

Ref: RDB/RP/CW/21.01.2020

22 January 2020

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



Dear Councillor Wild,

Environmental Scrutiny Committee – 21st January 2020

On behalf of the Environmental Scrutiny Committee I would like to thank you and the officers for attending the Committee meeting on Tuesday 21st January 2020 to discuss 'Cardiff's Transport White Paper'. The comments and observations made by Members on the areas relevant to your portfolio of responsibility are set out in this letter.

Cardiff's Transport White Paper

- **A Positive Transport Ambition** - Members are supportive of the proposed ten-year transport vision that is set out in the draft 'Transport White Paper'. They believe that if the combination of schemes contained within the document are delivered, then moving around Cardiff will become easier, air quality will improve and both carbon emissions from vehicles and congestion will reduce.
- **Cross City Connectivity** - The Committee is fully behind the proposals that are designed to improve connectivity across Cardiff. For example, some of the Members have regularly championed the importance of improving east / west transport connectivity to reduce journey times and avoid non-essential trips in and out of the city centre. They believe that projects such as the Cardiff Crossrail Tram – Train Line, the Cardiff Circle Line and new cross-city bus network will address this longstanding problem.

- **Importance of Engaging with Bus Companies** – Improving bus provision in the city is a core aim of the draft ‘Transport White Paper’. Indeed, section 2 of the document titled ‘Bus Growth’ is exclusively dedicated to improving bus travel into and around the city. During the meeting a Member commented on the importance of the bus as a mode of transport in the draft ‘Transport White Paper’, and asked for details on how much engagement had happened with the various private bus companies who operate in the city. He was told that regular engagement had taken place with the private bus companies, however, much work still needed to happen to deliver the vision set out in the plan – for example, developing governance and partnership agreements. The Committee see that bus has a central place in Cardiff’s transport plans, therefore, ask that you ensure that the Council works and fully engages with all of the private bus companies during every stage of the delivery of the plan.

- **Deliverability & Funding** - While the Committee supports the ambition and vision contained within the draft ‘Transport White Paper’, they have a number of concerns on the deliverability and funding of the proposals. With this in mind I would be grateful if you could reflect on and respond to the following comments:
 - Given the Council’s track record of delivering large transport infrastructure projects on time (for example, the bus station), please provide the Committee with some assurance that the 10 year vision is achievable, along with an explanation as to why you believe this to be the case.

 - The Committee understands that delivering large infrastructure projects is a complicated undertaking that regularly encounters unforeseen challenges. That said, the Council has been involved with many schemes over the years and so should have sufficient experience to plan accordingly. I would ask that planning is underpinned by ‘lessons learnt’ from other major projects, that the Council adheres to best practice throughout delivery, that ‘slippage’ is built into the planning

timeline and that the Council maintains a series of 'plan B' options to turn to should the worst happen.

- It is clear from the initial launch of the draft 'Transport White Paper' that funding is a concern. Public reaction to various options has been mixed, for example, towards the £2 congestion charge for non-Cardiff residents, but it remains the case that the £1 - £2 billion price tag is a significant barrier to delivery. You explained that issues including funding mechanisms had been raised with the Welsh government, and that they had provided a constructive response to the proposals in a letter. I would be grateful if you could provide the Committee with a copy of the Welsh Government letter in your response to this letter.
- Members believe that transport infrastructure needs to be in place before any charging takes place, and that any monies raised should be specifically ring-fenced for transport infrastructure. For example, it would seem wrong to charge people for driving into or out of certain parts of Cardiff without providing a practical alternative.
- At the meeting you and officers were asked if the Council has enquired about any newly available funding that might arise as a consequence of the scrapped M4 relief road. An officer explained that the point had been raised, and that conversations had taken place. The Committee ask that you pursue this potential funding avenue as it could provide the required catalyst to accelerate the delivery of many of the schemes set out in the draft 'Transport White Paper'.
- I would be grateful if you could explain how the £1 bus journeys scheme will work, and provide detail of how it might be funded, for example, is it anticipated that it will be paid for from a one off capital payment, or will it create long term pressures on Council revenue budgets.

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
- Jason Bale - Jason Bale, Programme Manager, Clean Air
- Professor Mark Barry - Cardiff University
- Professor Stuart Cole CBE – University of South Wales
- Davina Fiore - Director of Governance & Legal Services
- Members of Cardiff's Environmental Scrutiny Committee