

JOINT CABINET STATEMENT

Covid-19 Response

Education

Cardiff Schools Restart

All schools in the city reopened on 29th June 2020 for a three-week period prior to the end of the summer term. Robust health & safety procedures, including space-capacity assessments and risk assessments to establish volume, appropriate furniture lay-out, movement flows and use of external spaces were all considered prior to opening using best practice from the Council's Hubs. Strict hygiene and cleaning regimes have also been implemented, ensuring good hand-washing practices, contact point cleaning and the thorough cleaning of school spaces.

Schools reopened with a much reduced capacity, but all pupils have had several opportunities to come into school during this period. Initial feedback from schools has reported a high level of take up and growing confidence among everyone about being back in school. All schools have also used this time to help plan for the full return to school for the new academic year in September 2020 following the recent announcement on this, and publication of relevant guidance, by the Welsh Government. School leaders in Cardiff are doing excellent work and the Cabinet Member for Education, Employment & Skills has expressed her thanks for their resilience, innovation and dedication to the children and young people of Cardiff.

Engagement with Children and Young People

A child-friendly version of the Cardiff Recovery Strategy has been published in eight different languages to ensure that the important proposals contained in the strategy are accessible to all of our citizens. Members of the Education Management Team have also met with members of the Pupil Task Group to ensure that the views and experiences of children and young people shape the recovery planning for schools. In addition, young people in Cardiff have taken part in a Youth Panel as part of the recruitment process for the Council's new Director of Education and Lifelong Learning. The panel fed back their views directly to the Chief Executive.

Youth Services

The Youth Service has maintained contact with young people via social media, direct messaging, phone and, where possible, via Hubs throughout the lockdown. The team has now been given the green light to reconvene street-based and outreach work in areas of the city where young people most need support. They will be operating in St Mellons, Llanrumney, Llanedeyrn, Splott/Tremorfa/Plasnewydd, Ely/Caerau, Gabalfa, City Centre, Pentwyn, Fairwater, Grangetown and Riverside. The team will also target 'hotspots' such as Blackweir in Cathays to engage safely with young people to give advice and to listen to their experiences. The team will link with partners from the Youth Justice Stay Safe team and key organisations such as YMCA, Action for Caerau and Ely (ACE), Ministry of Life, the Urdd, Cathays Community Centre, South Riverside Community Development Centre and Grangetown Community Action.

Qualifications 2020

Given the decision to cancel examinations this summer as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic and following a consultation process with young people and education professionals, Qualifications Wales have published their findings and decisions regarding the arrangements for the summer 2020 exam series, which will be based on a statistical standardisation model for the issuing of grades and include a specific appeals process. Further information is available on the Qualifications Wales website at: <https://www.qualificationswales.org/english/coronavirus---covid-19/>

Supporting the Health Service in Wales

Tutors, learners, and centre staff at Llanover Hall Arts Centre in Canton have been joined by members of the public to form a 45-strong operation making scrubs for nurses, doctors and other NHS staff. The team has been busy using their sewing skills to produce around 600 tunics using material provided by Alexandra Workwear, which has been funded by the Welsh Government. The Llanover Hall Charitable Trust, together with donations from two generous supporters, have also provided funding for three new overlocking sewing machines, ironing boards and irons. Sewing tutors from the Council's Learning for Life community learning programme have supported the volunteers with technical details and instructions while they have been making the tunics at home.

Children's Services

Preparation for Restart of Face-to-Face Services

Work has commenced to prepare the service for the reintroduction of more face-to-face work with children and families. Risk assessments are being undertaken to:

- Identify staff who are available to undertake face-to-face visits; those who can are very keen to do so. Children who are on the Child Protection Register, or on a Care Order and placed with their parents, continue to receive a face-to-face visit a minimum of once every five weeks. As the workforce moves to the restart model, these visits will be increased to once every three weeks.

- Inform decisions about children having face-to-face contact safely with their families, taking into account the circumstances of all parties and ensuring the necessary precautions are in place.
- Prepare for the reopening of the St. Mellons Family Centre in order to safely accommodate staff who are not able to continue working from home full-time indefinitely and to better support the induction of new staff.

