

**COUNCIL: 25 JUNE 2020**

---

**JOINT CABINET STATEMENT**

**AGENDA ITEM:**

---

**Covid-19 Response**

**Education**

**School Restart Planning and Engagement**

Further guidance was issued by Welsh Government on 3 June 2020 to help schools plan for the return of pupils on 29 June 2020 for four weeks ahead of the summer holidays. This will allow pupils and staff to "check in, catch up and prepare for summer and September". The majority of pupils will not have had any face-to-face contact with their school for 14 weeks.

Since the lockdown commenced on 23 March 2020, education in Cardiff has continued through online distance learning, enabled by teachers with support from the Council and the Central South Consortium. The Council has provided over 6,000 Chromebooks to pupils across the city who were not equipped with devices at home, and 4G internet connectivity to 1,700 of these via mobile devices.

During the lockdown, 25 schools have been operating as Keyworker Childcare Hubs, providing childcare to an average of 450 children per day. These hubs have also provided essential support for vulnerable learners, referred for support by our new Vulnerable Learners Panel. When schools re-open on 29 June 2020, this childcare will transfer to the pupils' home school for the remainder of the summer term.

The re-opening of schools in the current crisis raises a series of challenges and the Council is currently working to implement a restart plan, which will ensure the safety of staff and pupils who return to class. This plan is being developed in partnership with head teachers, governors, young people and trade unions. There will be a phased approach in each school and it is likely that only a third of pupils will be present on site at any one time.

Robust health & safety procedures will be followed, including space-capacity assessments and risk assessments to establish volume; appropriate furniture layouts; movement flows and the use of external spaces. Strict hygiene and cleaning regimes will be implemented, ensuring good hand-washing practices, contact point cleaning and deep-cleaning of school spaces.

Individual schools are preparing timetables and lesson plans to meet the needs of their school communities. Such plans will continue to offer 'blended learning approaches', with face-to-face teaching supported by online distance learning at home for many months to come.

Alongside the Director of Education, the Cabinet Member for Education, Employment & Skills has engaged in webcasts with head teachers and chairs of governors in recent weeks to help inform restart plans and to offer support and reassurance during this very challenging period. Our school leaders and staff have shown incredible resilience and worked so hard over the last few weeks and deserve all our thanks.

### Qualifications 2020

Given the decision to cancel examinations this summer as a result of the pandemic, Qualification Wales is establishing new arrangements to make sure that learners receive their grades fairly and are able to progress to the next stage of their lives, whether that is further study, training or employment. Summer 2020 grades will be based on exam centres' judgements of each learner's attainment, which will then be standardised across centres, drawing on a range of other evidence. Appropriate appeals processes are also being considered. AS, A level and GCSE results will be made available to learners on the existing published results days on 13 August and 20 August 2020 respectively. Further guidance regarding arrangements for Year 10 and Year 12 pupils in summer 2021 is awaited from Qualifications Wales and the Welsh Government.

### School Travel

In preparation for schools re-opening on 29 June 2020, the Council's Transport and Education teams have been working to put in place temporary road closures outside a number of schools in the city during school drop-off and pick up times. The purpose of these closures is to keep roads clear of vehicles and to maximise space for safe social distancing. The Council has prioritised implementing closures at school sites where the road layout is most constrained in terms of being a cul-de-sac, having limited pavement width, or where there is a history of problems with traffic and parked vehicles. Temporary road closures are planned for between 20 and 30 schools.

### Covid-19 Engagement with Children & Young People in Cardiff

On 8 June 2020, the Leader and Cabinet Member for Education, Employment & Skills met virtually with members of the Executive Group of Cardiff Youth Council to discuss a range of subjects, including plans to re-open our schools. We also discussed the importance of continued dialogue between young people and city leaders, including a series of pupil Q&A webinars that the Director of Education and Cabinet Member for Education, Employment & Skills took part in on 9 and 16 June 2020. These webinars provided a rich conversation with pupils aged 10-18 years old. Hundreds of questions were submitted on a wide range of issues and we have now invited pupils to form a Pupil Task Group to help inform recovery planning in schools.

The meeting heard passionate and informed input from Fahadi, Chair of the Youth Council, who outlined the importance of recognising and challenging racism in light of the recent tragic incident in the USA. Fahadi set out a series of pledges that Cardiff Youth Council are asking individuals and organisations to support, which include:

- Promoting Black History Month to educate people on the positive contribution made by all in our community.
- Promoting inclusion and challenging discrimination in communities and organisations.
- Cardiff Youth Council continuing to strive to be a diverse platform that advocates for all children and young people.

The Leader and Cabinet Member for Education, Employment & Skills were more than happy to offer their support for these pledges.

The last input into this productive session was by Victor, who represents Cardiff on the UK Youth Parliament. He challenged us to think of the Covid-19 pandemic not simply as a threat, but as an opportunity to re-visualise our school curriculum. His articulate and passionate input set out a range of opportunities, from vertical teaching across age ranges to developing critical thinking skills and applying them in real world challenges. Victor will be attending the next meeting of the Education Development Board to inform its work in the coming months.

