

ECONOMY & CULTURE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

9 MARCH 2017

Present: County Councillor McKerlich(Chairperson)
County Councillors Dilwar Ali, Howells, Hyde, Keith Jones and
Simmons

50 : APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chairperson advised that the whole of the meeting would be filmed for webcasting, except where there were confidential or exempt items.

Councillor Howells had previously advised that he would be late attending the meeting due to work commitments.

51 : DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None received.

52 : MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 January 2017 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairperson.

53 : CENTRAL SQUARE REGENERATION SCHEME

Members were reminded that Appendices 2, 3, 4 and 5 to Appendix A of the report was exempt from publication because they contain information of the kind described in paragraphs 14 and 21 of parts 4 and 5 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972. It was viewed that, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

It would be necessary for members of the press and public to leave the meeting room, allowing the Committee and witnesses to discuss information contained within the confidential appendices.

The Chairperson welcomed Councillor Phil Bale (Leader, Economic Development and Partnerships), Neil Hanratty (Director – Economic Development) and John Worrall (Head of Major Projects) to the meeting.

The meeting then went into closed session to consider confidential items.

RESOLVED that the views of the Committee would be discussed during the way forward section of the meeting and a letter sent to the Leader in due course.

54 : QUARTER 3 2016/17 - MONITORING PERFORMANCE

The Chairperson welcomed Councillor Phil Bale (Leader, Economic Development and Partnerships), Councillor Peter Bradbury (Cabinet Member Community Development, Co-operatives & Social Enterprise) and Neil Hanratty (Director – Economic Development) to the meeting.

Members were provided with a presentation on Quarter 3 Performance and the Chairperson invited questions and comments from Members:

- Members asked who was driving the creative industry development at the 'C' Shed. Officers advised that Associated British Ports were the owners of the building. Discussion had been ongoing with Igloo who were the owners of the adjacent building, and the owner of the Tramshed Development, about relocating the road to behind the building for public access. There was a cost associated with this and various ways of delivering public transport to the building were being considered.

The Leader added that it was one of the older buildings in the Bay; progress was being made and it was an opportunity to use the space creatively if the additional access arrangements could be resolved.

RESOLVED that the views of the Committee would be discussed during the way forward section of the meeting and a letter sent to the Leader and Cabinet Member in due course.

55 : CARDIFF CONTEMPORARY ARTS FESTIVAL 2016

The Chairperson welcomed Councillor Peter Bradbury Cabinet Member (Community Development, Co-operatives & Social Enterprise), Kath Richards (Head of Culture, Venues & Events) and Ruth Cayford (Visual Arts Manager) to the meeting.

The Chairperson invited the Cabinet Member to make a statement in which he said that it was all good news; the event had been very successful and footfall had been up on previous years. He added that this was due to the excellent work of Ruth Cayford and her team who had managed to put on the event with very little budget.

Members were provided with a presentation on Cardiff Contemporary Festival 2016 after which the Chairperson invited questions and comments from Members:

- Members asked if there was any way of discerning the number of people that visited the festival from outside Cardiff. Officers explained that it was difficult to do, as they do not have the capacity to undertake individual interviews and determine this information. Anecdotal evidence from conversations with those engaging with the festival show that visitors came from places including China, Japan, Glasgow, Liverpool and France.
- Members asked what was next and if there would be a festival for 2018. Officers stated that there would be a period of reflection now; they may look at the architecture and design and also look at resources and funds. They added that they would however need Council support and stressed the positive impact that the festival has for the City. Discussions are underway with Tate, Tate Modern and Turner Prize and all had expressed interest.

The Cabinet Member added that there were also conversations taking place across the cultural sector in Cardiff. He added that he admires the work that been done and the fact that the festival was brought in on virtually no budget; this was an entirely discretionary area and had already felt the brunt of the savings.

