



**ECONOMY AND CULTURE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
RESPONSE TO THE REBUILDING MOMENTUM: A GREEN
PAPER ON THE FUTURE OF CARDIFF'S ECONOMY**

On the 18th March the Economy and Culture Scrutiny Committee held a workshop to discuss Cardiff Council's economic vision Green Paper 'Rebuilding Momentum'. The Committee were provided with information on *Cardiff: Economic Performance*, the *Core Area Masterplan*, and discussed the new approach that was to be adopted. The following responses were provided in line with the consultation structure.

Q1. What do you think the city's priorities for economic development should be?

In discussing the potential economic development priorities the Committee noted the analysis provided by the Head of Economic Development.

It is clear that periodic economic recession, the unpredictable rise of major competitors elsewhere, unexpected business closures, the challenges arising from technological change and globalisation highlight the importance of building Cardiff's economic resilience. The resilience of Cardiff's economic systems is affected by the interconnectedness of today's economy and the Committee are of the view that there is a need for the economic approach to foster a diverse range of sectors, a mix of businesses and jobs. This balanced approach will need to be cognisant of Welsh Government priorities relating to the Enterprise Zone.

A key area for development is that of building an entrepreneurial culture in Cardiff. The metrics provided to the Committee highlighted that this is a key area for development, and it will be important for the city to harness the creativity and talent of young people in all areas of the city and foster entrepreneurship in the classroom. In improving the values, norms and attitudes of the population of a region relating to business start-ups, the development and embracing of a culture of risk-taking without fear of failure will be important.

As noted previously the development of creative industries will need to be a key feature in the economic Vision. Whilst the percentage of the population employed in creative industries in Cardiff is high, Members would like to point out the need to further increase the size/number of jobs in the sector.

It is acknowledged that there will be significant population growth over the duration of the economic vision. Within the context of Cardiff's quality of life indices and the Local Development Plan process, improving connectivity poses a key risk for economic development going forward. Improvements to the city's transport infrastructure will be required, with particular attention needed to the issue of car use.

The presentation provided to Committee highlighted that Cardiff is well placed in terms of its population with higher level qualifications, but has challenges in terms of the quality of schools. If Cardiff is to improve economically in a balanced way, it is essential that this matter is addressed to secure a broad skilled workforce.

Members were also of the view that there is a need for the strategy to focus on job creation and the central part the Council plays in this agenda. Jobs play an important role in improving well being, social cohesion and in reducing poverty issues, and it is important that any approach considers the needs of all and fully considers the socio economic and geographical perspectives.

Q2. What do you think are the most significant challenges that Cardiff faces and what are the city's greatest opportunities?

In terms of strengths and weaknesses Members discussed the need to maximise the potential of Cardiff City Football Club's promotion to the Premiership. In addition Members discussed the potential of promoting Cardiff as a regional sporting leader in the south west of the UK. In discussing the success of Cardiff in attracting major events the Committee identified complacency as a potential challenge to overcome for the future. It was also considered important for the correct mix to be achieved, and for partners to maximise the added value (social and economic benefits) associated with major events.

Universities were also identified as a major strength in Cardiff and there is a need to maximise this strength by improving the working relationships with the Council to foster an entrepreneurial culture.

The Committee recognised the success of the developments within the city centre and highlighted as a significant challenge the need to reduce the income disparities between communities via job creation

Cardiff's role as a capital city and regional centre for economic development was highlighted as a significant opportunity, and the developing city region agenda will be important opportunity for the future. Members highlighted the need to recognise the growth of Bristol and to see Bristol's 2050 business vision as significant challenge. Relationships need to be developed to ensure that the development is achieved in both city regions.

The development of Cardiff Airport is a significant challenge facing Cardiff and its region. International connectivity is a key factor in improving Cardiff's competitiveness and it will be important for Cardiff to be mindful of the potential of developing routes to key economic hubs.

Q3. Moving forward, how do you think Cardiff should build on its recent success to position itself in the UK and internationally?

From an international perspective it is clear that the possible improvements at Cardiff Airport have the potential to link with the economic focus of the Enterprise Zone - for example focussing effort on building flight links to international financial centres.

The Committee noted that Cardiff is one of Europe's youngest capital cities. Building on the 'young and vibrant capital city' approach appears to be the correct approach going forward. The Committee was also of the view that there were other potential areas for development, including Cardiff's cultural distinctiveness and the positive aspects/distinctiveness of the devolution agenda, which could also be developed.

In discussing the marketing approach it is clear that there is a need to focus more of the resources internationally being mindful of the growth of the BRICs (Brazil, Russia, India and China) in terms of inward investment. It is essential that any approach is based on strong market intelligence and robust consultation with Cardiff businesses.

Q4. Do you agree with the key infrastructure priorities for the core area and are there other priorities the Council should consider?

The Committee approved the Cardiff Metro concept and highlighted the example of Liverpool as an example of a city with good connectivity by rail.

The Committee agreed about the need to develop a convention centre, although mixed views were expressed regarding the ideal location. It was noted that a city centre site would assist in bids for large events such as the

UEFA Champions League. However, it was noted that land ownership issues might complicate this.

Q5. Do you agree with the Council's strategy to create an Integrated Transport Hub?

The Committee were supportive of the Integrated Transport Hub and the need to progress. The Committee were mindful of the context of the developing LDP and highlighted the importance of radial transport across the city.

The Lloyd George Avenue transport proposals were discussed and supported, in particular the development of a double sided street at the heart of the public transport network. The long term need of heavy rail access into the Bay was also discussed.

Q6. Do you agree with the land use zoning and densities proposed in the master-plan and the location of key infrastructure?

The Committee were particularly pleased with the opening up of the city centre by creating new open spaces such as the canal areas. Members also highlighted the importance of community facilities/local centres in holding areas together.

Q7. How this can best be achieved including the scope of any new model that is put into place?

The importance of high quality build was raised as a key issue in delivering any model. In relation to the Lloyd George Avenue proposals lessons should be learned regarding securing quality build, and innovative methods should be employed to ensure that this happens.

In relation to the potential convention centre and the potential eastern bay link, Members discussed the need to master plan the transportation infrastructure alongside developments rather than undertaking developments and risking increased congestion.

Land ownership issues were also highlighted as a potential barrier to progress and perceived bidding issues.

The Committee were concerned that the communication around such developments needed to be handled sensitively, taking into consideration the need to avoid the perception that investment is directed to the city centre only.

Q8. How can the Council better engage with the private sector and what role should the private sector play in shaping Cardiff's economic future?

In discussing the engagement of the private sector Members discussed the Cardiff and Co as an example. There were mixed views regarding the respective benefits of an arms length company (that is common practice in other cities) or an in house approach where there may be clearer lines of responsibility, with for example the Economic Development Director leading any approach. Members also discussed the need for a co-operative approach where major private sector companies were involved.

The Committee, hope that these comments support the emerging development of the City's Economic Vision.