In addition, we were proud that the children and young people of Cardiff provided the highest number of responses to the Children's Commissioner for Wales' recent Coronavirus & Me survey, with over 3,500 responses. The Cardiff report has been shared with the Council and will help inform our future plans.

Our aspiration to become a UNICEF Child Friendly City is more important now than ever. Meaningfully involving children and young people in dialogue and planning during this challenging time enables us to develop responsive plans that meet the needs of the communities we serve.

## **Children's Services**

### Children Looked After and Placements

Plans to re-instate face-to-face contact for families are being developed on an all-Wales basis and the teams will respond accordingly when agreement has been reached. In the meantime, individual requirements are considered on a case-by-case basis where the risks to the young person of not having contact outweigh the risks of having contact.

### Out of Area Placements

All children placed outside of Cardiff have been reviewed in line with Children's Services risk assessments and when required, these young people have been visited. In particular it has been important to ensure these young people maintain indirect contact with connected people and have felt supported. Care and support plans are regularly updated and reviewed and areas for consideration include necessity to be seen. Discussions with providers and care givers have been undertaken to ensure the needs of children placed outside of area are in line with the Children's Services operating model and that all children are reviewed and observed. The use of virtual technology has meant young people have had increased access to social workers and friends outside of their immediate network.

## Children's Services Phased Return Plan

Between June and September 2020, work will continue on the restart of services. This work will include:

- Risk assessing all social work staff and match to appropriate roles and responsibilities.
- Developing a proposal to create touchdown hub in St Mellons to support staff who have requested office time.
- Reviewing the operating model to manage anticipated surge in demand.
- Re-introducing face-to-face contact for all Children Looked After with their families.
- Matching and moving children into their adoptive placements.
- Re-introducing face-to-face contact and parenting assessments for court cases involving newborn babies.

## **Supporting Business and Employment**

Councillors will share the Cabinet's concerns about the economic threat that faces the city at the present time. It is extremely likely that the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic will continue to have an adverse impact on the city's economic prospects for some months, if not years. In the immediate term, as the furlough scheme tapers, we expect that many of those who work across the city will lose their jobs, especially those in sectors who deal directly with their customers on a face-to-face basis.

### City Centre Recovery Strategy

The Administration has, therefore, invested considerable effort in seeking to understand what best we can do to support the city's businesses and best protect the people that they employ. With some 70,000 jobs in and around the city centre, this has become the focus of our restart efforts to deal with this economic threat. In consultation with businesses and other key stakeholders, we will put in place measures that will help to ensure that the city centre is safe and welcoming for workers, visitors and shoppers. In addition, we are ramping up our engagement with small businesses to understand what help they need as the lockdown subsides. This includes engaging with the South Wales Chamber of Commerce and the Federation of Small Businesses, as well as developing a larger database of local business with whom we can engage directly to provide important information about the support that is available, whilst observing GDPR requirements.

### City Renewal

The Administration is extremely conscious that the Covid-19 pandemic will leave a legacy. We have seen responses to the pandemic developed in weeks when they would traditionally have taken years. We have witnessed technology being embraced across all areas of business. We have seen teleconferencing and remote meetings become the norm. During this period, there has been much talk of the changing role of cities, and it is inevitable that the Cardiff that emerges from the crisis will look different than the one that entered it. It is essential that we do not passively respond to these changes. Rather, we need to make sure that we respond to the post-crisis environment in a way that supports our city's businesses and communities in order

that both can thrive. The low-wage growth that emerged nationally from the last economic downturn simply cannot be accepted in Cardiff.

To plan for this response, we have appointed Sydney-based Dr Tim Williams, who is the global lead on cities for Arup, to look at a post-Covid renewal vision for the city over the coming months. This will, in particular, focus on the changing role of cities and identify what we need to do to best protect Cardiff's economy. Dr Williams has extensive experience of working in the Britain, advising both the Welsh and UK Governments. Originally from South Wales, he has a passion and understanding of Cardiff. A report to Cabinet is expected to be considered in September 2020 detailing the findings of Dr Williams' work, together with an outline of Cardiff's proposed response.

### Celsa

A recent announcement via Sky News confirmed that Cardiff-based Celsa Steel has been successful in negotiating a Covid-19 loan of £30 million from the UK Government. The news report also suggested that existing investors have committed a substantial sum to the financing plan. The unconfirmed reports also highlight that the UK Government loan will include an option to take an equity stake in the company. This is an important intervention by the UK Government, which is very welcome at a time of considerable uncertainty. Should the deal be confirmed, it will be very positive news for one of Cardiff largest manufacturing companies and one of Wales' and the UK's leading steel producers, and will help protect a large number of jobs not only at the plant, but also as part of its wider supply chains.

