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Date 14 November 2014

My Ref SS/CYP/MJH

Your Ref:

Councillor Sue Lent
Cabinet Member for Families, Children and Early Years and Deputy Leader
County Hall
CARDIFF CF10 4UW

Dear Sue

Thank you for attending the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee on 11 November 2014 to help introduce the **Youth Offending Service – Annual Plan 2014 - 2015**. I would also like to thank Ingrid Masmeyer for the full and honest answers that were provided at the meeting. Following consideration of the reports and answers to Members' questions, the Committee has asked me to write to you with the following comments and concerns.

The Committee were pleased to be informed that between April 2007 and March 2012 the number of offenders in Cardiff had reduced from 992 to 363, however Members expressed their concern that the proportion who subsequently reoffended, had over the same period, increased, as a percentage, from 38% to 47.7%. Members hope that actions identified within the plan will address this situation quickly.

Members also welcomed that at a strategic level the YOS manager is in discussions with the Cardiff and the Vale Health Board, which are making significant progress towards designing a mental health service for children & young people that will deliver services in a radically different manner from the conventional CAMHS approach, this includes the pooling of budgets and joint working. The Committee suggested that this type of joint working, and specifically pooled budgets, could be piloted across other areas.

I hope that the comments and concerns detailed above will be helpful, and will assist in improving the services and support for provided by Children's Services. This letter does not require a formal response.

Yours sincerely

COUNTY COUNCILLOR RICHARD COOK
Chair – Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

CC: Tony Young, Director of Children's Services
Ingrid Masmeyer, YOS Manager



My Ref: Scrutiny/Correspondence/MJH

14 November 2014

Hannah Woodhouse
Managing Director – Central South Consortium
Ty Dysgu
Cefn Coed
Parc Nantgarw
Cardiff
CF15 7QQ



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Dear Hannah

I would like to thank you and Councillor Chris Elmore, Chairman of the Consortium Joint Committee, for attending the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee on 11th November 2014 to present the **Consortium's Performance Report for 2014/15**. I would also like to thank Nick Batchelar and Angela Kent for their contribution to the report and the full and honest answers that were provided at the meeting. Following consideration of the report presented at the meeting and answers to Members' questions, the Committee has asked me to write to you with the following comments, concerns and recommendations.

The Committee welcomed the explanation of the Governance and Accountability arrangements recently implemented for the Consortium and agreed that the updated governance model provided greater clarity and clearer lines of responsibility, within the consortium and across the five Local Authorities. Members particularly appreciated Cllr Elmore and Cllr Magill's attendance that helped emphasise the composition of the governance arrangement.

The Committee did however raise a number of concerns at the inconsistency in the operation and management, by some Head Teachers, of the Performance and Personal Development Review system for teachers. The Committee considered that a consistent application of the process across all schools was a crucial element of school improvement. Members therefore recommended that the Consortium must identify and address any inconsistencies as soon as possible.

The Committee also expressed some concern around the general problem of the recruitment of high quality teachers, particularly in certain specific subject areas. Members suggested that the Consortium support schools wherever possible in their recruitment process.

Finally Members were pleased to receive positive responses to all the issues they had identified in the Estyn Monitoring letter, for the Consortium to address, and were considered to be a priority; however Members were unclear as to how the consortium was addressing Estyn's concerns that school Governors were unclear



about the areas for improvement in their schools. Members requested clarification of how the Estyn concern would be addressed either by the Consortium or Council.

I hope that these comments, advice and recommendation, detailed above will be of use and support in improving outcomes for Cardiff's pupils and I look forward to receiving the requested information and a positive response to this letter within the next month.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard Cook', with a long horizontal line underneath it.

COUNTY COUNCILLOR RICHARD COOK
Chair – Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

CC: Nick Batchelar
CC Angela Kent
CC Cllr Chris Elsmore

My Ref: Scrutiny/Correspondence/MJH

14 November 2014

Councillor Julia Magill
Cabinet Member - Education and Skills
County Hall
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Dear Julia

Please find attached a copy of my letter to Hannah Woodhouse in respect of the Committee's consideration of the Central South Consortium's Performance Report considered at Committee on 11th November 2014.

During the way forward section of the meeting the Committee agreed a number of actions arising from its consideration of the report, one of which was more appropriately directed to yourself and the Education Directorate. Members requested that the Annual Cardiff's Schools Performance Report, presented to Committee in January 2015, must include comparative data from England, and in particular the Core Cities.

I look forward to receiving this information in the performance report in January 2015. As such this letter does not require a formal response.

Yours sincerely

COUNTY COUNCILLOR RICHARD COOK
Chair – Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

CC: Nick Batchelar
CC Carol Jones
Cc Angela Kent



My Ref: Scrutiny/Correspondence/MJH

14 November 2014

Councillor Julia Magill
Cabinet Member - Education and Skills
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Dear Julia

Thank you for attending the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee on 11th November 2014 to help introduce the **Progress report on Recommendation 2 and 6 of the Estyn Inspection letter**. I would also like to thank Nick Batchelar, Carol Jones, Angela Kent, Simon Morris, Phil Norton, Neil Hardee and Marie Rosenthal for their contribution to the various elements of the report. Members were particularly pleased to be able to hear from and question officers who were directly involved in implementing the actions to address these recommendations. Following consideration of the monitoring reports presented at the meeting and answers to Members' questions, the Committee has asked me to write to you with the following comments, concerns and requests for information.

Recommendation 2 - Exclusions

The Committee welcomed the opportunity to be updated on the progress being made in addressing this part of recommendation 2 and in particular the good progress being made in reducing exclusions across Cardiff's Schools.

Members did however note with concern that two performance indicators had deteriorated and following further analysis members noted that this had resulted from only small number of schools. During the way forward section of the meeting, the Committee agreed to request details of the department's actions to address the deterioration of these two performance indicators in the schools.

Recommendation 2 - NEETS

The Committee welcomed the positive picture being portrayed, although members did note that precise data was not yet available. Members particularly appreciated the description of the work being undertaken with the 180 originally identified NEETs and that through intervention 121 now have a destination with 23 fully engaged.

Recommendation 6 - Scrutiny

Members appreciated the summary given by Marie Rosenthal and noted the progress that had been made in supporting Members in addressing the actions for this Committee. The Members also noted that following a review of the Partnership



Scrutiny Panel it was now agreed that Partnership issues would be considered directly by each Scrutiny Committee, and Members further agreed to receive all children & young people partnership reports.

I hope that these comments, and advice, detailed above will be of use and support in improving outcomes for Cardiff's pupils and I look forward to receiving the requested additional information and a positive response to this letter within the next month.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Cook', with a long horizontal stroke underneath.

COUNTY COUNCILLOR RICHARD COOK
Chair – Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

CC: Nick Batchelar
CC Marie Rosenthal
CC Carol Jones
Cc Angela Kent
CC Simon Morris
CC Phil Norton
CC Neil Hardee



Date 10 December 2014

My Ref SS/CYP/MJH
Your Ref:

Councillor Sue Lent
Cabinet Member for Families, Children and Early Years and Deputy Leader
County Hall
CARDIFF
CF10 4UW

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 9 DECEMBER 2014: REGIONAL ADOPTION SERVICE

Dear Sue

Thank you for attending Committee yesterday with Tony Young and Angela Bourge to present the draft Cabinet report on the **Regional Adoption Service**. Members would like to thank you and colleagues for the full and honest answers that were provided at the meeting. Following consideration of the reports and answers to Members' questions, the Committee has asked me to write to you with the following comments and concerns.

VISION AND PERFORMANCE TARGETS

While Members support the principle of a regional adoption service, they would like the draft report to have made explicit the Council's expectation of the benefits of the collaboration, in terms of specific outputs and overall outcomes.

During questioning, Committee came to understand what you felt to be the fundamental drivers of entering into this partnership arrangement. Members could view the benefits of collaboration you set out – such as increasing the pool of potential adopters, improving capacity to brand and promote the service, increase consistency and reduction of the current 'postcode lottery' – as valid reasons for entering into partnership, and would have liked to see these mentioned in the draft report.

In scrutinising a proposal like this, it would also have been helpful to have had some data on the current position, and quantification of the anticipated targets for improvements in service delivery and performance outcomes that would emerge from the collaboration.

We were pleased to hear that you will still be able to bring Cardiff-specific data to Committee so we can compare future outcomes with what is being achieved now, and recognise that arrangements for regional target setting are still developing.

Committee expressed a concern at the way forward that this proposed agreement was a "leap into the unknown", albeit one predicated on successful outcomes being delivered from earlier adopters such as the North Wales collaboration, which is now one year in.

It would be appreciated if for the future, you might be able to bring some of this data from North Wales to Committee, and for us to discuss future performance planning and monitoring arrangements so that suitable indicators can be agreed for Members to scrutinise.

GOVERNANCE ISSUES

Members asked a number of questions about the governance of the Regional Service. With so many and such varied partnership arrangements and alternative delivery models currently emerging in the fields of child protection, education and social care, the Committee is concerned at its future capacity to provide overview and scrutiny of these services, and will be grateful if your officers can liaise with Paul Keeping and Martyn Hutchings, and with regional social care and scrutiny colleagues, to develop ideas and options for the future scrutiny arrangements that can be brought back to us. On the basis of this information, we can put plans in place to optimise performance monitoring and future service delivery.

Committee recognises that the concept of regional adoption service delivery and the actual collaborative footprint for this collaboration have been mandated by the Minister, and that you have not been able to influence this. The same has been the case with the education consortium arrangements. Members are concerned in both instances at what scope for manoeuvre the Council would have, should the regional collaboration arrangements not prove effective. We do not believe that the Cabinet can currently anticipate or control what the Council's financial contribution will be in future years, and we heard that the partnership agreement is a 'work in progress'. This will leave the Council with unspecified risks moving into this arrangement, which we will need to scope and quantify so that the Committee will be able to effectively scrutinise the proposals.

OTHER ISSUES

Committee were interested to hear that the emerging national and regional collaborations were partly seen as a means to support the "Welsh identity" of adopted children, and reduce the number of children adopted far afield in England or Scotland. This would also make it easier for prospective adopters to visit and prepare in advance of the adoption, as travel times would be shorter. Members can see the value of this, but felt overall that the most important factor was for a child to be placed in an appropriate and caring family environment, irrespective of the location.

A Member asked why there was not more explicit reference in the draft report and business case to the role of the Third Sector in supporting adoption arrangements, but was reassured to hear Angela assert that charities would be closely involved in the operational arrangements going forward.

We were pleased to hear that we might be able to receive an update on the National Adoption Service before too long, and Martyn Hutchings will liaise with Tony Young to find a suitable time slot for this.

I hope that the comments and concerns detailed above will be help you and Cabinet colleagues in your consideration of these proposals at Cabinet tomorrow, and look forward to your response to the matters raised in this letter.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R Cook', with a long horizontal stroke underneath.

COUNTY COUNCILLOR RICHARD COOK
Chair – Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

CC: Tony Young, Director of Children's Services
Angela Bourge, OM Performance and resources
Jo Watkins, Cabinet Office Manager



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Date 21 January 2015

My Ref SS/CYP/MJH
Your Ref:

Councillor Sue Lent
Cabinet Member for Families, Children and Early Years and Deputy Leader
County Hall
Atlantic Wharf
CARDIFF
CF10 4UW

Dear Sue

Thank you for attending Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee on 9 December 2014 to help introduce the **Q2 Children's Services Performance report**. I would also like to thank Tony Young for the full and honest answers that were provided at the meeting. Following consideration of the reports and answers to Members' questions, the Committee has asked me to write to you with the following comments and concerns.

Children's Services Quarter 1 Performance 2014/15

The Committee was pleased to be informed that there have been improvements in performance on the recording of decisions on referrals, on the timeliness of initial and core assessments and on the recording of initial care plans for Looked After Children (LAC). However, performance on the timeliness of initial child protection conferences decreased. It is felt that practice within the service is good but that there is some bureaucracy in process that is getting in the way and this needs to be addressed.

