

ECONOMY & CULTURE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

14 JUNE 2021

Present: Councillor Howells(Chairperson)
Councillors Henshaw, Gordon, Gavin Hill-John, Lay, Parkhill,
Robson and Stubbs

1 : APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR & COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Noted.

2 : TERMS OF REFERENCE

Noted.

3 : APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Gordon and Eshaan Rajesh

4 : DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Robson declared a personal interest in Item 6 as he is a member of Friends of Forest Farm.

Cllr Henshaw declared a personal interest as her daughter has a business in Cardiff Market.

Cllr Lay declared a personal interest as he is the Chair of Cardiff Bus.

5 : MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 May 2021 were agreed as a correct record.

6 : LEVELLING UP FUND AND COMMUNITY RENEWAL FUND
APPLICATIONS - TO FOLLOW

Members were advised that this item was to undertake pre-decision scrutiny of a report to Cabinet that provides details of applications for two strands of UK Government funding – the Community Renewal Fund and the Levelling-Up Fund. The scope of Committee’s scrutiny is to explore these applications, their anticipated benefits and their role in levelling up Cardiff, as well as to explore the role of the Council in developing & delivering bids and whether there are any risks or other implications for the Council.

Members were advised that Committee are required to consider Appendix 1 in a closed session to discuss information deemed exempt, in accordance with paragraphs 14 and 16 of Part 4 and paragraph 21 of Part 5 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972; however the discussion would start in open session.

The Chairperson welcomed Cllr Thomas – Leader, Paul Orders - Chief Executive, Jon Day – Operational Manager, Investment & Tourism and Natalie Southgate – Improvement Project Manager, Gender Specific Services, to the meeting.

The Leader was invited to make an opening statement in which he said that this was the first opportunity Councils have had to access funding from the UK Government whereby £4.8 billion was available across the UK; £800 million for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, approximately £235 million for Wales. There had been a good dialogue with MLCHG where it was determined that there was a need for mature bids which were thorough and well prepared. Cardiff's strategy is to submit only 1 bid this month but to give notice of intention to submit 4 more in due course once engagement with stakeholders had taken place.

Members were provided with a presentation after which the Chairperson invited questions on the open session information.

Members requested further information on the position of the Cardiff South and Penarth Parliamentary Constituency in terms of the levelling up bidding process as the entire constituency was not within the Cardiff Council local authority area. Members were advised that clarification is being sought. The authority was also seeking to establish whether the Member of Parliament for Cardiff South and Penarth would be prepared to support bids both in Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan. Members requested that the Committee be informed of those details when clarification has been received.

Members asked whether thought had been given to submitting a bid for Cardiff Central Station. The Leader clarified the expectation that the UK Government would fulfil commitments on this, via City Deal monies and other monies.

Members sought clarification on the Highline project and on the Bridges submission. The Leader clarified that the bridges submission including landscaping public open space around three proposed bridges, creating a river corridor. The Leader further stated that he did not believe s106 agreements had been concluded for relevant sites. With regard to the Highline, this would secure the connection between City Centre and the Bay and contribute to the cross rail project. The Chief Executive explained discussions with the UK Government had indicated their keenness on large scale transport projects and their understanding of the complexity of funding for these and the need for a variety of sources to enable them to be achieved.

RESOLVED – That the public be excluded from the meeting at this point during consideration of this item as the Committee discussed exempt information of the description contained in paragraphs 14 and 16 of Part 4 and paragraph 21 of Part 5 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972. The public may be excluded from the meeting by resolution of the Committee pursuant to Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 during discussion of this item.

AGREED: that the Chairperson, on behalf of the Committee, writes to the Cabinet Member conveying the observations of the Committee when discussing the way forward.

7 : CITY CENTRE NEXT STEPS - CASTLE STREET & CITY CENTRE EAST (PHASE 1 + CANAL) - TO FOLLOW

Members were advised that this item was to undertake pre-decision scrutiny of a report to Cabinet. The report covers two transport schemes: City Centre East, seeking delegated authority to award the tender and begin construction; and Castle Street, seeking Cabinet approval for modifications to the current road layout and to commission further modelling and analysis of these modifications. The scope of Committee's scrutiny is to explore the potential impact of these schemes on the economy of Cardiff, particularly businesses, tourism, culture and events, including looking at the impact of proposals on the climate emergency and on equalities in Cardiff. Committee also need to explore whether there are any risks, financial or otherwise, to the Council.