Intake & Assessment

Moving forward, it is proposed that social workers will visit all children where a child protection investigation under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 has been instigated. The follow-up visits will be a combination of virtual and/or face-to-face visits based on risk assessment. Well-being assessments will continue to be virtual; however, face-to-face visits can be agreed when there are child protection concerns and attempts to engage the family by other means have failed.

Parenting Assessments

Children's Services have continued to undertake assessments virtually, recognising that this may cause difficulties and challenges because the assessments are designed to be administered face-to-face. In line with the restart model, the decision to proceed with face-to-face assessments will be made on the basis of the risk assessment process mentioned above. Where assessments require observation of the children living at home or with care givers, this has to be with the agreement of all parties, particularly where there are concerns about the health of the individuals involved.

Where assessments are undertaken by independent social worker practitioners or professionals, it is their responsibility to undertake an independent assessment of risk and to present the completed risk assessment to the relevant social worker. All independent assessors must have appropriate indemnity insurance in place when carrying out face-to-face sessions with service users. All health & safety guidance is expected to be adhered to, including the use of hand sanitiser, PPE and reduction in cross-infection by reducing the number of people they come into contact with outside of the assessed family.

Children Looked After and Placements

After a decrease in the number of children looked after in the early days of lockdown, a recent increase in new admissions has led to a gradual increase over recent weeks from 939 at 27th April to 964 at 6th July 2020. 21 of the 53 children who started being looked after in May and June were placed with parents on a Care Order, with family/friends or in parent and baby placements.

Supporting Business and Employment

Business Support

Members will be aware that we have been working closely with the Welsh Government to provide support direct to businesses in our city that have been impacted by Covid-19. In total around £100m has now been provided to businesses in the city centre through the Business Rates Grant scheme and the Economic Resilience Fund. This is in addition to the national schemes that have supported employment, such as the Job Retention Scheme, which the latest data suggests has supported over 43,000 workers in the city. The Council has also administered the Welsh Government's Start-up Grant in Cardiff, providing support for 160 businesses to plug the gaps that have arisen from the UK Government's limited support for the self-employed.

City Centre Recovery

Cardiff continues to be seen as the exemplar city in the UK in the way that we are supporting our city centre to respond to the pandemic. As ever, we have engaged with businesses at all stages in developing our response that seeks to provide confidence for visitors and workers to return to our city centre in a safe way. As part of this approach, we have also launched a new marketing campaign for the city centre that hammers home the message that, despite the measures put in place, it remains very much open for business and the same Cardiff that we all know and love.

Economic Task Force

Officials have also begun looking at how we can support those who are impacted by the economic fallout of the pandemic. National projections suggests a significant rise in unemployment and it is essential that Cardiff is prepared for that. Partners are therefore looking at how we can increase the provision of employment support, bringing in officers from Economic Development, Schools, the Cardiff Commitment and our Into Work Services teams. Fundamental to this process is business engagement so that we are aware of both the opportunities that may arise, as well as where potential job losses may take place.

Inward Investment

It is important to note that there is continued interest in Cardiff as a location for business. Enquiries from sectors such as financial services, customer services and distribution continue to flow into the Council's Economic Development team and we are confident that, whilst there will be an inevitable impact of Covid-19 on our economy, we can continue to attract new investment and support the development of indigenous business in Cardiff.

Into Work Advice Service

The Into Work team have been working hard to prepare for the increase in demand that the team will see over the coming months. Already there has been an increase in employment enquiries as the DWP have reinstated conditionality to Claimant Commitments, meaning those who are in receipt of Universal Credit (and other employment-related benefits) are required to search for work and provide evidence of this.

In response to this, the team have set up regular Digital Job Club sessions. They include 'How to create a CV' and 'How to make a Universal Credit claim'. Further sessions will be run on a timetable basis, including 'How to jobsearch successfully'. Advisors are able to answer enquiries live from customers. Into Work mentors are still supporting their clients on a one-to-one basis, either by appointment in the Hubs or via various channels including Microsoft Teams, Facetime or over the phone. The Into Work team are also working with Adult Learning to assist customers who do not have access to IT equipment or broadband.