The Committee also expressed some surprise at the reduction in the number of referrals, pointing out the drop from 1,169 in Quarter 1 to 969 in Quarter 2. The Members welcomed the Directors suggestion that, as there had been a several questions on this, he could return to the Committee at a later date and present a report on contacts and referrals, on demand and on the quality of service.

The Committee asked whether, in light of current economic circumstances, there is now expected to be more pressure on Children's Services and whether the service carries out analysis that allows it to predict patterns, in terms of the types of children that will be referred to the service for specific reasons. The Committee was advised that that kind of analysis is not carried out at present. The children who get referred to the service are predominantly from poorer backgrounds, so if economic circumstances get harder it might be expected that there will be an increase in referrals, but that increase would not come through straightaway. Members considered that this analysis may be helpful for future workforce planning information.

The Director advised the Committee that the situation on recruitment and retention has improved greatly; agency workers want to stay with the service and staff morale is good. The Committee was concerned that protracted processes in HR might be causing delays in newly-appointed social workers being able to take up their posts. The Committee was advised that



staff are being consulted on this to see if they feel that the current process helps or hinders recruitment. The Committee requested that the Director should provide a further report to the Committee on this issue.

In conclusion, thank you again for participating in this scrutiny, and we look forward to your response to the questions raised and requests for information detailed above within the next month.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard Cook', with a horizontal line underneath it.

COUNTY COUNCILLOR RICHARD COOK
Chair – Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

CC: Tony Young, Director of Children's Services
Kim Brown, Service Manager, Policy and Performance
Melanie Jackson, Personal Assistant to the Deputy Leader
Cheryl Cornelius, Cabinet Support Manager

DEPUTY LEADER'S OFFICE

My Ref: CM29408

Your Ref: SS/CYP/MJH

Date: 22nd December 2014



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Councillor Richard Cook
Chair – Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee
City of Cardiff Council
County Hall
Cardiff
CF10 4UW

Dear Richard,

**Children And Young People Scrutiny Committee 9 December 2014:
Regional Adoption Service**

Thank you for your letter of 10th December 2014 following my attendance with Tony Young and Angela Bourge to discuss the Regional Adoption Service and I welcome your positive comments and your interest in regional and national developments.

In relation to your specific observations I would respond as follows:-

Benefits of the collaboration - although the prospective benefits of the regional service were trailed in the two previous reports in December 2013 and July 2014, and scrutiny members had the opportunity to consider them then, I acknowledge that it might have assisted members had they been re-iterated, particularly for those new to the committee. I am pleased however, that we were able to clarify these at committee.

In terms of widening the scope of the report to incorporate performance data relative to the current position, it is important to emphasise that this was a joint regional enabling report designed to progress the regionalisation rather than a report designed to provide you with insight into the adoption service overall or its performance. As such this same report has been considered by each of the four Council's cabinets and it would have made it a very unwieldy piece if it had been burdened with very different data sets from each of the four councils. Indeed one of the advantages of a national approach and regionalisation is that this will facilitate a common approach to performance management, monitoring and reporting across Wales and regionally.

In relation to the development of 'indicators' I would advise caution in terms of approaching this on a Cardiff basis in isolation when we are about to enter into collaborative arrangements and will in any event be subject to the performance framework which is to be developed nationally. In this regard I understand that the newly appointed National Director of Operations would be able to attend committee for a further exploration of this issue.

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I share your concerns with regard to governance as do officers. In this context it is worth bearing in mind that the establishment of a National Adoption Service and within that its regional delivery arm, has the effect of removing adoption services from the control or direct responsibility of councils in Wales (It would have been possible for instance for all adoption services to have been transferred to a voluntary sector organisation).

Once transferred to the new hosting arrangement in the Vale, the Council, along with all other councils in Wales, will no longer directly provide an adoption service. Councils' duties in relation to adoption services will instead be provided through regional commissioning arrangements. As such these arrangements will be overseen by the National Adoption Board, reporting to the Minister. This new model flows directly from the Social Services and Well Being Act 2014 with local government providing a 'hosting' role only. We will need to be vigilant in holding the new service to account in order to ensure that the service and support provided to Cardiff children and citizens remains as good or better than currently.

We are reasonably reassured however, by the relatively extensive regional and national governance arrangements that are being established as part of the National Adoption Service. Moreover, we are placed in a much stronger position than any other council given our direct role in hosting the national service and my seat, as a consequence, on the National Governance Board; the Director of Children's Services will also sit on the National Governance Board.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sue Lent'.

**COUNCILLOR SUE LENT
DEPUTY LEADER
CABINET MEMBER FOR EARLY YEARS, CHILDREN & FAMILIES**

DEPUTY LEADER'S OFFICE

My Ref: CM29801

Your Ref:

Date: 4th February 2015

Councillor Richard Cook
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Dear Richard

Scrutiny - 9 December - Performance Report

Thank you for your letter dated 21st January 2015 on behalf of the members of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee following its meeting on the above date.

I would like to thank members for their constructive comments and I am pleased to provide the following response to your request.

I will be very pleased to give Members the opportunity to further explore the issue of contacts and referrals at the March Committee by providing a detailed breakdown of information.

In relation to the issues concerning workforce, the Director would be happy to provide Members with an insight into the picture on recruitment and retention once the end of year position is known.

Yours sincerely

Councillor Sue Lent
DEPUTY LEADER
CABINET MEMBER FOR EARLY YEARS, CHILDREN & FAMILIES



My Ref: Scrutiny/Correspondence/MJH

21 January 2015

Councillor Julia Magill
Cabinet Member - Education and Skills
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Dear Julia

Thank you for attending the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee on 9th December 2014 to help introduce the **School Performance Monitoring – Outcomes in Literacy and Numeracy**. I would also like to thank Nick Batchelar, and Angela Kent, for their contribution to the various elements of the report. Following consideration of the monitoring reports presented at the meeting and answers to Members' questions, the Committee has asked me to write to you with the following comments, concerns and requests for information.

The Committee mainly focused its initial questions on the processes in place to challenge and support schools that were considered to be performing poorly. The Members expressed some uncertainty as to when the local authority takes action in relation to schools that are under Estyn monitoring but are still failing to improve their performance. Members heard that such measures can be taken after a year, although if a school has been categorised by Estyn as requiring significant improvement or has been placed under special measures, the local authority can act immediately. However the Director commented that last year the process for dealing with poorly performing schools was not as robust as it is now. The Committee requested confirmation that the process was now robust.

In addition the Committee suggested that information on the actions that are being taken in relation to schools which have been identified as poorly performing schools should be released to the public, as there is a danger that people will feel that the local authority is doing nothing about these schools.

The Committee expressed some concern that the Challenge Advisor assessment of a school's performance were not always in line with the local authority's assessment. If the Challenge Advisor identifies one concern and the Estyn report says another then something has gone wrong. The Director advised the Committee that the performance of the Challenge Advisors has improved but there is room for further improvement. Members requested further clarification on how this improvement was being undertaken.

During the way forward section of the meeting Members expressed the view that future reports should focus more on making comparisons between the performance of schools in Cardiff. If the performance of schools could be raised to match that of



Cardiff's best performing schools then performance when compared to schools across Wales would rise as well

Finally the Members felt that, overall, the report seemed to lacked some detail on the vision of what the outcomes are for the pupils and Cardiff's Schools.

I hope that these comments, and advice, detailed above will be of use and support in improving outcomes for Cardiff's pupils and I look forward to receiving the requested additional information and a positive response to this letter within the next month.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard Cook', with a horizontal line underneath it.

COUNTY COUNCILLOR RICHARD COOK
Chair – Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

CC: Nick Batchelar
Cc Angela Kent
Cc Gareth Newell,
Cc Joanne Watkins
Cc Cheryl Cornelius

**CABINET SUPPORT OFFICE
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My Ref: CM29817

Your Ref: Scrutiny/Correspondence/MJH

Date: 13th March 2015

Councillor Richard Cook
Chair – Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee
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Dear Richard,

**Scrutiny - CYP 9 December - Schools Performance Monitoring - Outcomes
In Literacy and Numeracy**

Thank you for your comments in relation to the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee meeting on 9th December 2014 in your letter of 21st January 2015.

You requested confirmation that the process to challenge and support schools is now more robust.

I would like to inform you that schools requiring ESTYN monitoring are visited at least once per half term by the challenge adviser in accordance with the Central South Consortium's (CSC) Framework for Challenge and Support. The purpose of the visits is to evaluate the progress being made and to ensure that the additional support, the schools are receiving, is having a positive impact. The Local Authority takes action when there is sufficient evidence which demonstrates that any school is failing to improve their performance.

Since September 2014, the Headteacher and the Chair of Governors of schools in the red level of support category are required to present evidence of progress, each half term, to the Head of Achievement and Inclusion and Senior Challenge Adviser. The evidence of progress must be verified by the challenge adviser in their half termly report. A similar process is operated termly for schools in the amber level of support category. Any schools which are deemed to be making insufficient progress will be issued with a letter of concern or a formal warning notice.

General information on the actions that are being taken in relation to schools which have been identified as poorly performing is already in the public domain. The CSC Framework for Challenge and Support is available through the CSC website and the Statutory Guidance for schools and local authorities for use with schools causing concern is available on the Welsh Government's website.

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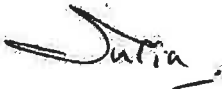


You also requested clarification about how the work of Challenge Advisers is being improved.

The performance of challenge advisers is being improved through a more stringent performance management process. More focused training and support has been provided, which has incorporated joint visits with a senior challenge adviser, moderation of progress judgements and quality assurance of reports.

Your letter requests detail on the vision of what the outcomes are for the pupils of Cardiff's schools. I would like to draw your attention to the improvement targets in the Council's Estyn Action Plan, which clearly set out targets for improvement in literacy and numeracy, as well as in other performance areas.

Yours sincerely



**Councillor /Y Cyngorydd Julia Magill
Cabinet Member for Education & Skills/
Yr Aelod Cabinet Dros Addysg a Sgiliau
Member for Llanishen and Thornhill/
Aelod Dros Llanisien a Thornhill**

My Ref: Scrutiny/Correspondence/MJH

11 February 2015

Councillor Julia Magill
Cabinet Members for Education and Skills
County Hall
Atlantic Wharf
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Dear Julia

**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE:
12 January 2015 – Schools Annual Report**

Thank you for attending our Committee meeting on 12 January to present the second tranche of the Cardiff Schools Annual Report for the 2013/14 academic year.

We were delighted to welcome three head teachers to provide contextual information about performance issues within their schools, and will be grateful if you can thank Marc Belli, Helen Turner and Kevin Tansley, for the insight they provided to Members of the Committee about the factors that determine and impact upon performance in schools.

It was also helpful to our scrutiny that Hannah Woodhouse of the South Central Consortium were in attendance to support our scrutiny, on this occasion joined by Challenge Advisor Debbie Lewis.

It has been far easier for us this year to do credit to the significance and size of the Annual Report by scrutinising it in stages. We were grateful to return to the report again in January, having previously given consideration to literacy and numeracy outcomes for the year at our December 2014 meeting.

Members found the report and data to be clear in their presentation, and the analysis at the start of the report was helpful. We are pleased to note the many improvements in our performance this year compared to the Welsh average (particularly the Key Stage 4 level 2 Inclusive Measure). The Director also helpfully identified in paragraph nine some priorities for further improvement, which Members were pleased to note and which will become a fertile source of scrutiny for our 2015/16 work programming arrangements. It is clear, based on the questioning that followed, that leadership in its widest sense is a critical area for development.

Members also found it helpful to see the introduction of comparisons with English core cities in the report. While we acknowledge the limitations of benchmarking performance outside Wales, we were interested to note Cardiff's performance relative to cities in the north of England, and are sure that the continued inclusion of these comparative data will be welcomed by Members. A Member questioned whether Cardiff's performance against other Welsh local authorities listed in the first

line of Appendix 3 of the report had suggested deterioration compared to its 2010 level, but was satisfied to learn that different measurement methodologies accounted for this.