### Coal Exchange

Councillors will be aware that the company redeveloping the iconic Coal Exchange building in Cardiff is now in Administration. It will not be the last casualty of the downturn in the economy caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. Councillors should note that the proposal to provide a loan to the company, under the Town Centre Loan Scheme, which was intended to help fund the completion of the redevelopment has not been drawn down, as the necessary due diligence was process was still ongoing at the time that the company went into administration. My officials have been in regular touch with the Administrator and have indicated our willingness to consider any future funding proposal which guarantees a long term sustainable future for this landmark building. In addition, Councillors should be aware that officials are maintaining close contact with the administrators to ensure that the Council is kept informed of their future plans for the building, and what this means for the area.

### Business Grants

The Welsh Government's Business Grants Scheme is due to close to new applications at 5pm on 30 June 2020. The grant is for business rate paying premises only: those businesses in receipt of small business rates relief; retail, leisure and hospitality businesses with a rateable value of between £12,001 and £51,000; alongside charities and not-for-profit organisations operating in the same sectors. To date, Cardiff Council has paid out over £62.5 million to businesses in Cardiff, which represent 4,607 grant applications. If an eligible business has not yet applied, they need to make sure they apply or email their intention to apply. Full details are available on the Council's website.

## Into Work Services

Into Work staff returned to 'business as usual' duties in May 2020, with an increase in demand for the service as a result of people being furloughed and made redundant during the Covid-19 pandemic. A number of funding bids have been submitted to help resource a new way of Job Club working via digital platforms. This includes funding for a tablet loan scheme and funding for Wi-Fi, to assist those who do not have access to ICT equipment or an internet connection. Into Work's Employer Liaison Team have contacted businesses who were supported by the team in the past 12 months to see if they require further support. The team are compiling data on employers who are currently recruiting and are working with Adult Learning to create bespoke training, matching skilled workers directly to employment opportunities.

## **Health & Safety**

A Workforce Risk Assessment has been developed to support council staff in returning to work, where working from home is not possible. Webinars to explain the risk assessment process have been held and attended by over 300 managers. As some members of staff have been self-isolating for three months and are understandably anxious regarding returning to work, well-being webinars and support groups will be offered to assist them in preparing for a return to the workplace. This work is particularly relevant for school-based staff who will enable schools to re-open on 29 June 2020. The restart planning of schools has required significant support from the Health & Safety team, who have directed all available resource, alongside officers from other service areas, into supporting safety assessments of premises, social distancing, as well as infection control arrangements. PPE, signage, cleaning products and guidance will be issued over the next two weeks to ensure that Cardiff's schools are properly equipped for the safe return of staff and learners.

## **Homelessness & Housing**

### Developing a Phase 2 Plan for Homelessness

Considerable progress has been made in addressing homelessness in Cardiff during the Covid-19 pandemic and the number of rough sleepers in the city remains low. Whilst not without its challenges, the use of hotels to provide supported accommodation has resulted in considerable learning. New ways of working, together with health and third sector partners, have been developed, which will provide a good foundation for the future. Officers are currently working hard to develop a Phase 2 plan, in line with Welsh Government guidance, to ensure that the progress made is maintained as we move forward. We will work with local communities to help implement and minimise the impact of this plan.

### Rent Smart Wales

Rent Smart Wales continues to deliver business as usual activities whilst also assisting Welsh Government to communicate with Welsh landlords and agents in support of their efforts to provide appropriate support to private rented sector tenants and landlords.

Recent activities have included a survey of landlords to assess the impact of Covid-19 on the sector (circa 1,500 responses were received during the consultation week) and more recently a request for landlords to help Local Authorities secure housing to meet the homeless challenge. Again, within a very short time, the response has been significant and could make a real difference to some vulnerable people.

## **Adult Services**

### Locality Services: First Contact and Assessment

Community social work teams have continued to support vulnerable citizens, with staff carrying out home visits in cases where there has been a critical situation or a safeguarding referral. All visits are risk-assessed and staff utilise appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). Teams have worked closely with individuals, families and care providers to maintain services as safely as possible.

Teams have continued to operate within Mental Capacity Act legislation and have utilised a number of different methods to safely carry out assessments; for example, staff have talked to citizens through windows, on the telephone and using FaceTime and Skype. This has enabled staff to continue to operate effectively in support of citizens. Furthermore, Court of Protection hearings have continued via conference calls and work has not been delayed.

Teams have continued to call the most vulnerable citizens, with particular focus on maintaining contact with informal carers. The Council is very aware that without the usual structure of respite, whether long-term or via attendance at a day centre, informal carers have found themselves under considerable pressure. The Carers Team has therefore maintained high levels of contact and worked to find solutions wherever possible.

Hospital social workers have linked in with community teams and care providers to work through complex cases, in order to achieve positive outcomes at discharge from hospital. Social Workers have supported discharges and continue to do so in line with 'home first' principles.

Social work teams are now focussed on the management of discharges from hospital via isolation beds which are now on stream. There has been considerable joint work with our provider partners to develop a robust discharge process which both supports the care home sector and meets the outcomes of citizens. These arrangements also allow us to offer a placement in cases in the community where there has been an emergency.