Adult Services

Community Teams

Recovery planning is well underway within Adult Services. The community teams are all reporting that contact from citizens has increased and operating models have been updated to reflect the move to more 'business as usual' activity, whilst maintaining the benefits of working with increased technology and communicating on a regular basis with families and citizens. Staff are continuing to provide a great deal of care and support to unpaid carers and consideration is being given to restarting respite provision to carers who are in need of this.

Supporting Care Home Communication Using Technology

Access to care homes is being carefully managed at this time in line with guidance. Staff have found the use of communication applications to be key in providing a service. Teams are now looking to develop this further and all options are being considered as they move ahead. Further use of technology is being looked to ensure continued positive working relationships are maintained for the benefit of care homes and the citizens residing there. Positive feedback has been received by care home providers during the Covid-19 crisis, recognising that the support has been immensely helpful and having access to the right expertise at the right time has been invaluable. Communication between care home providers and council staff has been positive and continues.

Reintroduction of Visits to Care Homes

The Welsh Government updated care home visiting guidance on 16th June 2020, which allowed residential care homes to once again support face-to-face visits with family members, but restricted to outside areas.

Care home providers have worked tirelessly to create appropriate outdoor facilities to enable individuals to reunite with their loved ones in a safe and protective open space. This has not been without its challenges for care home providers and their extensive planning has been underpinned with robust risk assessments, the implementation of visiting rotas so that physical distancing can be observed at all times and screening checklists for visitors, including temperature checks on arrival. It has been amazing to hear how our local care homes are supporting all weather visits by erecting covered areas such as gazebos and we have heard some wonderful and touching stories of how families have resumed face-to-face contact after nearly four months of being apart.

The positive impact of the visits have also been noted and we have been made aware of individuals beginning to thrive once again following a period when their well-being had been seriously affected as a result of them not being able to see their loved ones.

Restart of Stakeholder Groups in Learning Disabilities Teams

Stakeholder groups have been restarted to discuss the impacts of Covid-19 on the individuals and families the Learning Disabilities teams work with and also to consult on recovery plans. The families worked with have shown great resilience over this period, but more people are struggling to manage without their usual services. Social Work teams continue to monitor welfare, offer emotional support and work with families to direct services to where they are most needed.

Day Service Provision and Support into Supported Living

Ongoing work is being undertaken with providers to plan to reopen day service opportunities where this can be done safely. Staff are starting to support people to proceed with moves into supported accommodation originally planned for earlier in the year. This requires significant input and multi-agency risk assessment to ensure the safety of all involved. Isolation beds are also being developed to assist safe hospital discharge.

Addressing Social Isolation

During the Covid-19 pandemic, older people have been advised to stay at home and limit social contact with others. These people are at an increased risk of loneliness and social isolation at this time. Digital technology can be used to tackle loneliness and isolation, however evidence shows that digital exclusion is higher, amongst those aged 65+ years. Independent Living Services (ILS) have been focusing on digital inclusion for the older community during the pandemic, working to reduce inequalities around access to services. All staff have joined the Digital Champions network through Digital Communities Wales, enabling them to provide digital training and support on elements such as:

- Websites and apps
- 'Soft' skills showing someone how to use a digital device and navigate the Internet
- Online safety
- Tailored information and advice to citizens to remove digital barriers and supporting what matters to them
- Basic online toolkit
- Having an email address/anti-virus software
- Support to use accessibility tools such as speaking text or magnifiers
- Support provided to those who may need support to access charitable funds in order to purchase equipment

A newsletter has also been created and will be distributed to all our partners to encourage more people to come forward and make use of the digital platforms, as well as to encourage new groups to set up virtual online get-togethers, thereby helping to reduce isolation during this challenging period.