Given the attendance of the three head teachers at the meeting, Members were naturally most interested in taking the opportunity to question the heads in detail on the effectiveness of performance management arrangements in their schools, and the roles of the governing bodies, the Consortium and the LEA. You will therefore find this to be the dominant theme of the Committee's observations below.

MANAGING PERFORMANCE IN SCHOOLS

The insight provided by the head teachers was welcomed by Members, who hope that the presence of head teachers might become a more regular aspect of our scrutiny of schools' performance. Similarly, we will welcome the opportunity to discuss these issues with school governors.

It was clear from the presentations given by the three heads that for them good performance relies on a number of factors. It is clear that individual leadership from the head teacher, clear and competent direction from the governing body and a broad team approach in the teaching environment are all of paramount importance. Each of the three heads spoke of the importance of maintaining high expectations, and of challenging everyone involved in the child's educational package to push and stretch the expectations of what that child can achieve.

We were also pleased to note from all three heads an unwillingness to tolerate mediocrity in the teaching body, and an acceptance that teachers who are failing to meet expected standards will have no future in the school. We endorse this approach. We were particularly pleased that difficult conversations had taken place within school settings to challenge traditional approaches around the number of times that a head could observe a teacher's practice, and that a flexible and productive set of arrangements had been achieved.

A Member asked if adequate training and support was provided to teachers to meet performance standards. The head teachers advised that the challenge provided to teachers by the heads was complemented by mentoring and support arrangements.

Members were reassured to hear that all three schools had robust appraisal systems in place for all teaching staff that were linked to pay. It was appreciated that individual performance targets are closely linked to national attainment standards.

Committee was also advised that governing bodies should provide overview of the impact and effectiveness of the school's performance management arrangements, and annually revise its performance management policy. In the case of one of the schools, the governing body's Pay Panel approved each of the head's threshold payments.

THE LEADERSHIP ROLE OF HEAD TEACHERS

Members were mindful of a comment made during the meeting that an ambitious head might not wish to take on too many roles in schools causing concern during their career, as it could limit their prospects.

Members asked Hannah Woodhouse and the heads about arrangements for the recruitment and development of head teachers. They heard Hannah set out the Consortium's three-fold role in: a) attracting new talent into the region by national recruitment and building the region's reputation as a good place to relocate; b) enabling heads to develop their skills by taking on short to medium term secondments in other schools, thus supporting mobility in the sector; and c) encouraging the highest-performing schools to spread good practice across the region.

We heard Hannah state that School Improvement Groups were naturally identifying future leaders. She described activity underway to support middle management development in the region, and to encourage governing bodies to provide challenge to head teachers. She conceded that more could be done. Debbie Lewis also spoke of the need to be more robust in challenging mediocre performance, and also of the inherent challenge of encouraging governing bodies to willingly release a talented teacher to take on a role in improving performance elsewhere. We are mindful that the Consortium is still at an early stage of its development, but are also aware that we need to provide challenge to the Consortium on its performance. We are pleased to hear Hannah and colleagues describe activity, but need to find some intelligent ways of assessing outcomes from the Consortium's activity so that we can provide proper and mature challenge that will help optimise its performance.

In passing, Members noted a view that the quality of many school environments across Cardiff are not acceptable, with chalk boards still being used in some schools, and upkeep of the estate a real issue.

COMMITTEE'S NEXT STEPS

It was clear that the three heads attending on this occasion had worked to build levels of performance in their schools. One specific recommendation made at the meeting was to ask if you can arrange with the Director to invite heads and other representatives of schools whose performance might be causing greater concern.

We recognise that we will need to provide a safe and non-judgemental environment that would be conducive to allowing heads to be candid and open in describing the challenges they face, and that our feedback needs to be carefully crafted to offer a level of challenge that is positive and stretching, rather than unhelpfully harsh or critical.

We feel that a task and finish environment will be more appropriate to this kind of scrutiny than a formal committee meeting, and have instructed our scrutiny officer to liaise with the Director to arrange for our Committee's second Performance Deep Dive of the municipal year to take place in March. We would like to speak with a

range of teachers and governors in schools with performance challenges. As this will be a new area of scrutiny for us, we remain open in terms of considering the precise dynamics of these sessions, and will ask the scrutiny officer to prepare a scope of scrutiny proposal for us to agree.

During the meeting Members shared their concerns about the performance of Eastern High School, in anticipation of the Inspection report expected soon from Estyn. We noted your willingness for Committee to play its part in examining and advising on areas of concern that might be raised in the report, and will appreciate advice from the Director on when and how Committee can explore the Inspectorate's findings.

I hope that this has been a helpful series of observations and recommendations. I look forward to hearing your views and your response to the requests made in the letter.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard Cook', with a horizontal line underneath it.

COUNTY COUNCILLOR RICHARD COOK
Chair – Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

CC: Members of Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee
Nick Batchelar, Director of Education and Lifelong Learning
Angela Kent, OM Schools Performance
Hannah Woodhouse, Managing Director, South Central Consortium
Debbie Lewis, Challenge Advisor, South Central Consortium
Marc Belli, Bishop of Llandaff High School
Kevin Tansley, Ty Gwyn Special School
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My Ref: Scrutiny/Correspondence/MJH

30 January 2015

Councillors Julia Magill and Sue Lent
Cabinet Members for Education and Skills, and Families, Children and Early Years
County Hall
Atlantic Wharf
CARDIFF
CF10 4UW

Dear Julia and Sue

At our Committee's 12th January meeting a number of children and young people supporting the city's youth and play services asked to attend Committee to present their concerns about Cabinet's budget consultation proposals affecting Play and Youth Centres.

We found the testimony to be powerful and compelling. Although we are sure you will have yourselves been approached by these stakeholders in recent weeks during the Budget Consultation, we wanted to let you know about the evidence we received at the meeting (and the subsequent Way Forward discussion we had) in advance of the 3 February to prepare you for the likely lines of questioning that might emerge at the meeting.

Several of the witnesses have since the meeting contacted me with written evidence, which I have attached to this correspondence. For clarity, these are from:

- Two young male users of the Howardian Youth Centre "Studio 22" Music studio
- Two young women representing youth provision in Llanedeyrn and Pentwyn
- Five young female users of Butetown Youth Pavilion, who, although their own provision was not under threat, wished to speak on behalf of young people across Cardiff (and particularly in Butetown, Grangetown and Riverside)
- Five young male users of youth provision in Grangetown and Riverside
- A group of children, carers and parents representing Play Services (particularly Adamsdown and Splott).

We were impressed that young people were willing and able to clearly and honestly advocate their compelling concerns at provision that they were likely to themselves lose in their local communities. Some of the young people's immediate provision was not due to being directly impacted by the budget proposals, however, and it was even more striking to witness their generosity in advocating for the preservation of provision in other parts of Cardiff.

In the timescale available it was not possible to adequately invite views from across the whole city, but while the young people clearly identified with their own local provision, we would rather present this evidence to you as representative of the views of young people from across Cardiff.



We feel that the evidence attached to this correspondence speaks for itself, and we do not wish to unduly elaborate. The key points that we wished to make, however, are as follows:

- **TRANSITIONAL PLANNING AND FUNDING:** We are pleased to see that the Council has produced its “Stepping Up” toolkit, and strongly support the approaches based on co-production and capacity building. Some of the young people also mentioned their gratitude to the Council for help in supporting their capacity. The campaigners from Howardian and from Play Services we spoke to had obviously put much time, thought and effort into developing sustainable business cases, and were currently contacting a range of private, voluntary and charity partners to seek their involvement, as well as exploring new approaches like Crowd Funding.

But a message we heard more than once was that communities need more time to plan to learn the skills to take on facilities and provision. It was felt that the Stepping Up Toolkit could be more child and young people-friendly, and that the level of expertise needed to navigate the Stepping Up website necessitated a level of capacity that might not always be available in communities.

Howardian’s Studio 22 chairman Joshua Quigley advised that the Studio’s financial needs were modest, but that one or two years of transitional support might be necessary to deliver a sustainable solution. As the site was not due for demolition for some time, a “stay of execution” was particularly requested to make this happen.

In the case of Play Centres, parent Annaliese Shanhan said that despite engaging closely with the Council for the past 12 months, little real progress had been made in that time, and that the “Stepping Up” approach had been initiated too late to make a practical impact in the short time window now made available to develop a transition Plan. While Splott parents might be ready in between nine to 18 months to take on the running of the building, parents in other areas of Cardiff had not been as proactive – possibly as the community campaigning around the Splott Community Hub had kick started activities in the Splott area. So, for instance, it was felt that campaigners for Llanrumney Play Centre could be a year or so even further behind Splott in their readiness to take on the challenge.

As a result of these concerns, we would like you engage you in serious conversation of how much extra time can be afforded these communities, if a genuine, robust and sustainable co-production approach can be delivered.

- **THE TRANSFORMATIVE NATURE OF YOUTH AND PLAY SUPPORT:** Traditionally regarded as “Cinderella” services, Youth and Play clearly make a significant impact on many of their service users.

- Witness after witness spoke of how their social and leadership skills had been transformed by using these centres, and spoke of their support workers as being like family members. They spoke of the positive impact of using a centre on their educational attainment and school attendance record, their readiness for the world of work, their ability to communicate and their general positive self-image. In considering any cuts to Youth and Play, we really should be most proud of these excellent services which exemplify a Co-operative approach to social capacity in Cardiff's communities, and recognise the many losses that will be experienced in years to come (if not immediately) should they disappear.
 - In the case of disabled children, play provision might be the only viable way for them to spend four productive hours of respite with their carer during a day, where they could receive peer support and engage in properly resourced, meaningful activities with people of their own age.
 - A parent from Splott Play Centre said that many of their users came to the Centre hungry and unfed, and although it was not in the Centre's core purpose, it regularly provided essential quasi parental and child welfare support.
 - The Centres often provide a unique environment where people from differing cultural and religious backgrounds can mingle and become friends, sometimes in single gender groups and sometimes in mixed ones, learning the skills of tolerance, respect and diversity, both easing cohesion and tensions in communities, and supporting good educational attainment and behaviour in the classroom.
 - Similarly, the Play Service has been recognised for its engagement with the local Gypsy and Traveller young people and families, and if this were to be lost it might prove harder to support and engage this often hard to reach community.
- **UNWELCOME CONSEQUENCES OF REDUCTION OF PROVISION:**
Several of the service users painted a stark picture of what outcomes would be like for young people if these facilities were not available to them.
 - Young women spoke of real and evident risks of sexual exploitation associated with socialising outdoors after dark in the absence of indoor provision. The cases of Rochdale and Rotherham are timely reminders of what can happen to a City's reputation when the basics of youth safeguarding are missing in an inner city area.
 - Similarly, young Muslim men from Riverside talked of real examples of the risks of radicalisation apparent in Cardiff. The Riverside Warehouse has delivered numerous anti-radicalisation activities, and was seen as a safe space and as a bulwark against radicalisation in the community. The young men said how easy it would be for malign

forces to get a grip on teenagers in Riverside who did not enjoy any other support activities after school. Members were particularly concerned to hear this, given the recent publicity of events in Paris, and Cardiff's own problem in recent months with young men travelling to Syria and elsewhere. They wondered whether corporate or even external PREVENT or other counter terrorism funding might be available to staunch the loss of youth provision if radicalisation could be a consequence.

- o At a more general level, young people spoke of the gang culture in some neighbourhoods, with their corresponding violence and criminality. A young man who had been attending Splott Play Centre from the age of five and who was now trained as a volunteer Play Worker, clearly stated that without Splott Play Centre he would have become a gang member, and had a significantly different life experience and prospects to the ones he now enjoys. A Member reinforced this view by reminding Members that the Buzz Information Shop had actually been established precisely for the purpose of reducing anti-social behaviour that had been reported in the north Grangetown community a decade or so ago.

Finally, some specific concerns were expressed about the apparent advertisement of tender arrangements for the site of Splott Play Centre, which may have given an impression that planning assumptions had already been made about the future of that building. These may have been a misunderstanding, but exemplify the level of anxiety in communities about their future provision.