The service is planning a return to a more 'business as usual' way of working, with increased face-to-face contact and home visits where appropriate. Community and hospital social care staff have been resilient and positive throughout this period; staff have appreciated the Council's improved technology solutions and have found a range of ways to communicate. This is of key importance to a social worker in the field, where the work is challenging and can be isolating. Managers have held regular meetings and supervisions throughout the crisis, with one manager taking the responsibility to call every social care worker in the Older People and Physical Disability Service on a weekly basis to offer personal support. This has been well received by teams.

## Learning Disability

Learning Disability teams are working closely with partners from specialist health services and the third sector. Services offered have been reduced, with staff focused on critical work, ensuring the safety of the people that the Council supports. All adults known to the teams are contacted regularly to monitor their well-being, and officers have worked with individuals and their families to risk assess their needs and prioritise crucial input. This work is regularly updated.

Individuals have responded very positively to contact regarding their welfare, and have provided positive feedback to staff: *"thank you for ringing us to check how we are doing. We haven't needed to speak to our social worker for a while and it's been great knowing the team are checking in on us"*.

Visits and meetings are undertaken remotely using telephone and video capabilities. Face-to-face visits, using appropriate PPE, have only been completed where there are adult protection or other critical concerns. The service has received praise from health partners regarding good practice and the quality of multi-agency response.

Systems are in place to ensure that there is good contact with all individuals, and regular team meetings are held to update staff and maintain morale. The Council offers a wide range of support to assist with staff well-being, and supervision continues regularly. Staff are working extremely hard to support the people they work with and each other. A particular mention must go to staff who agreed to be redeployed into direct services, where they have worked to meet the critical daily living needs of vulnerable individuals.

Close contact has been maintained with providers and there are multiple examples of good practice taking place, with social care staff from all agencies supporting people and families with learning disabilities to manage well in this difficult time. The service is currently working with providers to explore ways to re-open services safely as lockdown eases and government guidance allows. Due to safety considerations, this is likely to look very different from 'business as usual' while the pandemic continues. A recovery plan is therefore being developed to identify what support can put in place for service users during this period. Consultation will take place with the stakeholder group regarding this.

## Safeguarding

Adult safeguarding has continued to operate, and performance against the usual standards has been maintained. The service has adapted to virtual multi-agency meetings to manage escalated risks to the most vulnerable citizens as a consequence of the pandemic. A comparison in relation to allegations of domestic abuse indicates an increase on levels reported for the same period last year. This is despite an initial drop in allegations following the UK Government's Covid-19 statement on 16 March 2020. The Council continues to work closely with partners on this important issue.

## Adult Direct Services

Services are continuing to support people by using technology and working remotely. Day Opportunities have closed its buildings for people with learning disabilities and older people, but have continued to keep in regular contact with service users and their families.

Management support has been bolstered in both Internal Supported Living (ISL) and Community Resource Team (CRT) Homecare services. There has been a concerted approach to recruitment of additional staff through Cardiff Works, which has resulted in some obtaining permanent posts within the service.

In order to support the NHS, the CRT's operating model changed from reablement to the provision of care and support to those with the highest level of assessed need. This allowed the timely discharge of medically fit people out of hospital and to their own homes. To further support our NHS colleagues, the CRT Homecare service has provided an increased level of double-staffed calls to people with more complex needs. Since the UK Government's Covid-19 statement on 16 March 2020, CRT has supported the hospital discharge of 182 Cardiff residents.

As a result of the pandemic, a number of staff within Adult Direct Services have been required to shield or self-isolate for extended periods of time. The Council-wide approach to the redeploying of staff from other areas has allowed ISL and CRT Homecare services to continue to operate optimally, and safely. This has allowed CRT Homecare to maintain its capacity to deliver essential support to the NHS throughout the crisis.

All services are currently developing recovery plans, setting out how each can safely extend services to more individuals, as government restrictions on the movement of people eases.

Managers maintain regular weekly contact with care homes across the city to identify and support any that may be experiencing an outbreak of Covid-19. Additionally, they chair and facilitate supportive meetings. Similarly, Social Services officers continue to work in close partnership with public protection specialists in Shared Regulatory Services, the Council's Health & Safety team, the NHS primary care division, public health specialists and providers to support multi-agency management of outbreaks in care homes. Care homes are also able to access mass testing of all staff and residents.

## Adult Mental Health Services

All Community Mental Health Teams (CMHTs) have remained open throughout the Covid-19 pandemic. Staff continue to minimise direct contact where possible. Direct contact is only carried out when essential and following a risk assessment, including the ability to social distance and appropriate PPE. General demand in the CMHTs remains below Covid-19 levels but is increasing steadily. The Ty Canna Day Service has adapted significantly during the Covid-19 pandemic and is now operating 18 virtual groups which are well attended. The service is continuing to support their client group and are providing additional practical support to service users in CMHTs.

