

COUNCIL: 28 SEPTEMBER 2017

HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES STATEMENT

Rough Sleeping

The Leader and I attended a conference last week hosted by Capital Law to consider the issue of rough sleeping in the city. The event was an opportunity for those working with the street homeless, those who had experienced street homelessness, businesses and specialist services to share their knowledge & experience and formally state their commitment to unite to tackle this growing problem. The rapidly increasing rate of street homelessness across the UK represents huge challenge for us all & I have been very impressed by the way our own Council teams and our front line partners have worked together to help individuals to make a life off the streets. The Leader and I went out with the outreach team and spoke to a number of those sleeping rough in the city centre. The team do an amazing job and the visit showed us very clearly how challenging the role can be. Between April and August 2017, 74 people were assisted off the streets of Cardiff, however despite this number continue to increase. I would encourage members to watch and share the very short video on street homelessness at www.cardiff.gov.uk/homeless. The best help we can give is to support people off the streets and in the next few weeks we will be launching an alternative giving campaign to make it easier for those who want to help to do so.

Libraries

I visited a number of our branch libraries recently and was very impressed by the commitment, passion and knowledge of the staff. Library services are so much more than just books and the integration of library and other community services at our Hubs has proved massively beneficial to outcomes across the board. For example one of our Neighbourhood Development Librarians supported five Autistic children and their parent/carers who attended the first session (of four) of a special library lock-in at Canton Library on its 'closed' day - they all had a fantastic time!

DigiFest

Adult Community Learning and the Library Service have been working together to provide creative opportunities for Cardiff's Citizens to engage with technology. An example of this was DigiFest which was held on the 9th September at Central Library Hub. DigiFest promoted the extensive variety of digital services and resources offered by both services, whilst also serving as the first enrolment event for the Learning for Work courses. The event offered information stalls on topics such as Virtual Reality and Digital Photography and well-attended hands-on workshops about 3D Printing, building functional robots using Lego, Minecraft, coding and Raspberry Pis. Children and Adults had the opportunity to learn about apps, programming and experience a live band performing music using old-school Atari video game consoles and components.

The day was very popular with footfall for the building at 21% over the Saturday average, and with 85 successful enrolments including 56% of these being new learners. This demonstrates that DigiFest helped to attract people who had never registered on a course with Adult Learning before. I am delighted that Adult Community Learning and Cardiff Library Service are illustrating so well that by working collaboratively the impacts that can be delivered to the people of Cardiff are greater as we work towards a society that enables everyone to fulfil their potential.

Employability Services in Cardiff

I would like to thank members who attended the recent briefing sessions and contributed to the development of a new, more joined up approach to employability in the city. Consultation on the proposals is currently underway and we have had an impressive response so far. I would encourage all members to take part in this process and to use your networks to make sure everyone gets the chance to take part in this important consultation. The outcome of the consultation and the resulting recommendations will be considered by Cabinet in November.

Into Work Advice Services Jobs Fair

On Wednesday 6th September 2017 at St David's Hall The Into Work Advice Service hosted The Big Cardiff Jobsfair, in partnership with Job Centre Plus. Numbers were up on last year with nearly 2,250 jobseekers attending the event.

45 employers attended, which was also more than last year, offering over 6,000 real job vacancies. Employers included; Marks & Spencers, Toys R Us, South Wales Police, Legal & General, Admiral and Lidl showcasing a broad range of employment opportunities in a variety of different sectors. Cardiff Council Corporate Traineeship, Fostering Agency, Social Services and Cardiff Works were all promoting opportunities within the Council.

In addition, a range of employment and careers advice services including; Careers Wales, Communities 4 Work and The Wallich attended the event providing clients the opportunity to access funding or mentoring support to improve employment opportunities.

A range of training providers including Adult Community Learning, Cardiff & Vale College, Adult Learning Wales, ACT and ITEC were present promoting local training opportunities offering clients the opportunity to upskill.

The Into Work Advice team also carried out workshops throughout the day including – how to make your CV stand out and job interview skills. Overall the event was a great success.

Councillor Lynda Thorne
Cabinet Member for Housing & Communities
27 September 2017