Taking all of these points on board, at our Way Forward discussion, our general consensus was that – while recognising the clear requirement for the Council to reduce service provision to meet reduced budgetary capacity – the proposed cuts to these preventative and capacity building services are a short-sighted step that will lead to larger costs in the near future to remediate the impacts raised in the evidence above.

They will also reduce the quality of life of young people in many of Cardiff's most deprived communities, and reduce the Council's capacity to effectively work in partnership with communities in carefully planning and nurturing sustainably co-produced services – outcomes which all seem at odds with the Administration's stated vision and priorities.

We are sure that views very similar to those presented to us will have been shared with you over the past few weeks, and while the proposals you have recently circulated to us have not been significantly updated from those sent out for consultation in November, we feel that you will have made certain assumptions and calculations since then about changes to the proposals to mitigate the kinds of impacts raised as risks by the young people during the consultation period.

Rather than waste any of the time available at the meeting on 3rd February, we would like you to come to the meeting assuming that we will be engaging in a practical conversation about how these proposals can be rejected or modified, and

where savings can be found from other areas of the Council's budget to avoid them having to fall in the area of Youth and Play Services.

We are looking forward to meeting you and officers on 3rd February, and hope that the information contained in this correspondence will be helpful in your preparation.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R Cook', with a horizontal line underneath it.

COUNTY COUNCILLOR RICHARD COOK
Chair – Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

CC: Members of Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee, Nick Batchelar, Chris Hespe, Joanne Watkins, Cheryl Cornelius

To whom it may concern,

I am writing in the hope that my thoughts and feelings will be considered when a decision is being made regarding "The Hut" Adamsdown Play Centre.

For a long time I did not know anything about the special needs sessions in the play centre but now I do and I go there every Saturday. I will be extremely upset if it is taken away from me. For almost a year my Saturdays have become a day to look forward to.

I have Cerebral Palsy, Hydrocephalus Epilepsy and am blind in my left eye.

Before "the hut" my Saturdays with my carer Karuna would be spent either in Cardiff town, the museum or St Fagan's. Although I like the museum and St Fagan's, they are not places that can offer me what the hut does. They are places that are always the same with nothing different to do or see. There is nowhere else at all that I can go

to have the experiences and fun that I do at "the hut".

I am wheelchair bound and it is very difficult for me to access many places.

Keeping warm and dry, enjoying my time out and being able to be with my friends and the staff in "the hut" are so important. I play, I learn, I draw, I paint, I cook and I enjoy every minute of my time there.

There is nothing else anywhere that is adapted to my needs or can give me the opportunities that "the hut" does.

PLEASE DON'T TAKE ALL THIS AWAY FROM ME AND SO MANY OTHERS LIKE ME.

Kieran Henderson

**Young People's Evidence to Children and
Young People Scrutiny Committee meeting
January 2015**

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Young female Butetown Youth Pavilion service users

PAGE 4:

Young male users of Buzz Youth Information Centre & Riverside
Warehouse

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Howardian Youth Music Studio – Business Plan and Argument 2015

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Katie's experiences of using the Dome and Powerhouse

Appendix:

Kieron's experiences of using Play Services

**VIEWS EXPRESSED BY YOUNG FEMALE BUTETOWN YOUTH
PAVILION SERVICE USERS TO CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE ON PROPOSED CUTS TO CARDIFF YOUTH
SERVICES, JANUARY 2015**

Thank you for giving us youth a chance to speak up for all the teenagers who may lose their local youth clubs. We are all here from different areas of Cardiff, Butetown, Riverside, Grangetown, Canton and Roath, to express our opinions on why you shouldn't close down the youth services.

Youth club has given us so many opportunities and the chance to be involved in many different things such as, setting up a sports club with Street Games where children get the chance to participate in different sport and try things they wouldn't usually try. We have also created a group for anti-radicalisation in Butetown Youth Pavilion where we meet up to discuss issues regarding radicalisations.

We also have met with local MP, Prevent officers and other organisations and worked together to help other young people, we also were on bbc news. Having these experiences in youth club has given us the chance to meet new people and create new friends. Without these opportunities from youth club we feel that it gives us the chance to try new things and gives us the chance to put real life skills in to action and learn things that we don't in school.

Youth Services are amongst the most necessary, important and cost effective services that local authorities provide. Working in communities, Youth Workers build relationships of trust and support with young people, helping them to make their own decisions, build capacity and resilience and preventing their issues from escalating.

Health, Community Safety, Education:

Population in the three areas where you have proposed to cut two youth centre are 6600 young people. The three areas are ranked in most deprived in Super output area sited by Cardiff research centre

Concerns:

If the proposals are implemented, the Youth Service will have suffered a reduction of over 70% to the budget since 2011. In financial terms, this equates to a cut from £3.5 million to £1 million. We question if this cut is disproportionate compared to other services given the protection it affords young people across Cardiff.

Within a current needs analysis of young people in Cardiff, the impact of these services provide young people with improved attainment and attendance at KS3/4 within schools, reduced exclusions, reduced risk taking behaviours specifically substance misuse, reduced sexual health and teenage pregnancy, reduced anti-social behaviour, offending and reoffending, increased percentage of 16-19 year olds in education, employment and training and improved outcomes in relation to the most disadvantaged and vulnerable groups.

The incidents in Sheffield and Rotherham illustrate that young people need people with whom 'they can engage and trust.' This was highlighted in the Jay Report, 2014.

**VIEWS REPRESENTED FROM THE BUTETOWN PAVILION, BUZZ
YOUTH INFORMATION CENTRE AND RIVERSIDE WAREHOUSE TO
CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE ON
PROPOSED CUTS TO CARDIFF'S YOUTH CENTRES**

JANUARY 2015

My name is Kamrul Haque and I am 19 years old from Grangetown. I have attended the Buzz for many years and I am really sad and concerned that it is at risk of closure. I have noticed that anti-social behaviour is really low at the moment and if you allow The Buzz to close this will only lead to more kids on the streets and for these numbers to rise. I hope to attend University next year and this would not have been possible without the support of staff at The Buzz.

Q1) Councillors will you put your job on the line to save the Buzz from closure?

Q2) How was it decided that The Buzz would close when all the signs indicate it should remain open eg. High Unemployment, ESOL Needs, Large BME Communities and Young Parents?

Q3) Recently, the Enterprise Centre closed in Grangetown and the library is next for refurbishment, leaving the area with nowhere to go - why does it seem that we have been hit the hardest?

My name is Khalid and I attend the Buzz Information Shop it is with great disappointment that I hear that the council will not safeguard the Buzz from closure. I understand the council have to make difficult decisions but when it comes to young people it is as if you have forgotten we have entitlements and that we should be consulted when changes are being made to services and programmes that will affect us.

I have attended the Buzz for help with revision, coursework and for finding work experience - its a safe place to come together with friends and get help from supportive staff who care about us.

Q1) Are you happy to support these cuts that will see young people out on the streets instead of in safe places like the Buzz?

Q2) If you were in my position and your local councillor didn't help save key services in the local community would you VOTE for them in the future?

My name is Abdi Hassan and I live in Butetown and i am 18 years old as soon as heard about the closure of The Buzz i felt worried because ever since i attended The Buzz regularly they helped me with work experience and provided me with advice about UCAS and my personal statement.

Although, my youth club Butetown Pavilion is surviving the closures - the Buzz is a different provision and it would be wrong to close it, I have many friends and family that have made use of the Buzz and it would be crucial service to lose.

Q1) Have you measured the impact the closure of The Buzz will have on the community and young people?

Q2) What steps will you take to prevent this happening in the future if we are able to save it from cuts this year?

My name is Sameer and I am 20 years old, thank you for taking the time to allow us to present why it is important to keep our youth clubs open.

In Cardiff we have had a recent rise in young people going away to terrible places like Syria and the risk is real, closing centres like the Riverside Warehouse will leave young people on the streets and as easy prey to the people brainwashing them to commit illegal activities & if it isn't them it will be the Drug Dealers which lurk around the street corners.

Riverside Warehouse is a safe place for 11-25 years to attend, play and engage in activities and in fact we have young people from all walks of life attend from Asians, Arabs, Africans, White Welsh and newly arrived Eastern European young people without any single problems. I am afraid that by pushing us on to the streets you will create Ghettos and each community will stake their claim to an area of Riverside and this will cause havoc that cannot be undone.

Q1) Councillors do you actually realise the impact these cuts will have on us young people?

Q2) Councillors don't you think prevention is better than cure? Why wait for problems to happen when you can solve them now?

My name is Abdul Raheem and I am 19 years old, I live in Riverside and attend Riverside Warehouse. The closure and proposed reduced youth service to Riverside doesn't make sense when we have many issues in this community that without a youth club will grow considerably. We have High Unemployment, Drugs and Substance Misuse and like my friend Sameer said Radicalisation is present. Our centre provides us workshops and training to broaden our minds and our CVs. It will be a huge shame if our centre is closed because all the boys will have no where to hangout in and we will be literally on the streets and this will result in ASBOS.

Howardian Youth Music Studio – Business Plan and Argument 2015

Our Argument

1. As a specialist provision we work with young people from across all of Cardiff.
2. There will be either no or negligible savings made in relation to building costs by closing the Studio as it is located in Council premises not earmarked for closure until 2018.
3. Studio 22 is in a vital period of development as a sustainable youth led Youth and Community Music Service. Any major disruption to how it currently operates, either through withdrawal of Youth Service staff (1 p/t post – estimated annual saving £12,000) or relocation of studio to other premises will result in destabilising the progress being made.
4. Studio 22 are well aware that the long term future of its Youth and Community Music Service will be away from the present site at the Howardian Centre. It concludes that utilising the excellent current facilities whilst it explores other potential sites and/or potential capital resource funding for a new studio site is the preferable option.
5. Studio 22 will possibly have another 3 years at Howardian to grow sufficiently enough to satisfy funders such as the Arts Council of Wales of our suitability to receive the estimated £15,000 to £30,000 needed to build a fit for purpose music facility and/or locate to facilities in the appropriate community setting.
6. Receiving one more year of Youth Service staff funding (approx. £12,000) will enable us to work towards developing our business plan (see page 12) as realistically Studio 22 will struggle to maintain the current service if it were to take over in April 2015 rather than April 2016

Our Vision

The three things we have identified that must be utilised to their full potential in order for Studio 22 to achieve long term success as a deliverer of music youth work are

- 1- A fantastic space (that we have currently at Howardian) that serves as a setting for potential Sound/Music services be that Youth and Community , Educational or for commercial work.
- 2- The Skills of our staff, volunteers and young people in being able to deliver services.
- 3- The wide variety of music equipment that can either be used at the studio or in other settings..

In exploring funding options, one of our first conclusions has been that obtaining funding for what we currently run would prove difficult but that retaining open youth provision would be our main priority. Though we embrace change and the diversification of our services we want to stay true to our mission statement in that we wouldn't overly change the majority of our evening provision in order to meet funding criteria. We are therefore currently investigating funding with The Arts Council of Wales that may enable us to provide a similar provision to what we presently have and that would be able to 'roll on' for a considerable amount of time.

Meanwhile in order to utilise our skills and facilities we have concluded that we have to expand our services into the wider community and have therefore gone about acquiring funding for a sizeable project running in the daytime with targeted groups. We have been approaching appropriate partners and offering affordable taster sessions in order to build up evidence for potential funders such as the Big Lottery's Awards for All. The long term goal would be to generate income attributable to studio hire through funded daytime community projects. We would initially be looking at music projects targeted at vulnerable/homeless adults, people with learning difficulties and adults with mental health issues but are keen to work with any groups available in the daytime.

Another avenue that we are exploring is that of an Alternative Curriculum Pre 16 and Post 16 training provider. We have made provisional enquiries about applying for tender for the academic year 2015-16 and the studio manager is currently gaining experience as a tutor delivering BTEC vocational studies awards to Pre 16 pupils from Cathays High School. He is currently writing an assortment of music modules at Level 1 which would stand us in good stead in identifying a package of appropriate courses that we would be able to offer to schools and pupils.

