

ECONOMY & CULTURE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

13 DECEMBER 2021

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

49 : APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies had been received from Cllr Lay.

50 : DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Gordon declared a personal interest as she had been involved in the Severn Road Adult Community Learning Centre.

51 : MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting on 16 November 2021 were agreed as a correct record.

52 : WESTERN GATEWAY UPDATE

Members were advised that this item enabled them to receive an update on the work of the Western Gateway partnership and the proposed priorities to focus on with this work. The update provides Committee with an opportunity to input its views into the way forward, ahead of a report to Cabinet later this week.

The Chairperson welcomed Cllr Thomas – Leader; Paul Orders – Chief Executive and Gareth Newell – Head of Partnerships & Performance to the meeting.

The Chairperson invited the Leader and Chief Executive to make statements after which he asked Members for their comments, observations and questions.

Members referred to the £10k contribution made by each of the 19 members and asked how this money would be used. Members were advised that it would be used to develop an Independent Base Resource which would drive forward the work and the profile of the Western Gateway.

Members asked about potential conflicts between partners/area over schemes and monies. Officers stated that this had and would continue to happen, however it was important to remember that any investment would benefit the whole region.

It was added that the schemes/projects that Cardiff are particularly interested in are of National significance.

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.

Members were advised that this item was to undertake monitoring scrutiny of the Council's contract with GLL, which took over responsibility for running 8 Leisure Centres in Cardiff. This item enabled Members to evaluate the progress made in delivering the contract, including consideration of the impact of the pandemic on participation and usage rates, the capital programme, and whether there are any changes to the Council's commitments or to risks to the Council.

The Chairperson welcomed Cllr Bradbury – Cabinet Member for Culture & Leisure; Neil Hanratty – Director of Economic Development; Steve Morris – Operational Manager – Sport, Leisure & Development; Rhys Jones – GLL – Head of Service, Cardiff and Jamie Coleshill – GLL – Regional Director to the meeting.

The Chairperson invited the Cabinet Member to make a statement after which Members were provided with a presentation. Members were invited to make comments, observations and ask questions.

Members discussed the demographic profile of users and considered it was important to get the messages out to the inner-city wards that the centres are open for use, also how to get there, such as appropriate bus routes.

A discussion took place about the importance of targeting resources and communicating differently to encourage more BAME users, including the use of focus groups to determine what the barriers are and contact with BAME community leaders.

Members were pleased to hear that the centres offered casual use on a PAYG basis but noted that the membership is important for a steady income stream.

Members also stressed the importance of women only sessions and noted that there was a lot of knowledge around this within the Public Health teams.

Members considered more could be done in terms of Council Messaging for promoting the centres across all social media, including getting to the centres by public transport.

Members were concerned about further Covid restrictions being implemented or even if people chose to self-select and not use the centres during the pandemic and what this would mean for meeting targets next year. Members were advised that if further restrictions such as another lockdown were implemented then they would expect support from Central Government once again including furlough and the extension of the hardship fund. Officers explained that January was usually a huge month in terms of new memberships so they hoped that no new restrictions would be implemented. GLL has also looked at efficiencies to its cost base and has not replaced all staff that left during the pandemic.

Officers considered that the income mix going forward would look different in that there would be more exercise referrals, health memberships, hospital discharge and rehabilitation; they were working with Health colleagues on these. It was also noted that during the pandemic some people will have discovered walking, running, cycling

etc. and may not return to the centre environment; although officers had looked at the data and considered that as people like the social element of the centre, this impact had not been as bad as expected.

Members noted that it was key to attract new users through the door and establish customer confidence. They considered the focus should be on Older people, families, women and BAME users.

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.

54 : AUDIT WALES REVIEW OF LEISURE - UPDATE

This item was to provide Members with an update on what has been delivered so far regarding the improvements recommended by Audit Wales, following their Review of Leisure Services in Cardiff.

The Chairperson welcomed Cllr Bradbury – Cabinet Member for Culture & Leisure; Neil Hanratty – Director of Economic Development and Steve Morris – Operational Manager – Sport, Leisure & Development for this item.

The Chairperson invited the Cabinet Member to make a statement after which Members were asked for their comments, observations and questions.

Officers informed the Committee that Local Partnerships report was due in January 2022, they had carried out a full review of contract with GLL.

Members noted that Internal Audit had also looked at this and asked if they had found any issues. Officers explained that they had not, the last report had been signed off as satisfied. Officers explained they were in discussion with Audit Wales to agree a date for a return visit.

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.

55 : ADULT COMMUNITY LEARNING REVIEW/ APPROACH TO FUNDING FOR INTO WORK ADVICE SERVICES - PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY - TO FOLLOW

This item was to undertake pre-decision scrutiny of a report to Cabinet that proposes changes to adult community learning provision and seeks Cabinet endorsement for the proposed approach to future funding bids for the Into Work service.

The scope of Committee's scrutiny was to examine these proposals, whether there were any risks to the Council, the financial implications for the Council and the next steps.

The Chairperson welcomed Cllr Merry – Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Education & Lifelong Learning; Cllr Weaver – Cabinet Member for Finance,

Performance & Modernisation; Helen Evans – Assistant Director - Housing & Communities and Hayley Beynon – Operational Manager – Advice to the meeting.

The Chairperson invited the Cabinet Members to make statements after which Members were provided with a presentation and asked for their comments, observations and questions.

The Cabinet Member agreed to meet with Women Connect First and a member of the Committee in relation to the Severn Road Facility.

In relation to future funding, Officers confirmed they would continue to lobby Welsh Government for the best outcomes for Cardiff.

In response to a question by the Committee's Youth Council representative, officers confirmed Cardiff needs to demonstrate a collaborative, cohesive approach, working with the City Deal Regional Skills Board and Careers Wales as well as with community partners.

Members asked whether it would be possible to lever in monies from the private sector; officers explained that a nominal 'finder's fee' is currently levied for each person placed via the Council's Into Work scheme. Officers also explained that discussions were also underway with planning colleagues regarding whether it would be possible to have community benefits including jobs linked to planned developments.

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.

56 : FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME JANUARY - MARCH 2022

Members were provided with the Forward Work Programme for January to March 2022.

The Principal Scrutiny outlined the Forward Work Programme to Members.

RESOLVED To approve the Forward Work Programme January to March 2022 for publication on the Council's internet.

57 : CARDIFF CAPITAL REGION CITY DEAL - JOINT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY: UPDATE

Members were provided with an overview of the report.
The next meeting of the CCRCD would be on 13th January 2022.

Members asked if Cllr Patel, as Cardiff Council's representative, could provide a short summary to Committee on how he feels the scrutiny is working. The Chairperson advised that Cardiff Council's Scrutiny Chairs had recently discussed the operation of the JOSOC, resulting in a letter due to be sent to the CCRCD Director detailing their concerns and suggestions for strengthening scrutiny prior to the

transfer of the JOSOC to a scrutiny committee for the new Corporate Joint Committee; this letter would be shared with Committee shortly.

58 : CORRESPONDENCE

Members were advised that there were two outstanding pieces of correspondence; one in relation to City Recovery from the Leader and one in relation to the Joint Committee on the RLDP from Cllr Wild.

59 : URGENT ITEMS (IF ANY)

None received.

60 : DATE OF NEXT MEETING - 19 JANUARY 2022 AT 4.30PM

The meeting terminated at 6.42 pm