

POLICY REVIEW AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

8 MARCH 2022

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

70 : APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies had been received from Cllr Lister.

71 : DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Bowen-Thomson declared a personal interest Item 4 as she was a member of the Race Equality Justice Sub-group in her role with Safer Wales.

72 : MINUTES

The minutes of the meetings held on 18 January 2022 and 23 February 2022 were agreed as correct records.

73 : RACE EQUALITY TASK FORCE

Members were reminded that in 2020 the Leader established a Race Equality Taskforce for Cardiff. This Committee received a useful update on the taskforce plans in January 2021, noting its direction of travel. The report before Committee is the culmination of approximately 18 months' work, capturing the work of its 5 sub-groups and identifying practical opportunities for change to improve race equality in the city.

The Chairperson welcomed Cllr Saeed Ebrahim, Chair of the Race Equality Taskforce; Cllr Lynda Thorne, Cabinet Member; Gareth Newell, Head of Performance & Partnerships; Sian Sanders, OM Community Cohesion & Equalities and Charlotte Amiss, Senior Policy Officer for this item.

Councillor Ramesh Patel had also been invited as a Scrutiny Chair and Member of the Covid-19 Scrutiny Panel with a particular interest in this area.

The Chairperson invited Cllr Ebrahim to make a statement after which Members were provided with a presentation by Officers. Members were invited to ask questions and make comments and observations.

Members welcomed the report and acknowledged that it was a snapshot of the work of the taskforce over the past 18 months and creates a starting point that shapes the Council and partners' aspirations for serving the one in five Cardiff residents with an ethnic minority background.

Members considered that the report sets out clearly the high level aims to improve lived experiences of ethnic minority residents. However, Members found that the governance arrangements for oversight of progress going forward were unclear in the

Report with regards to whether the Cabinet would be responding to the recommendations in the report. Members were advised that the first point of accountability would be the Public Services Board, this was an update report, and a more formal response could be expected in the summer.

Members noted that monitoring any actions would be dealt with as a part of the corporate policy programme. Members welcomed the offer of returning with proposals as to how the governance and accountability arrangements may work in the summer of 2022

Members were assured that the recommendations set out in the report were achievable but noted that a partnership approach would need to be required and there would be a need to embed the recommendations in partners' plans.

Members were keen to establish when action plans would emerge to deliver the recommendations, whether there would be KPI's to monitor progress and whether the Committee would have the opportunity of scrutinising the plans.

Members noted that most ethnic minority employees were in lower paid jobs and considered that the Council has a role to play in ensuring PSB partners were on board and that there needs to be a shift across the city, with organisations asking why more senior roles are not held by ethnic minorities.

Members were encouraged that ethnic minority staff from the BAME community currently constitute 10.26% of the workforce at Cardiff Council, representing an increase from 9.87% in 2020. However, this is clearly still lower than the 15% of ethnic minorities that make up Cardiff's population. Members noted there was work to be done in raising the confidence of ethnic minorities to apply for Council jobs, that workshops have started at Council Hubs, and the importance of raising expectations from an early age.

RESOLVED: The Committee **AGREED** that the Chairperson writes to the Chair of the Race Equality Task Force on behalf of the Committee to convey their comments and observations.

74 : HOME & AGILE WORKING

Members were asked to recall that over the past year a task group of this committee had been gathering evidence with a view to examining how the experience of managing remotely during the pandemic can inform future policy on working styles. The task force specifically focussed on the management/leadership challenges of supporting home & agile working.

The Chairperson, along with Cllrs Mackie and Henshaw met with several witnesses representing organisations that had adopted homeworking well before the emergency pandemic. They also interviewed a good cross section of Cardiff Council managers about their experiences.

The Principal Scrutiny Officer provided a presentation that outlined the Key Findings and the recommendations made.

The Chairperson invited questions and comments from Members.

Members considered that from discussions with the Leader and Chief Executive, they seemed generally happy with the direction taken.

Members liked the focus on leadership and culture, a coaching culture and that wellbeing was considered. Members noted the reorganisation challenges.

Members hoped that findings and recommendations would continue to look to the future and ask questions, particularly in light of emerging issues such as the Energy Crisis and Cost of Living Crisis.

RESOLVED: that the report and its recommendations be submitted to Cabinet.

75 : COMMITTEE BUSINESS

Scrutiny Annual Report.

Members were reminded that the five scrutiny committees produce a joint Annual Report, each committee contributing a page on its achievements. A draft page for this Committee was attached at Appendix 1 for approval. As previously the page would set out membership, purpose, and achievements over the year.

Members were asked for any comments they wished to add to the draft proposed.

Members were also asked for any highlights they would like to see referenced in the final Annual Report of this five-year Administration.

Replacement Local Development Plan Joint Task & Finish group.

Cllrs Mackie and Williams had been taking part in the Replacement Local Development Plan Joint Task & Finish group. Members were asked to note the way forward for collating the findings and recommendations to date for the inquiry into the RLDP Strategic Options.

Correspondence

Members were referred to the correspondence generated by the Committee since January 2022, and where required the Cabinet responses received to date.

76 : URGENT ITEMS (IF ANY)

None received.

77 : DATE OF NEXT MEETING

To be arranged.

The meeting terminated at 6.10 pm