We have also taken moves by affiliating with the Global Love Youth Trust into applying for Erasmus European Funding to run 5 music projects a year. We are confident that with Global Love's expertise and support in this area that we can host international exchanges in every half term. It also has become apparent that we can be utilising the PA equipment and staging that we have by hiring it and our services out for community and private use. A fair income may be generated in this line of work and it offers increased profile raising as well as wider community engagement.

Business Plan

We have developed a business plan around being able to continue to provide our current service on the principal of being able to employ one p/t member of staff who will deliver evening sessions and manage the studio at £10p.h for 20 hours a week, 40 weeks a year. This will mean that a minimum of £8,000 a year will need to be generated.

- £2000 a year (£50 a week) is projected as an achievable income for open evening provision subscriptions. Therefore £6000 will have to be generated through other income excluding staff costs. This will be a mixture of studio hire through funded daytime projects, Erasmus projects, providing alternative curriculum, Community PA hire and general fundraising. As we develop projects, thought will be given to what work is proving to be most time and cost effective and also what best fits our mission statement.
- Targeted Daytime Projects – studio hire -£20 an hour- 2 hours a day - 3 days a week- 30 weeks a year = £3600 p.a
- Alternative Curriculum – One day a week – Staff costs per day =£120, charge £30 per pupil, 4 pupils per day to cover staff costs. Income would equate to £30 per day and per week , £1200 per school year for every extra pupil over 4 pupils with a maximum of 10 pupils – a possible maximum income of £7,200. Our initial projection would be to break even for the academic year 2015-16 with income increasing in future years.
- Erasmus Projects- studio hire - £25 an hour, average 4 hrs a day, 5 days a week, 5 weeks a year - £2,500
- Community PA and Equipment Hire – based on this year’s takings we would conservatively estimate a £400 profit
- General Fundraising – based on this years’ takings and identifying that more can be done to increase the amount raised we have set a target to raise £500 through events & donations.

Income needed to cover costs	£-8000
Targeted Daytime Projects	£3600
Erasmus Projects	£2500
Open Evening Provision	£2000
General Fundraising	£500
Equipment Hire	£400
Total Estimated Income	£9000
<i>Estimated Surplus</i>	<i>+1,000</i>

This forecast we believe to be a realistic aim for the financial year 2016-17 and something to aspire towards in 2015-16 but it is our belief that the amount of income needed to sustain current provision at the level that is expected from young people is not achievable which is why we request at least one more year of funding at the current level. This would also give us some leeway in that any income raised in 2015-16 would alleviate cash flow problems in 2016-17.

Outcome and Impact Statements from Young People

Ex Howardian Music Studio Volunteer Ashley Morgan (23): "Having spent time at Howardian Youth Centre as a service user and volunteer it would be a shame and a huge disappointment for it to close. The Howardian youth centre is a fantastic, educational therapeutic environment for young children and young adults, the staff here provide an excellent service to these youths and losing Howardian centre, never mind any other youth centre would be a damaging blow to the community and the lives of many young adults.."

Current volunteer Jammy (23): I've been coming here since I was 12 and I owe a lot to the studio. I honestly don't know what I'd have done without it being there. I can't let them close the studio down, future people will miss out on something that's really special! I learnt to play guitar and drums there plus how to record and how to sing, so fighting to keep it open is the least I can do."

Deej Williams: The Howardian center had a huge development on me as a person and as a musicians. Without it, I wouldn't have had anywhere where I could explore music with the freedom afforded to me there. I met many other young people with very similar interests and made many friends I otherwise wouldn't have. Buds encouragement in our early development, not only as musicians, but as technicians and on very basic economic principles led us on to booking performances and recording and releasing out own music and marketing them to family and friends. I know that many of us went on to manage their own bands and tours, and I myself went to do a music degree, which I wouldn't have done without the opportunities afforded to me by Howardian. Besides that, it was a fun place to go and gave us something creative to do with our time.

Jack Harding: Studio 22 gives an education that is found nowhere else, it has changed my life and the lives of many others. School alone (particularly WJEC 'Music') doesn't offer the relaxed, friendly atmosphere and the positive experience that is offered at Howardian Studio 22.

Sam Watkins: Having spent a week doing work experience at the Howardian centre as well as jamming out there many times, i understand just how important it is to a wide stretch of people. Having lived in Cardiff all my life, i understand how difficult it is to find that haven where you can blast out a few songs with your friends. For me and many others the Howardian is so exceptionally brilliant in it's ability to improve peoples lives and broaden the creativity of many young people. It would be an absolute travesty to let this place go, and shame on the council for even considering it.

Amy Davies: My sons and his friends who are all 17-19 year olds have been practising instruments/band at howardian for years and they are good kids who dont drink don't smoke or do drugs. This im sure is because they have found a healthy hobby with somewhere to practice and keeps them from hanging around streets and parks.. please dont do this. Lets keep the youth of today on the right path.

KATIE'S EXPERIENCES OF USING THE DOME AND POWERHOUSE

I started to attend the Dome, Pentwyn Youth club when I was 10 years old, it was perfect for me as I lived right opposite the youth club. I was first going through different emotions such as, scared, nervous and excited as I was hoping to make new friends.

After a while I was had made friends and was attending the youth centre regularly, my mum was happy that I was attending it on a regular basis as it was in my community and she hoped it would help me develop as a person.

As I got older I started to become a regular and valued member of the youth club and was pleased to be having the opportunities to participate in various activities, trips and accredited courses. I've been lucky enough to go on trips to places such as Storey Arms and the Gower in Swansea. What I remember about these trips are firstly the fact that everyone had the opportunity to attend this trip and it was a lot cheaper than if I went in school. If some of the young people couldn't afford to attend the trip then the youth workers would try and either find extra funding or encourage us to do various forms of fund raising to make the trip affordable for everyone. This also made us value the trip a lot more as we helped paid towards it. On these trips I felt I started to learn a lot and about myself and start to build my own identity. It also helped me face my fears at a young age and continue to build my confidence and self esteem. A lot of these trips have also been with young people from different youth clubs so I have had to learn how to get along with people who I didn't know. These trips were also made fun and enjoyable by the youth workers who would do their utmost to make the trip a success.

Within youth club I also had the opportunity to complete my Bronze Duke Of Edinburgh's Award. Again this was more affordable and manageable within the youth club and by this time I had built up many positive relationships not only with staff but also young people too which made it more enjoyable.

At the start of my school year 10 I was having some problems at home between my parents. They were arguing and this was starting to affect my schooling. I didn't want to attend school or see my friends. I had built up positive relationships with the youth club staff and felt that I was able to speak with them about my home situation and receive some guidance and support off them. I would slowly start to open up to the staff and they would always find time to talk with me and I felt that they actually wanted to listen to me and help me through my problems which I didn't think anyone else did. I was receiving negative comments from my parents and from teachers in my school, some of whom thought I was going to succeed, but the staff at the youth club made me realise I could achieve what I wanted to in life.

As I was now attending the youth centre on a regular basis I was offered the chance to become a 'senior leader' and help out on a junior night. No one had ever given me an opportunity like this before and it made me feel that people did care about me and that I could be good at something. By doing this it took my mind off the bad things going on at home and also the negative thoughts I had. I was now thinking of activities to run for the young people and the sense of achievement I was feeling.

I am now 17 and am in ACT college. I have had a mixed education and mixed time at home, one thing that has not changed though is the support I receive from my youth worker. Even though the Dome is no longer open I am still in constant touch with the youth workers and still ask them for guidance and support. If I don't know something in college or want help looking for a job I phone the youth worker and ask him. I even tell my friends to phone him as I know he will do everything he can to help and if he doesn't know the answer then he will know someone who will.

These types of relationships are built over a number of years and remain for a number of years, they cannot be built like this in schools or any other services, they are unique and I think it is very upsetting that a lot of young people will not have the same opportunities as I have had. Without the input of my local youth centre there is no way I would be in the positive position I am in and I truly believe I would be another NEET young person, which for me isn't a nice thought.

Young people should be able to access their local youth centre and have the opportunity to live like young people. If there are less and less youth centres then where are the young people going to? I have young nieces and nephews who are asking me 'when can we do all the fun stuff you did in youth club? I cant lye to them and I find it upsetting when I have to tell them they may not have this opportunity as the council is reducing the funding.

I started this speech by explaining I was from Pentwyn and you have already 'closed down our local youth centre' to save money. However I would like to ask why the building is still there and why is it not being used? Not only young people but everyone who lives in the community is very dis heartened by this, a building not being used for anything and just wasting away. I have some very happy memories of my time at the Youth Club and will never forget them. I just find it very upsetting that other young people will not get these opportunities. Thank you for listening to me.

**CABINET SUPPORT OFFICE
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My Ref / Fy Ref: CM29982
Your Ref / Eich Ref : Scrutiny/CYP/Feb2015(2)
Date / Dyddiad: 3 March 2015

Councillor Richard Cook
Cardiff Council
County Hall
Cardiff
CF10 4UW

Dear / Annwyl Richard

**Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee 3 February 2015:
Consultation Report and Equality Impact Assessments**

Thank you for your letter of 3 February 2015 regarding the equality impact assessments of the budget proposals and the report of the budget consultation.

I welcome the acknowledgement of the Committee's appreciation of the extensive piece of work which was undertaken in relation to the budget consultation and the fact that this also represents a significant improvement to the way in which the Council engages with the public over key decision making. As a Cabinet we certainly believe that the consultation process this year has afforded greater opportunities for discussions with a wide range of stakeholders (including children and young people) over recent months so that we can all better understand the views of our citizens and service users.

Whilst I note the point about the Scrutiny deadlines, I also need to highlight the point that officers have done everything possible to collate and analyse the information received as part of this consultation as soon as they have been able. This is one of the biggest consultations we have undertaken and, as part of the 4,191 responses we received, we also has over 28,925 separate comments which needed to be inputted and coded before analysis could be undertaken. In addition there were also a large number of letters, emails and enquiries received which needed to be taken into account. This exercise in itself is extremely challenging within the timescales and does not factor in the subsequent work that was then required to produce graphs, write the report and appendices and undertake accuracy checks to provide quality assurance given the time pressures this was produced under.

I believe that the end result is a high quality and comprehensive report which is extremely valuable for providing an overview of the results in an open and transparent way and, whilst I accept that Committee Members may not have time to read the complete document over night, I do not accept that the report was of no practical value. This is based on the fact that there was an Executive Summary provided to all Members and, if focussing on Youth Services and Play

PLEASE REPLY TO / ATEBWCH I : Cabinet Support Office / Swyddfa Cymorth Y Cabinet,
Room / Ystafell 518, County Hall / Neuadd y Sir,
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Services, represented two small boxes of findings on pages 12-13 of the main report which are easily readable. Similarly, Scrutiny Officers could have also directed Members of the Committee to the main results regarding these services in pages 59-70 and clarification could have been sought from Officers attending the Committee.

Regarding the point about Equality Impact Assessments being loaded up on the website late, this would also have been impacted on by the short timescales between the consultation closing and the Committee meeting but again, Officers were available to update the Committee of any issues which arose during the consultation process should Members have requested this information.

Finally regarding the decision taken by the Scrutiny Chairs not to launch a separate 'call for evidence', this a matter for the Committees and something which the Cabinet is unable to comment on.

As a Cabinet we have recognised the value of engaging the public in early discussions about the budget proposals and it is something we be continuing in future years. As part of forward planning we will certainly look to build in more time again for the consultation next year and we will continue to work with the Scrutiny Committees to ensure that this is shared as early as we possibly can.

