

Ref: RDB/RP/CW/17.09.2019

26 September 2019

Councillor Caro Wild,
Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning & Transport,
County Hall,
Atlantic Wharf,
Cardiff CF10 4UW.



Dear Councillor Wild,

Environmental Scrutiny Committee – 17th September 2019

On behalf of the Environmental Scrutiny Committee I would like to thank you and the officers for attending the Committee meeting on Tuesday 17th September 2019 to discuss the item on the 'Third Cardiff Local Development Plan Annual Monitoring Report'. The comments and observations made by Members on the areas relevant to your portfolio of responsibility are set out in this letter.

- **New Jobs** - During the meeting I commented on the 20,900 new jobs that have been created in Cardiff during the period of the current Local Development Plan, and asked for clarification on the type of positions created and where these have been sited geographically. An officer explained that the employment information used in the Annual Monitoring Report had been drawn from wider national statistics, and that the Planning Service didn't currently hold employment data in that level of detail. He suggested that Economic Development might hold information that might answer my question. I would be grateful if you could liaise with Economic Development to see if they hold details on the type and location of the 20,900 new jobs created during the Local Development Plan, and if the information exists to share this with the Committee.
- **Physical Activity** – This Committee is concerned that measures contained within the Annual Monitoring Report suggest that in the last three years the level of physical activity has declined. For example, in 2016/17 23% of adults reported being physically active for less than 30

minutes in the previous week; this increased to 31% in 2018/19. Members asked what the point of the Local Development Plan was if people aren't getting healthier, and would like you to explain how the Local Development Plan can be used to reverse this trend.

- **Affordable Housing** – The Annual Monitoring Report explains that 40% of the housing completions set out against the Local Development Plan have been achieved, while only 25% of the affordable housing allocation has been completed – this appears to have created a 15% lag between the two targets. Members were concerned by this, particularly as 75% of the affordable housing target now needs to be delivered in less than seven years. To counter this, Members would like some assurance that progress will be made in the next few years to significantly increase the number of affordable properties provided in Cardiff. It would also be appreciated if you could provide the Committee with a breakdown of the different types of affordable housing that have been delivered within the current plan, along with the types of delivery model used, for example, social rented housing; affordable rented housing; shared ownership; help to buy and shared equity.
- **Education Travel** – The Annual Monitoring Report shows a gradual decline in the number of sustainable travel journeys for education, stating that trips for '*education has seen a significant decrease*'. This is supported by Figure: 1.14.1 on page 49 of the Annual Monitoring Report which presents a steady decline in this area. Members believe that this is a concern since school traffic is significantly adding to congestion in Cardiff at the beginning and end of every school day. Members would like to understand what the Council proposes to do to reverse this trend and increase the number of sustainable journeys to and from school.
- **Student Accommodation** – During the meeting there was some debate around planning decisions for student accommodation in the city. Some Members questioned the temporary change of use planning status that had been applied for and granted on some student developments in

Cardiff – this meant that, on a temporary basis, the accommodation could now be occupied by other residents, i.e. not students. They were concerned that a precedent had been set, meaning that other developers could follow suit should their developments fail to attract sufficient numbers of students. Members felt that this presented risks in terms of building standards and receipt of planning obligation monies. The Committee went on to question the level of demand for student accommodation in Cardiff, particularly as the Annual Monitoring Report states '*current evidence shows the further strength of the student accommodation market in Cardiff*'. A Member cited a recent Savills report which provided an opposite view. I would be grateful if you could provide a copy of the evidence used to support the claim that '*current evidence shows the further strength of the student accommodation market in Cardiff*'.

- **Congestion** – The Committee welcome the positive cycling results that are included in the Annual Monitoring Report, however, they are concerned that congestion levels continue to increase across the city (for example, from 27% in 2017 to 28% by 2018). They believe that reducing congestion levels in Cardiff should be one of the fundamental principles of the Local Development Plan, and they will monitor the progress made in this area closely. They hope that the Transport White Paper that is due to be published shortly will shed a light upon what can be done to reduce congestion in Cardiff.

- **Bus Station & Wanugron Road Transport Interchange** – At the meeting I asked for confirmation on:
 - When work would start on the new Bus station;
 - When the new Bus Station would be completed (including full fit out);
 - When work would start on Wanugron Road Transport Interchange;
 - When Wanugron Road Transport Interchange would be completed (including full fit out).

I was referred to the answer provided at the last Full Council meeting for the new Bus Station and given a brief response for the Waungron Road Transport Interchange. It would be appreciated if you could confirm the current position on the new Bus Station and the Waungron Road Transport Interchange when replying to this letter.

- **Bus Rapid Transit Routes** - At the meeting I expressed my concern at the lack of progress around the delivery of the Bus Rapid Transit Routes that have been included in the Local Development Plan. I would be grateful if you could provide the Committee with a detailed update on these proposed schemes, along with an estimate as to when these will be delivered.
- **Modal Split Target** – The Annual Monitoring Report repeatedly makes reference to a 50:50 modal split target that has been set for 2026. This created a little confusion for some Members who thought that the Council was actually looking to achieve a 60:40 modal split by 2026. I would be grateful if you could explain the current modal split target for 2026, and confirm if this has been changed from 60:40 target in recent years.
- **Travellers Site Update** – The Committee asked about the progress that had been made in identifying a new Travellers site in Cardiff. Members were told that discussions were ongoing around the location of a potential new site, and that as the content of the discussions were confidential it would not be possible to disclose any information at a public meeting. Members understand this position and ask that you provide the Committee with:
 - A confidential update on the progress that has been made since the review of the Second Cardiff Local Development Plan Annual Monitoring Report (4th September 2018);
 - Confidential updates on any future progress relevant to the development of a new Traveller site.

I would be grateful if you would consider the above comments and provide a response to the content of this letter.

Regards,

Handwritten signature of Ramesh Patel in black ink.

Councillor Ramesh Patel
Chairperson Environmental Scrutiny Committee

Cc:

- Andrew Gregory - Director of Planning, Transport & Environment
- James Clemence – Head of Planning
- Stuart Williams – Group Leader, Planning Policy
- Davina Fiore - Director of Governance & Legal Services
- Members of Cardiff's Environmental Scrutiny Committee