so that a final version of the programme can be brought back to the Committee for formal approval;
- II. Provide their views on factors affecting the timing of future scrutiny committee meetings.

Davina Fiore
Director of Governance & Legal Services
9 September 2020

PSB Annual Report 2019-20	October
Safe Restart of Services Oversight of key challenges Responding to Covid Panel request for a report to capture how response to pandemic, including flexibility, speed of response, new working practices and leadership approaches, can become new cultural norms.	October
Homeworking Policy development briefing in preparation for committee research, also linking with the following two items:	October
Programme of homeworking reviews <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital infrastructure, ICT equipment & virtual processes • Property & Assets • Staff Terms & Conditions • Staff Wellbeing • Management support & Performance Management Arrangements. 	
Annual Improvement Report	October
Strategic Office Estate (including core office, Willcox House & depot estate)	October/November
Waste Management Performance WAO Review	Joint Environmental? TBC
WAO - Financial Sustainability Phase 1 – WAO national summary Phase 2 – Local Output report	Autumn
Black Lives Matter Taskforce Interim presentation Insight into BAME Task Force activities and representatives of the Task Force to attend scrutiny meeting, in Autumn	Autumn
Cardiff Bus Ensure timely pre-decision of future reports re Cardiff Bus – <i>recommendation agreed following Covid Panel letter.</i>	TBC
WAO - Modernisation of the Workforce. Review linking to the Council's estate, digital and post-Covid plans for delivering future services.	Autumn delivery

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