Yours sincerely
Yn gwyir



Councillor / Y Cynghorydd Daniel De'Ath
Cabinet Member for Safety, Engagement & Democracy
Aelod Cabinet DrosDiogelwch, Ymgysylltu a Democratiaeth

My Ref: T: Scrutiny/CYP/Feb 2015 (1)

Date: 4 February 2015

Councillor Graham Hinchey
Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and Performance
City of Cardiff Council
County Hall
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CF10 4UW



Dear Councillor Hinchey

**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE:
Corporate Plan and Corporate Finance - 3 February 2015**

Thank you for attending this month's Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee. I will be writing at greater length to Councillors Magill and Lent regarding budget proposals from their Portfolio, but wanted to briefly bring to your attention some Member observations relating to corporate finance that might be best addressed for your consideration in the lead up to the Cabinet meeting on 20 February.

I will be copying this letter to the Chair of Policy Review and Performance Scrutiny Committee in advance of PRAP's meeting on Monday 9 February, and it is possible that he will raise these points with you in greater detail.

Before setting out these observations, Members would like to thank officers for attending Committee and answering questions fully and honestly, and for the huge amount of work invested by officers across the Council in recent months to support the invidious task of developing the required savings proposals. Equally, we are aware how difficult it must have been for Cabinet Members to weigh the conflicting pressures facing the Council. We hope that these comments will be seen as constructive, and will help you in your deliberations over the next few days.

- **Corporate Plan:** The purpose in attaching the Corporate Plan as an appendix to our meeting papers was to enable Members to consider the alignment of the Portfolio Budget Proposals being presented at the meeting with the Administration's overall performance and policy priorities. Members found the document to have been of general assistance in supporting the scrutiny and the Directors to have helpfully identified the linkages between the Plan and the budget proposals in their presentations to Committee.

While we are sure that Policy Review Committee and some other scrutiny committees may have further specific feedback on the Corporate Plan, our Members' only comment was to express some surprise not to see any significant reference to a Preventative Strategy for Children's Services that we have been discussing with the Director in recent months. Beyond this, we have no specific feedback on the Corporate Plan.

- **Impact of non-achievement of 2014/15 savings:** Although we noted that Children's Services was a positive example of a Directorate that achieved £2.6 million of its £2.7 million savings target for 2014/15, we are aware that non-achievement of savings targeted for 2014/15 has increased pressures on this year's and future revenue budgets. With £6 million (17%) of 2015/16's savings proposal having a red residual risk rating and £2.3 million having a red achievability risk rating, we urge you and officers to maintain pressure within the organisation on the management and achievement of performance targets, and we will be monitoring this vigorously during our quarterly performance monitoring in 2015/16.
- **Reduction to Collaboration Funding resources:** Given the significant moves towards regionalisation and rationalisation of services reporting through this Committee over the past year and its likely future trajectory, Members were worried that the reduction of allocation for collaborative initiatives from £4.8 million to £2.5 million will limit our capacity to remain agile to future opportunities to save money through collaboration.
- **Partnership for Change – service pressure risks:** Members were concerned that if not properly managed and monitored, enabling employees to purchase additional annual leave and placing additional restrictions on agency and overtime could increase pressure on delivery of front line services that report through this Committee. The Section 151 Officer stated that these savings would need to be sensitively applied to ensure continuity and efficiency of the services provided, and this will be an issue that our Committee will consider monitoring during its 2015/16 work programme.
- **Potential alternative uses of the £2.5 million capitalisation under the Partnership for Change, and the Balance Sheet Review:** Members discussed at length whether the Cabinet's proposed use of the £2.5 million windfall from Welsh Government's agreement to the Council's capitalisation proposal under the Partnership for Change would deliver best value for the Council's future needs. The capitalisation will be predicated on the disposal of assets that, once lost, will limit our future capacity to deliver services. Members questioned whether it might be more prudent to use these resources in preventative work, notably – in the case of this Committee's terms of reference – in optimising transitional arrangements for future delivery of youth and play services, and in the eagerly anticipated Children's Services Preventative Strategy.
- **Savings from Senior Management Posts:** Members felt the £200,000 target proposed to be overly modest, and urge you to consider increasing this allocation.

We hope that these comments will have been of assistance to you. There is no need to respond to this letter.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard Cook', with a long horizontal line underneath it.

COUNTY COUNCILLOR RICHARD COOK
Chair – Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

cc

Members of Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee
Chair of Policy Review and Performance Scrutiny Committee
Christine Salter
Martin Hamilton
Cheryl Cornelius

My Ref: Scrutiny/Correspondence/MJH

16 March 2015

Councillor Julia Magill
Cabinet Member - Education and Skills
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Dear Julia

Thank you for attending the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee on 10th March 2015 to help introduce the **Education Performance update, School Performance Monitoring Report and the 21st Century School Programme – refresh**. I would also like to thank Nick Batchelar, Carol Jones, Angela Kent, and Janine Nightingale for their presentations and contribution to the various elements of the agenda. Following consideration of the monitoring reports presented at the meeting and answers to Members' questions, the Committee has asked me to write to you with the following comments, concerns, requests for information and recommendations.

Education Performance - update

The Committee welcomed the opportunity to be updated on the progress, as shown in the quarter three report, being made by the Directorate, however following an analysis and explanation of the various elements of the performance report, Members considered that it was important that performance should be reported to Committee, as soon as possible after the end of the quarter. Members therefore recommended that future corporate performance reports must be presented in a more timely manner, so that they can review and assess up to date information.

Estyn monitoring – recommendation 3,5 & 6

Recommendation 3 – Make sure that the arrangements for delivering school improvement services challenge and support all schools effectively, in order to improve standards for learners in all key stages.

The Committee was pleased to hear that the improvement processes had been strengthened with the Consortium and that officers felt that there was now better challenge and support from the Consortium's Challenge Advisors. Members were however concerned that the operation of the consortium was still "a developing situation" and although some areas were performing well the consortium was still not operating satisfactorily. Members requested clear assurance from you and the officers as to when the Consortium will be operating to an acceptable standard.

Members were also pleased to be informed that the school performance process was working well and schools were holding regular school improvement meetings.



The Committee noted the officers' confirmation that there was a high degree of confidence that some schools would be improving. The Committee will therefore be looking forward to seeing clear improvements, across all schools, when the next banding of Cardiff's Schools is published.

When Members reviewed the challenge process, officers stated that schools had to undertake a self-assessment exercise, which identifies any changes in potential categorisation. As the Committee felt frustrated that improvements were not moving fast enough, Members requested copies of the latest school self assessments for the "red" schools so that they could see what potential progress was being made by each of the schools.

Recommendation 5 – Improve Performance management process to ensure consistent approach to delivering objective

The Committee welcomed the improvements made in the Corporate Performance Management Process and that there was now a consistent focus on the performance of schools. However Members considered it important that the Council should not lose sight of the progress being made by individual pupils.

In addition Members wish to highlight to Education officers that although Chairs of Governors were involved in school improvement meetings and plans, officers must ensure that all Governors are aware of the issues of concern and plans in place to improve the educational outcomes of pupils in their School.

Recommendation 6 – Improve the scrutiny of local authority education service and partnership working.

The Committee also reflected on actions relating to this recommendation as it was directed at this Committee together. Members considered the training they received was very good and should be repeated every two years as well as provided to all new committee Members. Members also stated that the analysis and presentation of education performance information had improved considerably over the years, however they were not always able to be presented with the full picture. As a result the Committee had agreed to undertake detailed investigations into selected schools, over the next few months, so that they can understand the challenges faced by schools.

School Performance Monitoring report

The Committee welcomed the explanation of the National Categorisation and in particular the analysis of the categorisation of Cardiff's Schools against those of the Consortium and All Wales. Members also noted the Schools Causing Concern process which had been sharpened since September 2014, and now included holding Head Teachers and Chairs of Governors to account for the progress of improvement. However Members still expressed concern that some schools were not showing signs of improvement. The Committee expect to see significant improvements over the next year.

Members expressed some concern, that following their analysis of the performance of schools, it was apparent that there is a disproportionately high number of Faith and Welsh schools in the "red" and "amber" categories. Members requested that officers investigate the reasons for the high number of Faith and Welsh schools causing concern, and report back to Committee, on the actions that are being put in place to address this imbalance.

Members also noted that some High Schools categorised as "red", had feeder Primary Schools that were categorised "green or yellow". Members felt that this highlighted problems around the transition from Primary to Secondary as well as a possible change in the educational culture in some high schools. Members requested that Education Directorate and the Consortium should investigate these situations and report back to Committee with actions they had identified to address this situation.

Finally Members noted that officers stated that they expected year on year improvements in school's categorisation and as such the Committee will be looking, in future reports, for the evidence of this improvement.

21st Century School Programme - Refresh

Members welcomed the opportunity to scrutinise the plans before they are presented to Cabinet, and identified a number of comments which could be taken into consideration by Cabinet when it considers this report on 19 March 2015. The Committee wished to reiterate to Cabinet that any refresh of the 21st Century School Plans must have as its primary aim "better outcomes for pupils".

Members noted that one of the aims of the refresh was to establish schools "to facilitate the development of community focussed schools for the benefit of the wider community across Cardiff". Members wish to emphasis to Cabinet that the development of any community facilities must be undertaken following discussions with neighbourhood partners, charities, youth service, and play providers, to ensure that the schools are truly community focussed.

Members expressed some concern that there seemed to be an over emphasis of Faith Schools projects being moved to the deferred list, as many were for the establishment of Nursery Units. Members noted that additional nursery places were being provided within other projects, however they considered that there would still be an in balance of places across the City, and this needed to be addressed as part of the refresh. The Committee requested details of the provision of nursery places across the City together with an explanation of the rational behind the prioritisation of projects and in particular the reasoning behind the deferral of the Nursery Unit projects.

Finally the Committee noted the refresh proposals included a New High School in the West of the City, which replaces Michaelston Collage and Glyn Derw High. Members wish to have assurance that you and officers have learnt from the issues identified at the New Eastern High and ensure that they are not replicated in the new school in the west.

I hope that these comments, advice and recommendations, detailed above will be of use and support in improving outcomes for Cardiff's pupils. The Committee looks forward to receiving the requested additional information listed above together with a positive response to this letter within the next month.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R Cook', with a horizontal line underneath it.

COUNTY COUNCILLOR RICHARD COOK
Chair – Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

CC: Nick Batchelar
CC: Carol Jones
CC: Angela Kent
CC: Janine Nightingale
CC: Cheryl Cornelius



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Date 10 April 2015

My Ref SS/CYP/MJH
Your Ref:

Councillor Sue Lent
Cabinet Member for Families, Children and Early Years and Deputy Leader
County Hall
Atlantic Wharf
CARDIFF
CF10 4UW

Dear Sue

Thank you for attending Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee on 7 April 2015 to help introduce and respond to the **Integrated Family Support Team Annual Report, Quarter 3 Children's Services Performance report, Recruitment and Retention of Social Workers update, three Cabinet Responses to Task and Finish enquires and Audit Committee correspondence**. I would also like to thank the officers who attended for their full and honest answers that were provided at the meeting. Following consideration of the reports and answers to Members' questions, the Committee has asked me to write to you with the following comments, concerns and recommendations.

Integrated Family Support Team – Annual Report

The Committee welcomed the opportunity to scrutinise the Team's third annual report, prior to its presentation to the Welsh Government. Members were pleased with the work of the team and the positive outcomes the various initiatives had achieved. However during the way forward section of the meeting Members did express some concern around some aspects of the report.

Members discussed in depth, with officers, the impact of the change in funding for the team. Originally funding was received directly and resources were allocated across Cardiff and the Vale on the basis of need. This resulted in 2/3 of resources being applied to Cardiff and 1/3 to the Vale. However Members were concerned to learn that funding was now included in the RSG settlement on a 50/50 basis. Members recommended that the Integrated Family Support Service Board ensure that resources are allocated on the basis of need.

Members also suggested that future annual reports should included information and data to help support the outcome measures and impact of the team's work, this could include:

- A termly assessment, from schools, of the changes in the children's education, during the course of the teams' intervention. This will compliment the happiness index; and
- Details of the cost benefit analysis of the teams work

Finally Members requested clarification of the outcome for the 89 children that had been worked with during last year as the presentation only gave details for 55 of the children.