- Members asked how the Cardiff Contemporary Festival compares with the Edinburgh Festival. Officers stated that it could not really be compared to Edinburgh, but comparisons had been made with Liverpool and Glasgow, both of which had a larger team of staff and budgets; Cardiff had received coverage that equalled both.
- Members asked if hotel prices rose during the festival and were advised that market forces drive the hotel prices, this did not happen at this event.
- Members wondered if the Tramshed had been used during the Festival and were advised that it had not been used this time but it had been in the past and it attracted plenty of interest.
- With regards to timescales and planning schedules, Members asked when officers had started to plan the 2016 Festival. Officers stated that it was December 2015, but if the Festival was to go ahead in 2018, they would want to start planning now and have a 2 year run in time.

The Cabinet Member added that cross party commitment was needed to keep Arts flourishing in the City as a reputation of excellence was already being established in Cardiff.

RESOLVED that the views of the Committee would be discussed during the way forward section of the meeting and a letter sent to the Cabinet Member in due course.

56 : FRIENDS GROUPS AND VOLUNTEERS IN PARKS

The Chairperson welcomed Councillor Bob Derbyshire (Cabinet Member – Environment), Nicola Hutchinson (Conservation Officer), Martine Chamberlain (Friends of Forest Farm), Steve Bool (Friends of Heath Park) to the meeting.

The Chairperson invited the Cabinet Member to make a statement in which he said that it was a very positive story to tell and he wanted to take the opportunity to thank all of the friends groups, without whom the Parks in Cardiff would not be the wonderful places they are today. Going forward with more cuts coming, the friends groups and volunteers would be needed more and more.

Members were provided with a presentation on Friends Groups & Volunteering after which the Chairperson invite statements from representatives of the Friends Groups.

Steve Bool (Friends of Heath Park) stated that he had been active in the group for 25 years; there was a real community spirit in the group, it provided opportunities for schools, the community and disadvantaged people to participate, always under the jurisdiction of the Council Staff, Insurance, Health and Safety etc.

He added that he had wholehearted praise for the Rangers Service but was concerned that support was starting to reduce, with issues such as litter and dog fouling increasing. Some of the positive schemes that had emulated from the

partnership/collaborative working were provided such as the sensory garden at Heath Park and Flood Prevention at Pontcanna.

Martin Chamberlain (Friends of Forest Farm) stated that he will only take volunteers onto Forest farm if they have rangers with them due to the skills, knowledge and insurance needed. He had concerns that he would not be able to continue with events and projects using volunteers without continued ranger support.

The Cabinet Member added that since he had taken over the portfolio he had made it clear that Community Rangers are vital to the Parks service, and needed to be maintained. In the budget for 2017/18 there remained the same number as there was before as without them the friends groups and volunteers could not continue.

The Chairperson invited questions and comments from Members:

- Members asked how many Community Rangers there were and were advised there were five, however ten posts in total for Community & Conservation Rangers; there were Urban rangers and these had taken the brunt of the cuts previously and could no longer be called upon for support for larger projects, making the friends groups and volunteers even more necessary.
- Members asked if Friends of Forest Farm had worked with Friends of Hayley Park in Llandaff North and were advised that they had helped set up that friends group, working closely at the start and then providing a buddy service thereafter. This support was also open to others.
- Members congratulated the Friends groups on the work that had been done to date and asked what was being done to encourage a more diverse cohort of volunteers to encourage diversity. Officers explained that they try to encourage local organisations and community groups; it could sometimes prove difficult with cultural differences and the key is to work with groups that they are used to and people that they know already.
- Members asked whether many young people were volunteering and were advised that the volunteers were all ages but predominantly people who have free time to give. There was work being done through the Welsh BAC, Duke of Edinburgh and Student Work Experiences; also exploring apprenticeships and developing practical volunteering courses.

RESOLVED that the views of the Committee would be discussed during the way forward section of the meeting and a letter sent to the Cabinet Member in due course.

57 : ANNUAL REPORT - ECONOMY AND CULTURE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Members were asked to consider the Committee Annual Report and were advised that the draft would be updated to reflect the content of the meeting. Members were keen to add their support for work undertaken by both the Friends Groups & Volunteers in Parks and also the officers involved in the Contemporary Arts Festival 2016.

Members were asked to send any amendments or comments to the Scrutiny Officer.

RESOLVED to approve the Economy and Culture Scrutiny Committee draft Annual Report 2015/16 for presentation to Council, subject to the above inclusions.