## **Volunteering**

The Volunteering team have had a busy month, with updates to the Volunteer website continuing in order to meet the demands of the community during the Covid-19 pandemic. The team have arranged for volunteers to attend Dominions Way for the collection and delivery of food parcels, alongside managing a further group of volunteers that have registered to assist with a second round of courtesy/well-being calls to the shielded community.

## **Waste Management & Recycling**

### Waste Collections

Collections for all waste streams are operating normally, apart from garden waste collections which will return to fortnightly collections next month. Bulky waste collections for larger items can be booked currently via C2C; however, we are currently working to develop a digital booking system for bulky waste collection slots without the need to phone C2C.

### Household Waste Recycling Centres

The Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs) will accept more items from Monday 22 June 2020, including large electrical items, white goods, batteries, clothes, tyres, paint and several other items. From this date, Bessemer Close HWRC will also allow vans to use the facility and have introduced a new van-specific booking system. Recycled materials need to be segregated and no black bags or recycling bags are accepted.

### Environmental Enforcement

There has been increased enforcement of fly tipping and duty of care enforcement, as well as additional enforcement of trollies, fly posting, skips on highway, abandoned vehicles and waste transfer note requests to 'man in the van' waste removers. We are also moving to the enforcement of the contamination of household waste, as shown by the 'Pink Sticker', following on from notification letters being sent to residents regarding contamination in their recycling.

With specific reference to the city's student population, following the Welsh Government's announcement on 27 May 2020, students have been permitted to travel between their rented student properties and home. As a result, guidance was communicated to landlords and students about how to manage social distancing in relation to the changeover of properties on 1 July 2020. To initiate the conversation between landlords and tenants, the team has worked with partners in Rent Smart Wales to cascade government guidance to landlords via the Rent Smart Wales website, mailing list notification and social media channels. This has been bolstered by follow-up visits to letting agents by our Student Liaison Officer and/or local Police to ensure consistent awareness.

Guidance has been published on the Cardiff Digs website and circulated to University and Student Union officers for it to be further cascaded to the city's student population. C2C and ward members have also been provided with this information in order to

advise residents should any make contact. We are committing additional resources to cleanse student areas of the city and will continue to respond to ongoing concerns relating to students leaving the city with appropriate education and enforcement.

## **Transport and Clean Air**

### Clean Air

Throughout the lockdown, many areas have seen an improvement in air quality and reduction in traffic noise due to the lower levels of car traffic. There is no doubt that these improvements will have had positive impacts on the health and well-being of our residents, and it will be important, as part of the recovery strategy, that these improvements are maintained.

During the pandemic, work has continued on developing and implementing our Clean Air Plan, with a focus on bringing forward schemes in the city centre. The first phase of works is due to start next month, with the permanent works on Castle Street due to start in early autumn 2020. Works will commence on the provision of a segregated cycleway on Castle Street, funded through the Welsh Government Clean Air Fund. In addition, work has been ongoing to develop mitigation measures to improve emissions from buses and taxis, and it is hoped that these will be launched later in the summer. The Council will also be enhancing its real-time monitoring capabilities within the city centre and surrounding areas to ensure robust air quality data is collected; these monitors will be installed shortly.

### Central Transport Services (CTS)

During the Covid-19 crisis, CTS has been working closely with Cardiff Bus to compensate for those CTS staff who have needed to self-isolate, as well as using Cardiff Bus technical staff who have been furloughed. Currently, three Cardiff Bus technicians are assisting with essential work and recovery works at CTS. This is allowing CTS to focus on parks maintenance equipment and several fabrication projects around the city.

## **Libraries**

### New 'Click & Collect' Service for Library Books

On 8 June 2020, a new 'click & collect' service for library books was launched. The service means that a customer can order, via the library phone line or online, a selection bag of five books that are picked in one of the core four Hubs, according to the customer's preference. Staff arrange collection appointments in the chosen Hub to ensure social distancing and the safety of staff and customers.

The library phone line was launched on the same day and, alongside taking 'click & collect' requests, the line can be used to answer any queries regarding the library service. Direct stock reservations can be placed online. Furthermore, a delivery service is being offered for those who are housebound or have been directly affected by Covid-19. Since 8 June 2020, the service has received over 184 library line calls, alongside 87 click & collect selection bag requests and 275 direct reservation requests.

## Culture & Leisure

### Museum of Cardiff

Members will be aware that we are living through a significant period of history. During this period, the Museum of Cardiff team has been working extremely hard to not only capture people's experiences, but to support the many community groups across the city. The Museum has recently launched its 'Cardiff in Lockdown' project, which aims to capture a snapshot of life in Cardiff during the Covid-19 pandemic by asking people to submit photos of how their lives have changed during this extraordinary time. This could be daily routines, new challenges or the small things that individuals have come to appreciate.