Children's Services Quarter 3 Performance 2014/15

The Committee was pleased to be informed that there have been general improvements in the overall performance of the service. In particular Members welcomed the percentage increase in the timeliness of core assessments and initial child protection conferences despite an overall increase in the number of referrals, as well as the number of core assessments and initial child protection conferences. Members were also pleased to see that the Managed Team had reduced the overall number of cases from 2,953 to 2,504, thereby bringing the social worker case load down to 18.4 cases.

In respect of the Managed Team, Members questioned the exit strategy, as the team were still dealing with 220 cases. Members were aware that these cases would now have to be allocated across the social workers. The Committee also expressed its concern that even though the Managed Team was always a temporary measure, it appeared that a robust exit strategy had not been developed.

Members recommended that urgent action is taken to develop a robust exit strategy, prior to the ending of the Managed Team's contract, as it became apparent that the transition would be challenging and involved a number of risks. Children's Services needs to ensure that social worker's workload is not adversely affected and a backlog does not build up again.

Recruitment and Retention of Social Workers

The Committee was pleased to hear about the ongoing initiatives, which had been implemented to improve social worker recruitment and retention, including the re-branding of the service, reorganisation of the teams and the review of the processes.

Members focussed their questions on the timeliness of the recruitment process. Officers indicated that the process can take an average of four months to fill a vacant social worker post. The Committee considered this delay to be overly excessive, particularly from a safeguarding point of view, and could put children and young people at risk. Members stated that a maximum of 2 months should be the Council's target.

The Committee, during the way forward section of the agenda, recommended that the Council's Human Resources and Children's Services departments must urgently investigate the social worker recruitment process, identifying the areas of delay or blockage, and thereby develop an action plan to reduce the recruitment process for social workers to a target of two months.

Cabinet Responses

The Committee was pleased to receive the positive responses to the Committee's three reports and noted that all recommendations had been accepted. Members did highlight that in respect of the Child Health and Disability response report, the attached action plan was dated June 2014. Members requested that a more up to date action plan be provided to Members as soon as possible.

Audit Committee Correspondence

The Committee noted the Correspondence received from the Chairman of the Council's Audit Committee and endorsed my response to you. The Committee agreed that in accordance with the commitment made in the Joint Chairs letter to you, the Committee will include the issue in its future work programme.

Finally I would like to take this opportunity to ask you and the officers, if the Committee's scrutiny of your items on the agenda had resulted or will result in any impact, change or review of the service provision covered by the reports.

In conclusion, thank you again for participating in this scrutiny, and we look forward to your response to the questions raised, requests for information and recommendations detailed above, within the next month.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard Cook', with a horizontal line underneath it.

COUNTY COUNCILLOR RICHARD COOK
Chair – Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

CC: Tony Young, Director of Children's Services
Angela Bourge, Operational Manager, Strategy, Commissioning and Resources
Sarah Woelk, Operational Manager, Child in Need Teams
Debbie Martin-Jones, Operational Manager, Looked After Children Teams
Cheryl Chapman, Service Manager for Integrated Family Support Service
Kim Brown, Service Manager, Policy and Performance

My Ref: T: Scrutiny/CYP/MJH

Date: 10 April 2015

Councillor Graham Hinchey
Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and Performance
City of Cardiff Council
County Hall
Cardiff
CF10 4UW



Dear Graham

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - Recruitment and Retention of Social Workers – 7 April 2015.

I am writing to you on behalf of the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee, following its consideration of an update report on the Recruitment and Retention of Social Workers at its meeting on 7 April 2015. The Committee considers that the safeguarding of Children & Young People is a vital part of its work and Members feel that the timeliness of the recruitment of social workers is a key factor in safeguarding and our Corporate Parenting responsibilities.

The Committee was informed during the meeting that there was a 25.3% social worker vacancy rate in Quarter 3 of 2014/15 and following detailed discussions with officers, Members were extremely concerned to be informed that the recruitment process takes up to four months. Members commented that a two month timescale should be the Council's maximum target.

The Committee, during the way forward section of the agenda, asked me to write to you to request that you and your Human Resources officers urgently undertake a detailed investigation, along with staff from Children's Services, into the Social Worker recruitment process. This investigation should identify any delays or barriers within the process, as well as develop an action plan to speed up the process to a target of two months.

I look forward to receiving a positive response to this letter, within the next 6 weeks.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard Cook', with a horizontal line underneath.

COUNTY COUNCILLOR RICHARD COOK
Chair – Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

Cc Philip Lenz, Corporate Chief Officer, Human Resources
Cheryl Cornelius, Cabinet Support Manager

1st December 2014

Councillor Julia Magill,
Cabinet Member for Education and Skills,
County Hall,
Atlantic Wharf,
Cardiff,
CF10 4UW.



Dear Councillor Magill,

Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee Phased Inquiry – High level of Local Authority Governor Vacancies in Cardiff and the Appointment and Effectiveness of Local Authority Governors

As you will be aware the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee recently agreed to undertake a phased inquiry into Local Authority School Governors (LASG). The Committee also agreed that the Inquiry Chairman would report directly to you, following each phase, to enable recommendations to be identified and reported to the Cabinet in a timely manner for prompt consideration and implementation.

The first report from the inquiry is contained in this letter, and covers the recruitment and appointment of Local Authority School Governors in Cardiff. The first meeting of the Inquiry was held on 20th November 2014 to agree the Scope of the Inquiry and:

- gain an understanding of the role of school governors;
- assess the level of local authority governor vacancies (LASG) across Cardiff's schools;
- receive evidence on the present LASG recruitment and appointment process and to assess this against a selection of other local authorities processes; and
- discuss and agree changes to the current system to improve the effectiveness of Cardiff's schools governing bodies.

The first meeting was arranged for Members to receive, in advance, background information on the role of governors, relevant output from a survey of Cardiff's School Governors, details of the current number of school governor vacancies, and an analysis of other local authorities' processes for the recruitment and appointment of their LASG. The information included:

- A draft scope for the inquiry, as discussed at Committee;
- A copy of a handbook for governors of schools in Wales published by the Welsh Government and Governors Wales. This handbook provided Members an explanation of what a governor is, categories of governors, support and training, how to fulfil their responsibilities and the role of a school governor;
- Details of the numbers and vacancies of each type of governor across Primary Schools, Secondary Schools, Special Schools, Nursery Schools and Welsh medium Schools;
- The Welcome pack for new Governors;
- Comparative information from a number of other Welsh and English Local Authorities on their recruitment, application form, processes and marketing and promotional process for Local Authority Appointed School Governors; and
- Extract from the school governor survey commissioned for this inquiry, covering: what is important for new governors, how easy is it to recruit new governors and what would help the recruitment of new governors.

In attendance for the inquiry meeting were Councillor Richard Cook (Elected Chair of the inquiry), Councillors Boyle, Murphy and Rees.

The Members were briefed at the meeting by the following officers and witnesses:

- Marie Rosenthal; County Clerk and Monitoring Officer
- Paul Jefferies (Secretary to Cardiff Governors Association)
- Julia Ellis, Governor Services Manager

- Ruth Lock, Governor Services Officer

Members were informed that unfortunately, you and Nick Batchelar were not able to attend but other witnesses were fully aware of your views.

On behalf of the Members who attended I would like to thank all of the witnesses who attended the meeting, provided information, advice, answered the questions and contributed to the discussions, Members found their input into the inquiry very helpful.

After the meeting Members considered the background information, answers to Members questions and advice and evidence from witnesses and the Inquiry agreed to highlight a number of key findings and recommendations. This letter, reports the key findings and recommendations on this phase of the inquiry for the Cabinet, Constitution Committee and Officers to consider for implementation.

Key Finding 1 – Cardiff’s Recruitment and Appointment process

- The Members were informed that the current recruitment and appointment process for Local Authority School Governors was not fit for purpose, there was no formal process, and no assessment or checks on applicants ;
- The Group noted from the papers provided that there were around 2,000 school governor places in Cardiff with around 250 vacancies. There was also a ten percent (38) vacancy level for Local Authority appointed Governors.
- The Members learnt that a lack of self assessment of skills, by school governing bodies, did not enable effective appointment of Governors to aid in school improvement;
- Members noted from the analysis of other authorities governor appointment processes, that more formal recruitment, interview, appraisal and transparent systems had been implemented in most Local Authorities;
- Members considered that within any appointment process appropriate checks should be made about each candidate prior to their consideration for appointment;
- Members heard from the Council’s Monitoring Officer that a more formal appointment system should implemented through Constitution Committee and could include:
 - Appointment through a Committee of Council Panel to meet on a regular basis, say six monthly.
 - Chaired by the Cabinet Member for Education with the Director of Education, Monitoring officer and a representative from the Cardiff Governors Association acting as advisors
 - Candidates assessed for suitability, maybe through interview
 - Candidates should be sought from various backgrounds to meet the skill needs of particular schools
- Members were also informed that the current appointment process is supported by the Governors service and this should continue with any new process, including an Appointment Panel.

- Members identified by the analysis of other Local Authority's processes that many encourage people to apply to be a school Governors using specific recruitment campaigns, Members noted that Cardiff does not presently have a campaign.

Recommendation 1 to 4

1. An Appointment Panel should be formed, as a Committee of Council, with appropriate Terms of Reference, to meet quarterly, Chaired by the Cabinet Member for Education, and politically balanced, perhaps including Group Whips. The Director of Education, Monitoring Officer and a representative from the Cardiff Governors Association must be allowed to act as advisors to the Panel,
2. The Panel should have in its Terms of Reference the implementation and monitoring of a School Governor recruitment campaign.
3. That appointments should be made based around any identified skill gap need within a school.
4. That the Clerking of the meetings should continue to be undertaken by the Governors Service Staff.

Key Finding 2 –School Governing Bodies must have the appropriate skills

- Members were informed that the role of governing bodies has become much more complex over the last few years.
- Members were aware that considerable resources are now delegated directly to schools, requiring schools to undertake many tasks that were previously managed by the local authority;
- Members were informed that Governing Bodies are now actively involved in managing, monitoring and challenging school performance, attendance, exclusions, recruitment and teacher performance; and
- Members were also informed that many school governing bodies do not undertake a skill analysis of their governors, to enable any skill gaps to be identified, to which new governors can be appointed.

Recommendation 5 to 7

5. That all school governing bodies must ensure that they include governors who have the skills and knowledge to ensure that they can work effectively across all aspects of the school.
6. That School Governing Bodies should annually undertake a skills assessment of the Body and inform the Council of any skill gaps, when they have LASG vacancies.
7. That the Director of Education must check annually that the skill mix of each school governing body, meets the needs of the school and its improvement plan.

Key Finding 3 – Ward Councillors

- Members were informed that the current practice is for two Ward Councillors to be automatically appointed to each school in their Ward;
- Members commented that with the changes in the role of Governors this tradition was becoming less relevant to the needs of a school;
- Members also commented that with the increase in Governor meetings and training it was becoming difficult for Councillors to attend all events for the schools that they were governors of; and
- Members were informed that as funding was being delegated directly to schools there was less of a need for the link between each School and the Council that the ward Councillors previously provided.
- Members did raise a concern, that in mixed party wards, there may be a need for both parties to be represented on the Governing Body, unless agreement can be made for only one to be appointed.

Recommendation 8 to 10

8. That the Cabinet, Party whips and Constitution Committee agrees that the new appointment process will only allow one Ward Councillor to act as LASG on each school, in single party wards.
9. That the appointment of Ward Councillors will follow the same appointment process as other LASG.
10. That in mixed party wards, two Councillors should be appointed unless agreement can be had to appoint one Councillor.

Key Finding 4 – Role of Governors

- Members were informed that the role of governors was becoming very complex and their appointment to a School Governing Body was a considerable commitment, particularly if they were appointed due to a particular skill that was needed;
- Members noted that there was a considerable amount of mandatory, and discretionary training, as well as the large number of meetings to attend, visits to be made, and the complex decisions that have to be made; and
- Members were surprised to hear that Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS) checks were not routinely undertaken and the Group agreed that this must be compulsory for all appointed LASG, with the Council paying for the basic check for all LASG.

