

STATEMENT OF THE LEADER

AGENDA ITEM: 14

WLGA Delegation Visit to Brussels

I visited Brussels on 4-6 September 2016 as part of a Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) delegation in my role as the WLGA Spokesperson for European Affairs. It was a productive visit which included a number of meetings with key partners, including the Welsh Government, National Assembly for Wales, Welsh Higher Education, LGA, COSLA, Bristol and Greater Manchester. The WLGA delegation also met with a number of key network partners, including Eurocities and the European Network for Rural Development. The need for continued dialogue, engagement and cooperation were highlighted as key issues going forward as we develop new relationships with our European partners post-Brexit in order to ensure that we continue to exchange good practice, knowledge and experiences of dealing with common challenges and to maximise opportunities for developing common solutions.

Official Opening of the Tramshed

I attended the official opening of the Tramshed in Grangetown by the First Minister of Wales on 12 September 2016. This fantastic new cultural and arts venue was developed as a result of the Council using the former council tram depot very differently. The City Council took the decision to enter into a partnership with a local developer and the building has been transformed with various facilities, including a music/entertainment venue, café-bar and tech-hub. An art gallery, dance studios, 'live-work' apartments and office space are all also planned for the site, while a 40-seat cinema is set to open next month. This project has also created 300 long term job opportunities and will help to regenerate this part of the city and the wider community of Grangetown.

Launch of the Inclusive Growth Commission and Core Cities Cabinet Meeting

I attended the annual Core Cities Business Summit, which took place in London on 22 September 2016. The Summit focussed on 'Inclusive Growth', and considered – post-Brexit – how cities and places in the UK and internationally are grappling with how to deal with a sustained period of low growth and high inequality, and the distribution as well as the creation of growth. The interim findings of the [Inclusive Growth Commission](#), chaired by former BBC economics editor Stephanie Flanders, were launched at the Summit and build on the work of the RSA's City Growth Commission. The Inclusive Growth Commission is seeking to devise new models for place-based growth, which enable the widest range of people to participate fully in, and benefit from, the growth of their local area. Over the course of the summer, representatives of the Commission have visited Cardiff and received evidence from the Cardiff Capital Region.

The Core Cities Cabinet also launched their [Whole Place Leadership](#) prospectus, which gave practical examples across a wide range of areas of how cities are leading places and leading the reform of public services. The Cardiff Public Services Board and the [Education is Everybody's Business](#) initiative both featured as case studies.

Welsh Government European Advisory Group

I attended the first meeting of the Welsh Government European Advisory Group on 28 September 2016 in my role as the WLGA Spokesperson on European Affairs. The advisory group was established by the First Minister in response to the outcome of the EU referendum held in June 2016 in order to discuss the consequences of Brexit for Wales. The group is chaired by the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government and comprises representatives from the public and private sector, as well as Wales' MEPs.

As the local government representative, I am keen to ensure that the voices of communities – from both 'Leave' and 'Remain' sides – are heard in the discussions. Although 60% of voters in Cardiff voted to remain in the EU, it is crucial that the views of 'Leave' voters are not ignored. By being in a position to bring the voice of real people to the discussions, local government brings a meaningful contribution to the table and is not just there to make up the numbers.

Growth and Competitiveness Commission

The Growth and Competitiveness Commission, which was launched in late June 2016, has also held a series of seminars across the Cardiff Capital Region in recent weeks, in addition to issuing a public call for evidence. The Commission is due to report its findings in November 2016.

Bilingual Cardiff: Five Year Strategy

The draft Bilingual Cardiff: 5 year strategy is due to be published shortly for consultation and will be available on the Council's website. This is a city-wide strategy which sets out the Council's priorities for promoting and developing the Welsh language in Cardiff. The strategy builds on our existing work and is one of the statutory requirements of the new Welsh Language Standards which were introduced earlier this year. It will include a target to increase the number of Welsh speakers within Cardiff over a five year period, as well as our priorities for facilitating the use of the language in line with the Welsh Government's Welsh Language Strategy.

The consultation exercise will give the public and elected members the opportunity to have their say on how we can promote and develop the Welsh language in Cardiff to support the Council's vision of a truly Bilingual Cardiff. Following the consultation, a detailed action plan will be developed with our partners to deliver on identified priorities.

Councillor Phil Bale
Leader of the City Council
28 September 2016