The Museum is also a key partner in Cardiff Commitment's 'Diff Diaries project, where staff will take some of the films and input them into the Museum's collection. Children's voices are often absent from historical records and, all too often, are accessible only as memories recalled decades later as adults. The 'Diff Diaries project is a chance to empower Cardiff's children and young people to record their place in history now, while it is happening, including what they are doing, what they are feeling, what they are enjoying and what they are missing. It will ensure that future generations know our children's story of their experiences of the pandemic, told in their words, in their way. In the future, when the country revisits and tells the history of the Covid-19 pandemic and its effects on Cardiff, our children's voices will be valued, recognised and heard.

The Museum team are also working with Cardiff People First and their members, adults with learning disabilities, on the creation of a 'digital take over' in July 2020. Individuals have been supported by the team to interview each other, capturing their experiences of lockdown. These stories will form part of a virtual online exhibition curated by the group and a 'take over' of the Museum's social media account next month.

The Museum launched its first online exhibition for the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of VE Day in May 2020 '*Victory Days*' which has proven to be popular. Staff are now working on its second exhibition, Cardiff's Sound, which is all about the music and instruments that are important to the city's diverse communities. The team are also doing a daily 'collection tour' on their Facebook and Twitter channels.

In consultation with teaching colleagues, the Museum team have created a series of downloadable resources for home-schooling, from Foundation Phase through to secondary school. These are all freely available on a new section of the Museum's website. In addition, in response to the interest in and calls for more information about Cardiff's Black history, which has resulted from the recent Black Lives Matters protests, the Museum has been posting stories and collections on social media and supporting its community partners.

Recognising that many of the regular participants in the Museum's Dementia Friendly Programme and Reminiscence Monthly events are particularly at risk of isolation and loneliness while shielding during the lockdown, the Museum's Learning Officer has scheduled telephone calls to each individual every other week for a chat. Most of these individuals live on their own and do not have a support network nearby, so these fortnightly conversations have been a lifeline for many.

Furthermore, many of the Museum's volunteers are shielding – again, many on their own. The Learning Officer and Collections Curator worked with volunteers to create a social media exhibition for Volunteer Week earlier this month. This not only celebrated the role and contribution of the Museum's volunteers, but everyone who took part noted that it impacted positively on their mental health through having something creative to do and by keeping in touch with the Museum team.

The Museum is continuing to support its community partner organisations in various ways; for example, by helping to identify funding streams that they can access during this difficult time. The team are also working with other partners to help them reframe their externally funded projects in light of the Covid-19 crisis, and what they can/cannot now deliver. The team have created programmes with partners to keep their members and clients busy, engaged and to combat their feelings of isolation and loneliness.

### Sport, Leisure and Physical Activity

The Welsh Sports Association continues to co-ordinate regular stakeholder meetings to consider the issues facing the sport, leisure and physical activity sectors. Fortnightly forum meetings are taking place, which are attended by Council officers, with representatives from Sport Wales, national governing bodies for sports, other Local Authorities and operators also present. The forum is seeking to influence decision-making at government level and provides a platform for local sports clubs experiencing difficulties. The forum has played a critical role during the Covid-19 crisis and will continue to do so moving forward as lockdown restrictions are gradually eased and the sector adjusts to the 'new normal'.

## **Workforce**

### Memorandum of Understanding with Trade Unions

The Council's response to the Covid-19 crisis has been built on partnership working with the Trade Unions. The Council and the Trade Unions are committed to continue to work in partnership to respond to the challenges posed as the crisis enters a new phase. As the Council develops its response, there will be a need to continue to be flexible in the deployment of staff to support key services. This will be underpinned by effective consultation and partnership working with the Trade Unions.

A jointly agreed Memorandum of Understanding has been developed and agreed unanimously, which outlines the Council and the Trade Unions' joint commitment to ensuring that the Council continues to respond effectively to the pandemic, with an overriding interest in the health and well-being of our staff and local communities.

## **Other Issues**

### **Black Lives Matter**

I stand in solidarity with the Black Lives Matter movement and its campaign for justice and equality, as I hope every member of this Council does. The tragic death of George Floyd in the USA has seen protest taking place across the world, including in Cardiff, and has led to a reflection, both on how the history of Black communities in the UK is treated, and on the ongoing challenges that Black people and all people of colour continue to face in today's society.

Although Cardiff has a proud history of multiculturalism, and a tradition of celebrating diversity, this cannot be an excuse for complacency or inaction, and we must acknowledge that there are people of colour in this city today who must deal with racism as a feature of their everyday lives. It is important therefore in my view that we too reflect on how we can address the issues faced by Black communities in the city.

Although Cardiff has a proud history of multiculturalism, and a tradition of celebrating diversity, this cannot be an excuse for complacency or inaction. We must also acknowledge that despite that diversity, there are people of colour in this city today who must deal with racism as a feature of their everyday lives. It is important therefore in my view that we too reflect on how the Council can address the issues faced by Black communities in the city.