Recommendation 11 and 12

11. That the Director of Education in consultation with the Cardiff Governors Association should develop a leaflet providing clear guidance and information for prospective Local Authority Governors.

12. That all new LASG have the basic DBS check undertaken prior to their appointment, paid for by the Council.

I would be grateful if you, the Director of Education and Lifelong Learning and Monitoring Officer would consider and respond to the key findings and recommendations reported in this letter. Should you require clarification or have any questions about any of this letter do not hesitate to contact me.

Finally at the meeting the Members agreed to amend the Scope of the Inquiry so that it did not now cover the Clerking of School Governor meetings and that the Effectiveness of Governing Bodies would be considered next.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard Cook', with a long horizontal line underneath it.

Councillor Richard Cook
Chair of the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee

Cc to:

Nick Batchelar, Director of Education and Lifelong Learning
Marie Rosenthal; County Clerk and Monitoring Officer
Paul Jefferies, Secretary Cardiff Governors Association
Gareth Newell, Operational Manager
Joanne Watkins – Cabinet Business Manager
Cheryl Cornelius, Cabinet Support Manager
Members of the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee

**CABINET SUPPORT OFFICE
SWYDDFA CYMORTH Y CABINET**

My Ref / Fy Ref: CM29572

Your Ref / Eich Ref :

Date / Dyddiad: 29th December 2014

Councillor Richard Cook
Cardiff Council
County Hall
Cardiff
CF10 4UW

Dear / Annwyl Richard

CYP Phased Inquiry

Thank you for your letter dated 1st December 2014 setting out the findings and recommendations from the first phase of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee Task Group inquiry into the Effectiveness of School Governor Bodies in undertaking their statutory role and supporting schools in improving the educational attainment of their pupils.

Thank you for dealing with the review into the recruitment and appointment procedure for LEA school governors so promptly. As we have discussed we are agreed that we need to ensure that Cardiff's process is efficient and effective as well as helping to ensure that appropriately skilled people are appointed to the posts.

I will be arranging for Cabinet to consider your recommendations as soon as possible in January. I broadly support them as a sensible and measured set of proposals. I would strengthen the issues around councillor representation to make it clear they have to meet the suitability and skills criteria, before issues of political balance can be taken into account. I am less concerned about the numbers of Councillors appointed than that all of those appointed are suitable and have skills appropriate to the schools to which they apply.

The Monitoring Officer has advised me that there is an opportunity to report on the Task Group findings in relation to setting up a Governor Appointment Panel to Constitution Committee on the 15th January recommending we amend the Constitution at the council meeting on the 29th January 2015. This would allow us to implement the changes after the February half term break.

A refreshed recruitment campaign to attract potential LEA Governor candidates has already been put in place. An open session is being held in December for council employees who may be interested in standing for office. A campaign is being planned for Capital Times and on the council website in the spring. I agree that the

proposed Appointment Panel should, as part of its terms of reference give further consideration to how best to recruit new governors.

I look forward to your further deliberations.

Thank you for your continuing support on the vital agenda to improve educational attainment to ensure all our pupils have bright futures.

Yours sincerely
Yn gwyir

Councillor / Y Cynghorydd Councillor Julia Magill
Cabinet Member for Education & Skills
Aelod Cabinet Dros Y Addysg a Sgiliau

20th November 2014

Councillor Sue Lent,
Cabinet Member for Early Years, Children & Families,
County Hall,
Atlantic Wharf,
Cardiff,
CF10 4UW.



Dear Councillor Lent,

Children's Services Referrals – Members Investigation

As you will be aware the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee recently undertook an investigation into Children's Services Referrals. The investigation was organised for members to have a clear understanding of:

- The Children's Access Point referral process;
- The issues behind the performance indicator for future performance data scrutiny
- To identify any areas of concern, comment or suggested improvement.

The Meeting was organised for Members to receive background information, operational and procedural briefings, anonymised information on live referrals together with detailed contact and referral data for the last two quarters. The Members were also briefed by the following officers:

- Tony Young , Director of Children's Services;
- Jane Hoey Operational Manager, Intake and Assessment and Early Intervention
- Kerrie Aldridge, Suki Bahara-Garrens and Natasha James
- Four Social Workers
- Bethan Francis – Deputy Headteacher, Windsor Clive Primary School
- Janet Burnhill – Glantaf Secondary School
- Nikki Harvey – Lead Nurse, Child Protection for Cardiff & Vale UHB
- Rod Cronick – Detective Sergeant, Lead Officer for Child Safety for Cardiff referral unit

On behalf of the Members who attended I would like to thank all of the witnesses who provided information and attended the meeting. Members found their input into the investigation honest, open, enlightening and very informative. The Members were particularly thankful for the amount of preparation that Officers had undertaken to ensure the investigation was a success.

After the meetings Members considered the evidence presented and highlighted a number of key findings and recommendations. This letter sets out the comments and observations of the Members on the investigations following their visit to the service at Global Link. The key findings and recommendations for management are set out below.

Key Finding 1 – Children’s Services Contacts and Referrals.

- The Members noted that the Children’s Access Point receives over 2,000 contacts each month, each of which has to be assessed and documented, prior to being categorised for referral;
- The service area must continue to support, encourage and resource, contacts from the public and agencies, to ensure that any child safeguarding issues are easily and promptly dealt with.
- Evidence from Health indicated that Cardiff’s referral system was one of the most accessible systems across Wales.
- Members were informed that contacts / referrals must be processed within 24hrs, however due to the number of contacts being received and the inconsistency in information, social workers were not always able to complete all the contacts within the 24hr period.
- Members also heard from both the social workers and Health representative that often contacts are made without personal details being provided this made a quick assessment difficult. Health stated that they could not always share the names of children.

Recommendation 1 and 2

1. That the system that enables members of the public and agencies to contact Children Service must be appropriately resourced and processes maintained to enable all safeguarding concerns to be dealt with efficiently, and within 24 hours.
2. That the Director of Children’s Services develops with The Cardiff and Vale UHB a protocol for the sharing of personal information.

Key Finding 2 –Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

- Members received background information that indicated that a number of local authorities had worked in partnership with Police, Health and other agencies to develop and implement multi-agency hubs to better manage contact and referrals.
- The Members also received evidence from Council Staff, Police and Health representatives that the operation of a Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) in Cardiff would more effectively manage contacts and referrals and would improve safeguarding.
- Members were informed by all witnesses that access to information across agencies and local authorities, did cause problems in undertaking detailed case assessment to promptly identify any safeguarding issues.
- Members were informed by Children's Service's Managers that they were working with Leeds Council to use the format of their MASH as a model for the operation of a Cardiff MASH.
- Members considered that there were efficiency and safeguarding benefits from the implementation of the MASH and this could be enhanced if the joint working was undertaken with other Local Authorities

Recommendation 3, 4 & 5

3. That the Director of Children's Service provide the Committee with a timetable for the implementation of a MASH, to ensure that contacts and referrals are processed effectively, safeguarding improved and joint working enhanced.
4. That the Cabinet Member lobbies the Welsh Government to develop protocols and processes that enables the Police, Health and Local Government across Wales to share safeguarding data.
5. That the Director of Children's Services investigates the possibility of working jointly with other Local Authorities in the operation of a MASH.

Key Finding 3 – Social Worker workload

- Members were informed by Children’s Services staff that they were currently dealing with approximately 25 cases each. Each social worker had a mixture of complex and straightforward cases, however there was not a formal process to assess complexity, this was based on a managers assessment.
- Members enquired about the length of time social workers were working each week to deal with their cases, staff indicated that it was around 45 hours per week.
- Members sought clarification from Children’s Services staff, as to the impact of the Council’s recent work force agreement. Members were informed that although pay was reduced as a result of the reduction of one hour, workload was not reduced. As a result staff were still working the same hours. Members were also informed that this was having an impact on staff retention and moral.

Recommendation 6

6. That the Cabinet must be made aware that social workers are still working considerably longer hours than 36 hours per week under the workforce agreement and that this was having an impact on staff retention and moral.

Key Finding 4 – Preventative Strategy

- Members were informed that senior school staff were provided with training, however it was up to the school to pass the information on to all school staff. Members were concerned that school staff should be kept aware of changing issues, and preventative initiatives and agencies ;
- Members welcomed confirmation that a Safeguarding Officer now worked across Children’s Services and Education, however Members considered that links and training should be developed across schools, health visitors, Doctors and Accident and Emergency
- Members were also informed that Social Workers were not consulted on what preventative measures would be the most effective to be developed. Members considered that this was important when the Council considered future strategies to reduce pressure on Intake and Assessment. Social Workers have a good knowledge of what pressures families were facing and what changing issues contributed to family break up eg:domestic violence seemed to be more current recently. They are therefore well placed to advise what support services would help to alleviate those pressures.

Recommendation 7, 8 and 9

7. That Children’s services’ develop a process to keep schools informed of changing safeguarding issues as well as services provided by preventative agencies who are supporting children and families.
8. That the safeguarding officers should develop contacts and training initiatives across Schools, Health Visitors, Doctors and Accident and Emergency.
9. That a consultation forum is set up with social workers to help advise on any future investment in preventative strategies and early intervention.

I would be grateful if you and the Director of Children's Services would consider and respond to the key findings and recommendations made in this letter. Should you require clarification or have any questions about any of this letter do not hesitate to contact me.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard Cook', with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

Councillor Richard Cook
Chair of the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee

Cc to:

Tony Young, Director of Children's Services
Jane Hoey, Operational Manager, Intake and Assessment
Gareth Newell, Operational Manager
Joanne Watkins – Cabinet Business Manager
Cheryl Cornelius, Cabinet Support Manager
Members of the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee

DEPUTY LEADER'S OFFICE

My Ref: CM29235

Your Ref:

Date: 12th January 2015

Councillor Richard Cook
Cardiff Council
County Hall
Cardiff
CF10 4UW



County Hall
Cardiff,
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Tel: (029) 2087 2087

Neuadd y Sir
Caerdydd,
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Ffôn: (029) 2087 2088

Dear Richard

Scrutiny - Childrens Services Referral - Members Investigation

Thank you for your letter following the committee's recent investigation, which I read with interest; I am pleased that your overall concerns and priorities reflect my own. Turning specifically to the recommendations I would respond as follows

Recommendations

1. & 2. - I would endorse the need to ensure the appropriate resourcing of the Children's Services to facilitate public and agency access re safeguarding concerns.

In relation to the UHB protocol suggestion please note that there are already well established protocols in place to enable information sharing and that these will be further refined in the process of developing a joint MASH.

3. 4 & 5. - The Director is already in dialogue with partners to progress the development of an equivalent to a MASH. This development is sponsored by the LSCB Executive Board and as such directly involves all partners including the Vo G council. The Director is not presently in a position to provide a timetable since this is not wholly in his gift and is a matter for all parties to agree. Three way funding has recently been agreed to establish a joint post which will facilitate this and other initiatives but until that post is advertised and appointed it will not be possible to provide greater certainty about timescales. It is expected that this postholder will be appointed by April or May. Meanwhile it is worth noting that the Cwm Taf MASH has taken two and half years before its launch which is imminent.

6. - I am fully aware of the workload pressures on social workers and am supporting proactive steps to mitigate this situation

7. 8. & 9. - Regular joint meetings between the Education and Children's

PLEASE REPLY TO: Deputy Leader's Office, Room 525 County Hall,
Atlantic Wharf, Cardiff CF10 4UW
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Services Management Teams are now established and all of the issues referred to in 7 & 8 are now the subject of plan that is being prepared. Committee members will have the opportunity to consider this joint plan when they consider the respective Directorate Annual Business Plan for 15/16 in March.

In relation to consultation, the Directorate has developed a first draft preventative strategy which includes the need for full consultation with all affected staff.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sue J. Lent". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'S'.

**COUNCILLOR SUE LENT
DEPUTY LEADER
CABINET MEMBER FOR EARLY YEARS, CHILDREN & FAMILIES**