Some examples of how digital platforms have been used include:

- Memory Lane Social Club – weekly chats using the online platform Zoom are ensuring that members of the Memory Lane Social Club, who used to meet every Tuesday at Cathays Community Centre before the Covid-19 crisis, get to see friendly, familiar faces and get invaluable social interaction. The weekly meetings pre-Covid were supported by ILS staff and were for people with dementia and their carers to take part in different activities, such as bowls, singing, dancing and reminiscing over a cup of tea. Community engagement officers from the ILS Day Opportunities team regularly signposted people to the get-togethers via Zoom where members can take part in quizzes, listen to music and have a chat.
- Llanrumney Hall Over 50s Social Group – ILS signposted Llanrumney Hall Community Trust, which hosts a weekly lunch club for local people, to an opportunity to bid for funding from the Integrated Health and Social Care Partnership on behalf of the Cardiff and Vale Regional Partnership Board. The funding has enabled the Trust to buy tablets to loan to group members who do not have their own devices so they can stay in touch and socialise with each other. ILS were instrumental in the development of the lunch club at Llanrumney Hall earlier this year, having identified a gap in services supporting older people to maintain independence and reduce social isolation in the area, as well as recognising the great potential of the restored Llanrumney Hall to host activities for older people within the local community.

Waste Management & Recycling

Kerbside collections have now returned to normal (with the exception of the pilot of separate glass collection taking place in some parts of the city), including garden waste collections which returned to fortnightly collections as of 6th July 2020. There has been a noticeable increase in the amount of household waste and recycling being generated as families and individuals have been at home for longer periods during lockdown and this is causing problems on certain days in terms of completing collection rounds. The service will return to streets to recollect any waste or recycling that has not been collected. Disposal volumes are being monitored on a weekly basis. Despite the tonnages collected having increased by over a third compared to the same period last year, household recycling performance remains in the region of 58%.

The new Household Waste Recycling Centre booking system has also proved to be a great success in supporting the management of traffic and social distancing at the city's two recycling centres. The recycling and composting rate at Cardiff's recycling centres has increased by at least 10% since the lockdown has been eased. Both facilities at Lamby Way and Bessemer Close are now achieving a 93% recycling and composting rate due to the new measures that have been put in place.

Due to lockdown restrictions, such as only being permitted to meet one other household in the open air, cleansing teams have been experiencing greater demand throughout the week in certain parks within the city. In order to support the increased demand, additional waste containers have been placed at Roath Park Rec. Other parks are also being monitored to ensure that adequate facilities are in place.

Transport and Public Spaces

Cardiff Recovery Strategy Update

The Cardiff Recovery Strategy identifies the essential steps being taken by the Council in the city centre to create an environment, which is perceived as safe, fully accessible, socially distanced, healthy, well-managed and welcoming in order to support local businesses, retailing, social and leisure activities.

A number of actions have already been implemented to support the reopening of the city centre. In the city centre, floor markings in the form of arrows, social distance figures and queuing areas (to both advise and remind the public) have been installed in the main city centre streets. A number of amendments have also been made in order to better serve the business community in St Mary Street in particular. Additional advisory eye level 'Keep Left' signage is also being installed, as well as 'No Cycling' signage at entry points to Queen Street.

Regular engagement is underway with the city's equalities group, which includes representatives from the Council, Age Connects Cardiff and the Vale, Alzheimer's Society, Cardiff 50+ Forum, Deaf Hub Cymru, Diverse Cymru, Guide Dogs Cymru and RNIB Cymru, to ensure that wider accessibility issues are being accommodated. These include physical design features, provision of additional information and the translation of information into British Sign Language and audio.

Cardiff Castle & Castle Street

A section of the grounds within Cardiff Castle has opened as a new public square for the city. Open every day from 10am-4pm, the public can enjoy the space free of charge. This is in addition to the moat surrounding the castle walls, which is already marked into sections to allow social distancing.

The open air eating facility on Castle Street, to be branded as the Castle Quarter, is also being finalised and has included the resurfacing of Castle Street and the installation of vehicle security measures. The operation of the Welcome Points in the city centre will also be reviewed following the easing of lockdown restrictions allowing outside areas of bars and cafes to reopen.

School Streets

Temporary road closures at pick up and drop off times to create 'School Streets' were implemented at 24 schools when Cardiff schools reopened on 29th June 2020. This has helped to keep roads outside schools clear of traffic and parked vehicles to help facilitate social distancing and support walking, cycling and scooting to school in line with Welsh Government guidance. The schools where these closures were implemented are in very constrained locations and regularly experience problems with vehicle traffic and parking. In Canton, a pavement widening scheme has been implemented along a section of Sanatorium Road between the junctions of Broad Street and Lansdowne Road. This has been achieved through a reduction of carriageway space as the existing pavement is very narrow. The scheme provides additional space making it safer for the pupils of Ysgol Treganna, Ysgol Pwll Coch and Fitzalan High School to walk, cycle or scoot to school.