A feature of the Black Lives Matter movement is how it is leading to a reassessment of how individuals in British history with involvement in slavery are commemorated. Members will be aware that one of the statues in the Marble Hall at City Hall forming part of the 'Heroes of Wales' collection is of Sir Thomas Picton, whose military career and death at Waterloo would have undoubtedly driven his original inclusion. However, there is growing awareness and understanding of the brutal nature of his Governorship of Trinidad and his involvement in slavery prompting many, including the current Lord Mayor, to propose moving this statue to a more appropriate location.

I have publicly indicated my support for this call, and asked that the Council as a whole give a democratic mandate for the removal of this historic monument through a debate and decision by Full Council at the earliest possible opportunity. This will also enable us to consider the practicalities of safely removing the statue and managing any associated implications to the listed status of the Marble Hall.

Whilst gestures such as this are important, they cannot deflect us from the harder task of trying to address the challenges still experienced by Black communities today. This is why I am also committing to set up a task force to work with Black communities in Cardiff to establish what more the Council can do to support them. Further details will be set out in a Cabinet report to be published in July.

### **Curriculum for Wales 2022**

A petition has received more than 30,000 signatures calling for Black history to be taught to pupils in Welsh schools. Rethinking the legacy of empire and the global impact of Britain's colonialism is undoubtedly central to an education system fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. The new Curriculum for Wales 2022 provides us with the opportunity and

framework to build upon teaching and learning in our schools, and to strengthen awareness and understanding of the role of Wales in building the former British Empire. The whole ethos of the new curriculum is centred on four purposes, including enabling learners to develop as ethical, informed citizens of Wales and the world.

The new Humanities Area of Learning and Experience seeks to awaken a sense of wonder, to stimulate the imagination and to inspire learners to grow in knowledge, understanding and wisdom. Exploration of humanities encourages learners to identify with and contribute to their communities, and to engage with the past, contemporary and anticipated challenges facing them, their communities, Wales and the wider world.

Our commitment to becoming a Child Friendly City, supporting all our schools to become 'Rights Respecting Schools' is also significant in contributing to equality and respect for all. Cardiff is proud to be a diverse city. We will continue to work together to identify, recognise and deliver upon the opportunities ahead of us in order to move equality and inclusion forward.

### **Refugee Week 2020**

To mark Refugee Week from 15 to 21 June 2020, members of Oasis Cardiff and the Museum of Cardiff team are co-hosting a virtual Cardiff Story-telling event. This event will provide a mutually supportive online group that will focus on sharing personal experiences of Cardiff and emphasising the importance of individuals to the story of the city. The Museum will be working with participants to take these stories into the collection, so their stories are made available for others to learn from, both now and in the future.

### **Adult Services Performance**

Data provided by the Cardiff and Vale University Health Board has indicated a decrease in Mental Health Act Assessments during April 2020, with the second lowest monthly total for Cardiff for the last five years recorded (2017 recorded the fewest assessments for the same period). The data for May 2020 shows a sharp increase in these assessments, with figures at their highest for the last five years.

There has been a sizeable fall in the number of new domiciliary care packages in both April (21.4%) and May 2020 (37.4%) when compared with figures from the same period in 2019. Additionally, the number of requests to increase domiciliary care packages has also fallen in both April (30.1%) and May 2020 (34.8%) when compared with figures from the same period in 2019.

### **Social Workers in Children's Services**

23 social workers are due to take up post within the next three months. All new senior managers are also now in post.

### **Children's Safeguarding Guidance and Training**

Communications have been issued emphasising that safeguarding is very much business as usual and remains everyone's responsibility. Training on the updated Wales Safeguarding Procedures will be delivered virtually, starting in July 2020 for Children's Services. Level 2 safeguarding training is currently being commissioned.

## **Fostering Fortnight**

Fostering Fortnight went ahead between 11 and 24 May 2020. Despite the Covid-19 restrictions that prevented open air events being held in communities, digital channels were used to highlight some of the incredible work of our foster carers, build support for fostering, and make people aware that the Council is seeking to recruit families who are reflective of the diversity of our community. Children's Services will be working with the National Fostering Framework to analyse unmet need and ensure that the Cardiff fostering operational plans are based on best practice.

## **Review of the Member Safeguarding and Corporate Parenting Protocols**

Prior to the Covid-19 crisis, Members actively engaged in workshops facilitated by Phil Hodgson, the expert advisor who is supporting the review of the Member Safeguarding Protocol. The work to finalise the protocol is progressing well, and taking into account the outcome of the Member workshops as well as revised legislation and guidance such as the new all-Wales Safeguarding Protocol. The protocol will be considered at the Standards and Ethics Committee prior to Council in the autumn. Phil Hodgson is also working closely with us to review Corporate Parenting and will facilitate a virtual workshop with Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee Members before the summer break.

## **Youth Justice Services**

An inspection of Youth Justice Services in Cardiff by HM Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP) was announced in December 2019 and undertaken in January 2020. Initial feedback raised serious concerns and required an immediate response from partners in Cardiff. The full Inspection Report is due to be published on 2 July 2020 and, in response a detailed action plan prepared by the Cardiff Youth Justice Management Board, the statutory partnership overseeing the service, is required by 13 July 2020.

