

My Ref: T: Scrutiny/PRAP/Comm Papers/Correspondence

Date: 31 January 2018

Councillor Huw Thomas,
Leader
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CF10 4UW



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Neuadd y Sir
Caerdydd,
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Dear Councillor Thomas,

PRAP Performance Panel, target setting session: 17 January 2018

On behalf of all Scrutiny Chairs, and Members of the Policy Review and Performance Scrutiny Committee's Performance Panel, a sincere thank you for the valuable session held today to consider in some detail the Corporate Plan target setting process. We particularly appreciate the opportunity to feed cross scrutiny committee observations into Cardiff's final draft *Corporate Plan 2018- 21* before it is presented to formal Cabinet. We look forward to seeing the final draft alongside budget papers, when all Committees will aim to test the budget proposals against the Cabinet's stated Capital Ambition priorities. Captured below are some key issues raised during our discussion that you may wish to explore further.

The performance targets set out in the Corporate Plan for 2018-19 are intrinsically linked to the requirement that the Council successfully sets a balanced budget in February 2018. We are concerned that sometimes targets and budgets are not achieved and we would encourage that targets set are stretching but attainable to avoid a projected overspend as early as Quarter 1. We accept that often budgets such as Children's Services will need to be re-balanced. However, we feel there is an opportunity to ensure budget savings aspirations are firmly reflected in the performance targets set out in the Corporate Plan. We accept the Corporate Plan is what the organisation wants to achieve, however it can fail if we see performance management as separate from budget management. We feel it should be possible to frame financial targets as an integral part of the Corporate Plan, and encourage you to consider this. Members feel they should be able to understand from reading the Plan, which KPI's are indicative of the real pressures on the budget.

Members made specific references to the following lines:

- Lines 46-48. Members consider these lines can deliver many of the aspirations in the Corporate Plan. We would therefore encourage you to raise the profile of the Council's vision for schools, and consider setting a 5-year target to achieve an ambitious improvement in the number of green schools. We recommend that benchmarking against successful areas in England would enable us to understand the City's potential to achieve levels of good-excellent schools within the region of 80%, a level that has been achieved elsewhere.
- Line 59 – We encourage you to consider whether we should be more ambitious in setting a target of 94.5% attendance for secondary schools, given this is not an improvement on the outturn of 2016/17, and is lower than the target set in 2016/17.
- Lines 38 & 39 – Please look further into the maths of these interdependent KPI's. We suggest increasing the total number of visitors (Line 39) to Cardiff will require a larger than 2% increase in the number of staying visitors (Line 38).
- Lines 75, 76 & 77 – We acknowledge these are new statutory performance indicators linked to the Well-being of Future Generations Act and as such are difficult to set, however wish to suggest a target between 60% and 70% based on the benchmarking information listed.
- Line 71 – Members are most concerned about the levels and cost to the Council of sickness absence, particularly in areas such as waste management. We consider the cost of agency staff to cover sickness absence has a direct impact on Council budgets, and the Council consequently has less money to spend on services. We have seen that when the whole organisation addresses an issue such as sickness absence it can make a real difference. We consider it vital to success in reducing sickness absence that a high level of proactive management focus is constantly maintained, emanating from the top.

Once again, on behalf of the Committee, please pass my sincere thanks to all who attended the PRAP Performance Panel. We consider this additional informal engagement session you offered to support effective scrutiny of the Corporate Planning process was a productive and worthwhile opportunity.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Walker". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

COUNCILLOR DAVID WALKER

CHAIR, POLICY REVIEW AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

cc Members of the PRAP Performance Panel
Councillor Lee Bridgeman, Chair Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee
Councillor Mary McGarry, Chair, Community & Adult Services Scrutiny Committee
Councillor Ramesh Patel, Chair, Environmental Scrutiny Committee
Councillor Nigel Howells, Chair, Economy & Culture Scrutiny Committee
Paul Orders, Chief Executive
Joseph Reay, Head of Performance & Partnerships
Dylan Owen, Head of Cabinet Office
Andrew Simms, Corporate Performance & Improvement Officer
Principal Scrutiny Officers.
Debi Said, Cabinet Support Officer
Joanne Watkins, Cabinet Office Manager