

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

Date: 28 June 2018



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Councillor Chris Weaver,
Cabinet Member Finance, Modernisation & Performance,
Cardiff Council,
County Hall,
Cardiff
CF10 4UW

Dear Councillor Weaver,

Policy Review & Performance Scrutiny Committee: 20 June 2018

Thank you for attending the Policy Review and Performance Scrutiny Committee for consideration of Quarter 4 Performance 2017/18. Would you also please pass Members' thanks to the officers who attended in support of this item? The Committee welcomes your genuine request for feedback in respect of the accessibility of the published performance documents, and your willingness to continue working with the Committee's Performance Panel as we move into Quarter 1 2018/19. However, we have some concerns; therefore, Members agreed that I pass on the following observations.

- **Presentation** – Firstly, we note you are continuing to refine the presentation of quarterly performance information in the first quarter of 2018/19. We wish to stress that the current presentation of the Corporate Plan Scorecard is very difficult to read on screen. If Members are expected to access this information digitally by default, then it will require a re-design. If not, and there is no re-design, then we would request that in future an A3 colour scorecard is sent well in advance to aid Members preparation for Committee. We welcome your suggestion that the Performance Panel is consulted on emerging refinements to the information that will ensure a less is more approach to data, focussing on what really matters, and based on the structure of the 2018/19 Corporate Plan .

- **RAG Assessment** -.Members are puzzled by the RAG self-assessment. We are also confused about the relationship between a Commitment (Measure) assessed as Red, for a Performance Indicator assessed as Amber/Green. It would appear that a service can achieve a Commitment set out in the Corporate Plan, and have failed to achieve the target it set itself. This does not tell us sufficient about the organisation's performance, and we therefore feel there may be a case for the Committee to better understand the criteria that are being applied to the internal RAG self- assessment. This may be an area of work for the Performance Panel to consider.
- **Self-Evaluation** - Similarly, the Committee continues to be concerned about the quality of self-evaluation, and how effectively the organisation is questioning the effectiveness of its performance. We take on board your view that the robustness of target setting in the latest Corporate Plan will improve the situation. We also concur with officer's view that some indicators are more important than others are, and where this is the case there is a need for more detail.
- **Consequences** We were pleased to hear the Chief Executive's clear view that missed targets and budget overspends by Directorates are not without consequence, he is prepared to make a judgement as to the reasons why, and take action where appropriate. We are concerned about the overspend of £1.665m in Commercial Services, and were reassured it had been monitored throughout the year, therefore was expected for a number of reasons, and we note the challenging conversations that take place at a senior level. We wish to re-iterate that in the future the organisation may not have the capacity to address overspends, as there will be fewer contingencies. We endorse your view that managing spend needs to strengthen across the board. Similarly, whilst sickness absence is a complex matter, you reassured us that the consequences of failure are understood.
- **Benchmarking** - We were pleased to hear you confirm that significant progress continues to be made in creating appropriate data set comparisons for the Council, both with core cities and with those that face comparable challenges to Cardiff.

Finally, we note the change in external improvement assessment coming in October 2018, and will factor the new *Annual Well-being Report* that supersedes the *Annual Improvement Report* into our work programme for 2018/19.

My sincere thanks once again for the time you continue to commit to Scrutiny. I look forward to working with you and officers as you continue to evolve the reporting of performance throughout 2018/19.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'David Walker'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name 'David' being more prominent than the last name 'Walker'.

COUNCILLOR DAVID WALKER
CHAIR, POLICY REVIEW AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

cc Members of the Policy Review & Performance Scrutiny Committee
Paul Orders, Chief Executive
Sarah McGill, Corporate Director, People & Communities
Christine Salter, Corporate Director Resources.
Joseph Reay, Head of Partnership & Performance
Joanne Watkins, Cabinet Office Manager
Heather Warren, Cabinet Support Officer.