A number of actions in response to the initial inspection feedback have commenced, including:

- Independent Chair of the Youth Justice Management Board commissioned.
- New governance structure has been developed.
- Two-year Development Strategy has been drafted.
- Service Manager post appointed on interim basis.
- Third manager post appointed on a temporary basis.
- Consultation on restructuring of the management tier.
- Discussion with partner agencies regarding formal response to HMIP inspection report.

The Youth Justice Development Strategy 2020-22 will be considered by the Cardiff Public Services Board on 22 June 2020. The strategy is supported by a Development Plan, which sets out who will do what, how, and by when.

## **Private Sector Housing**

Earlier this month, 14 June marked the third anniversary of the Grenfell Tower fire – one of the UK's worst modern disasters, which tragically claimed 72 lives. The fire, which broke out at the 24-storey tower block in North Kensington in London, spread through the building at an abnormally quick pace, owing to its cladding.

In Cardiff, there are still a number of high-rise buildings in the private sector that do not meet fire safety requirements. Progress has been made on some of these buildings thanks to the efforts of Shared Regulatory Services, South Wales Fire & Rescue Service and some tenacious residents groups; but many more buildings need attention. Investigations show that residents are facing life-changing bills for more than just combustible cladding and if the Welsh Government does not provide additional funding or if the developers responsible for constructing these buildings do not step forward to put right their mistakes, then thousands of residents face massive bills for problems which are not their fault, and which, in many cases, will be a financial burden from which they will never recover.

The challenges presented by Covid-19 are dominating much of what we are doing at the moment, but Members should be assured that this issue has not been forgotten and we remain determined to find a successful resolution for all those affected.

## **Mowing Regime**

Earlier this month, local ward Members were notified of the introduction of a further 18 sites in the city for inclusion as part of an informal one-cut mowing regime. These sites add an estimated nine hectares to our other low-frequency mowing regime areas, totalling 24.5 hectares, and underlines the Council's commitment to enhancing and promoting biodiversity in Cardiff.

## **Central Transport Services (CTS)**

CTS is installing a new HGV brake rolling road testing machine for testing commercial vehicles, which will be ready in time for when MOTs start again. This will coincide with CTS taking over the full management and running of the Authorised Testing Facility (ATF) at Coleridge Road, which will generate an income for the Council. The ATF was previously operated by a private company and CTS will continue the operation and potentially expand on the approximately 100 tests per month.

## **Electric Vehicle Charging Stations**

Work has continued to develop and expand Electric Vehicle (EV) charging stations across the city, and the Council will shortly be engaging with local Members regarding an additional five on-street charging locations. As the equipment is required to be installed on footpaths, the timescales for this work will be dependent on contractors being able to work safely and allow for social distancing. We are working with the contractor to facilitate this in due course. Furthermore, additional funding for the expansion of this network has been made available. The Council will make an appropriate bid to secure funding to facilitate the provision of further charging locations across the city where off-street parking is not available.

## **Central Square**

Welsh Government has awarded £2.6m grant from its Local Transport Fund towards key city centre transport infrastructure. This will fund works forming part of the Central Square regeneration that will transform Wood Street through the provision of junction improvements to facilitate access to the new transport interchange and segregated cycle lanes. The works will commence in July 2020.

The Cardiff Capital Region Transport Authority has allocated £4m in City Deal funding towards the development of the full business case for the redevelopment of Cardiff Central Station as part of the 'Metro Central' project. This funding matches grant funding from the UK Department for Transport.

## **Bus Corridor Schemes**

The Welsh Government has awarded £1.6 million from its Resilient Roads Fund towards two key bus corridor schemes. The A4119 scheme will build upon previous bus improvements on Cathedral Road to provide a northbound bus lane on Penhill Road. The A470 scheme will introduce a bus lane between Caedelyn Road and Tyn y Parc Road.

## **Active Travel Network Map**

The Active Travel to Schools team has produced an activity for children and their families to map their journey to school. The activity is part of the Council's consultation on the next Active Travel Network Map. Designed by a qualified teacher, the activity asks children and their parents to draw a map of their local journey highlighting local landmarks and existing crossings. The activity then asks children to tell us what they like about their route to school and what needs to be improved.

The activity has been shared with all schools in Cardiff via the Hwb system, an education platform used by schools. Many schools have chosen to send the activity out to children as part of home schooling. The activity is also available from Cardiff Cycle City and will be shared by the Healthy Schools Network. The team has received a number of responses already, all of which will help the Council to develop the next Active Travel Network Map.

## **Cathays Cycleway**

Following the completion of the first phase of the cycleway in Cathays in January this year, work has been progressing during lockdown on designing the next phase. This will include a high-quality, segregated cycle track along Cathays Terrace, Whitchurch Road and Allensbank Road to connect with the University Hospital of Wales. The public consultation will be launched on Friday 19 June and will run until 31 July 2020.

**Councillor Huw Thomas**  
**Leader of the Council**  
**18 June 2020**