
STATEMENT OF THE LEADER

AGENDA ITEM: 12

Staff Engagement

I was pleased to join my Cabinet colleagues on 9 November 2017 at a staff engagement event to begin a conversation about our priorities, the challenges facing the city and, crucially, how we as a Council, need to respond. Attended by around 300 officers, it was an opportunity to acknowledge the dedication of staff and their absolute importance in delivering our agenda for the city. Delivering our priorities for the city requires a strong partnership between members and officers, with clear boundaries. As a politically led and professionally managed organisation, Cabinet is clear that we are responsible and accountable for the decisions we take. In return, we have set high expectations of our staff – to deliver with the utmost commitment, creativity and compassion – and I have seen first-hand the determination of staff to do their best for our city. It is my intention going forward that this dialogue will form part of a wider programme of staff engagement.

WLGA Autumn Seminar

I attended the WLGA Autumn Seminar on 23 November 2017 and welcomed delegates from across Welsh local government and public services to Cardiff City Hall. The new Cabinet Secretary for Local Government and Public Services, Alun Davies AM, attended the event and outlined his commitment to working with councils on local government reform, including his aim to meet the planned timeline for introducing a new Local Government Bill in June/July 2018 that was set out by the previous Cabinet Secretary.

Cardiff Commitment

The Cardiff Commitment represents a coordinated approach to supporting all young people in Cardiff to secure a job that enables them to reach their full potential, whilst contributing to the economic growth of the city. Working in partnership with the city's major employers in the private, public and third sectors, the Council is taking direct action to help prepare young people for the world of work.

By participating in the Cardiff Commitment, employers such as Admiral, British Airways, Eversheds, and GE Aviation have pledged to work with schools on employability skills and pathways into employment. On 2 November 2017, I was extremely proud to sign the Employer Pledge with the Chief Executive on behalf of the Council. I would encourage you all to support this important initiative.

European Plaque of Honour

Cardiff has been awarded the Plaque of Honour by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, which was presented at a ceremony held on 10 November 2017 at the Central Library. Cardiff is the only UK city to receive any part of the Europe Prize this year. This award highlights our commitment to working with our sister cities and with international partners as well as our continued commitment to our European friends. I am proud that Cardiff remains an outward-looking and culturally diverse city and must continue to act as a key connecting point between Wales and Europe.

Planning for Just Cities

On 14 November 2017, I was invited to respond a lecture given by visiting Harvard academic, Dr Susan Fainstein, which was organised by the School of Geography and Planning at Cardiff University. Dr Fainstein presented arguments from her book, *The Just City*, and shared international examples of how inequality could be addressed within major urban areas. It was a valuable opportunity to rehearse the priorities of the city with leading academics and city development commentators to ensure that our continued focus on reducing inequality in Cardiff is as informed and as effective as possible.

Cardiff Third Sector Council

I was delighted to deliver the keynote speech at the Cardiff Third Sector Council AGM - *Influencing Matters* - on 16 November 2017, which was held at Yr Hen Lyfrgell. The Third Sector makes a huge contribution to life in Cardiff, adding skills, diversity and an understanding of the needs of local communities, which can help make services more responsive and tailored to what each person, family or community needs most. The Third Sector also has a vital role to play in delivering public services and is well-placed to develop bold, innovative and sustainable solutions to complex issues.

Councillor Huw Thomas
Leader of the Council
29 November 2017