Committee were required to consider Appendix 6 in a closed session to discuss information deemed exempt, in accordance with paragraphs 14 of Part 4 and paragraph 21 of Part 5 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, but discussions would start in open session.

The Chairperson welcomed Cllr Wild – Cabinet Member, Strategic Planning & Transport; Andrew Gregory – Director of Planning, Transport & Environment and Gethin Shields –Transportation Programme Manager to the meeting.

The Chairperson invited Councillor Wild to make a statement in which he said that in relation to Castle Street, there were lots of different factors at play, the main being clean air and the transport elements; he stated that he has pushed to see what mitigations can be put in place. Modelling has shown some concerns about air quality impact in residential areas. The next step is temporary as there is a need to continue to test how things go forward. With regard to City Centre East, this comes with road closures; these have already been started in Wood Street and lots of bus and cycle lanes are going in across the City.

Members were provided with a verbal presentation after which the Chairperson invited questions on the open information.

Members asked how people from the North of Cardiff will be able to access Castel Street and Officers advised that it would be the same as pre-covid.

In relation to the Consultation, Members asked how this had been promoted across the City as a whole. Officers explained they had used social media, press releases, the Council website and email databases and had had an unprecedented response. In response to a further question on how businesses in particular had been consulted, Officers explained that they had undertaken a letter drop to all businesses within 150metre radius of city centre and used an email database. The responses had been mixed as some business wanted it kept open for deliveries etc. and some wanted it closed to have use of wider pavements.

A discussion took place around promoting active and public transport. It was noted that the pop-up Cycle ways were quicker to implement due to Covid. In relation to the Bus Strategy, the aim is to double bus usage to fit in with the aspirations of the

Transport White Paper. It was noted that there would be impacts while these are embedded and this was the reason for the temporary solution.

Members discussed displaced traffic and the impact on air quality and children's health. Officers assured Members that the air quality would still be compliant with EU Nitrogen Dioxide levels but they would continue to monitor levels going forward and find the best solutions as set out in the Clean Air Plan.

AGREED: that the Chairperson, on behalf of the Committee, writes to the Cabinet Member conveying the observations of the Committee when discussing the way forward.

8 : SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT

Members were advised that this was the first combined Annual Report, which had been a recommendation from Audit to ensure maximum visibility and the impact of Scrutiny. It also encourages engagement, promotes Scrutiny and is an easier read. This will be published as part of the rebranding of the Scrutiny page on the Council website, which will also be a mechanism for engagement.

This is the draft report, comments from Members are welcomed before it goes to Council on 24 June 2021 for approval. At the Council meeting, all five Scrutiny Chairs will have an opportunity to take part in presenting the report.

Councillor Robson advised that he liked the Scrutiny annual report format although he considered there maybe a few too many comments from the Cabinet, but that would evolve.

He considered that one thing which was missing was any mention of committee not agreeing with the Cabinet recommendations for Merchant Place/Cory Buildings. He was not sure how that should be captured but at the moment the report suggests that the committees agreed or strengthened Cabinet recommendation, whilst Cabinet accepted 70% of the committee's recommendations; as it happens very infrequently he felt it should be mentioned somehow. Members agreed with this change.

RESOLVED: that subject to changes agreed at the meeting, approved the Annual Report to go to Council.

9 : WORK PROGRAMME 2021-2022

Members were advised that there were two issues to consider; firstly to agree an approach to form the Work Programme and secondly to agree dates for the calendar of meetings.

Members discussed both issues and determined that the approach previously undertaken for the Work Programme be continued; whereby Cabinet Members and Directors are given the opportunity to flag up areas for scrutiny, the Principal Scrutiny officer then reviews this and associated documents and shares an information pack with Committee Members. An informal meeting is then held to prioritise a work programme.

Members agreed that the October Committee Meeting be moved to Monday 11 October to enable Cabinet Papers to be included in the agenda pack.

10 : CORRESPONDENCE

Members were advised that at the time of writing the report there had been two responses outstanding, however one response has since been received. The only outstanding response is for the Canal Quarter Regeneration letter.

11 : URGENT ITEMS (IF ANY)

None received.

12 : DATE OF NEXT MEETING

8 July 2021 at 4.30pm

The meeting terminated at 7.00 pm