The School Street measures have been warmly welcomed by head teachers, pupils, parents, residents and local ward members. There is potential to make some of the closures permanent in line with the model developed as part of the School Streets pilot project involving five primary schools which was launched in January 2020. Transport officers are currently investigating this and engaging with colleagues in Education regarding measures that may be needed for the return of schools in September 2020.

Pop Up Cycleways

The Council's Transport team have been busy designing new pop-up cycleways, as part of the delivery of the Cardiff Recovery Plan. These are particularly important in ensuring that new and potentially vulnerable cyclists are made to feel safe on some of the city's busiest roads. The first route to be delivered will follow an east-west corridor between Leckwith Road and Four Elms Road via Wellington Street, Cowbridge Road East, Castle Street and Newport Road. The second route will extend east-west between the Magic Roundabout in Splott and the Taff Trail in Grangetown via Tyndall Street, Herbert Street, Callaghan Square and Penarth Road.

These schemes are due to be implemented towards the end of August 2020. Planning work for an extended network of pop-up cycle routes is also underway in conjunction with the design of measures to facilitate social distancing within local and district centres and the implementation of additional 20mph limits.

Highways Resurfacing

Resurfacing works recommenced at the end of May 2020 and have focused on main routes in the city. Work has continued at an impressive pace with approximately 95,000 square metres of new surfacing laid throughout the city. Works have been completed on major routes such as the A4232 and A48, as well as at Green Farm Road in Ely (reconstruction works) and at Sandbrook Road in St Mellons and Schooner Way in Butetown (specialist treatments). Work on residential streets continue to be delayed as the vast majority of car owners are currently parked at or close to their homes.

Hubs and Libraries

Hubs and libraries are being reopened following detailed risk assessments and consultation with Trade Unions, together with the implementation of social distancing arrangements and an increased cleaning regime. The reopening of these facilities has been well received by the community and further Hubs and libraries will be reopened on a gradual and phased basis, ensuring that communities across the city are served equally.

Llanishen and Llandaff North & Gabalfa Hubs reopened earlier this month as part of the phased return of services provided from the city's hubs, with Radyr Library and Grangetown Hub also reopening from 13th July 2020. The reopening of these facilities takes the total number of open Hubs and libraries in the city to eight, together with Central Library Hub, St Mellons Hub, Ely & Caerau Hub and The Powerhouse, which have remained open for appointments and emergency cases only during lockdown.

The anticipated reopening dates for the next tranches of Hubs and libraries in the city are provided below; however, these dates may be subject to change if anything delays the safe reopening of the buildings:

Hub/Library	Anticipated Reopening Date
Llanrumney Hub	20 th July 2020
Canton Library	27 th July 2020
Butetown Youth Pavilion	27 th July 2020
Fairwater Hub	3 rd August 2020
Rhiwbina Library	10 th August 2020
Rumney Partnership Hub	10 th August 2020
Butetown Hub	17 th August 2020
Cathays Heritage Library	17 th August 2020
Tongwynlais Library	17 th August 2020

Customers are able to access the new click & collect library service from all locations and to collect green recycling and food waste bags. Food Bank vouchers can also be obtained without the need for an appointment. A range of advice services such as Into Work, housing, benefits, and money advice will also be available by appointment in the Hubs when enquiries cannot be dealt with over the phone or by email.

Supporting Residents and Volunteering

Shielded Citizens

The number of people advised to shield by the Chief Medical Officer for Wales stands at nearly 13,500, but this figure changes daily. It was vital that the Council's Advice team made contact with each and every person to offer help and advice. For those who had not called the Council's Adviceline, proactive work was carried out to ensure that contact was made with those individuals.

A total of 14,605 outgoing calls were made to offer support and advice to those residents who are shielding about food, social care needs and medicines. For those remaining individuals who could not be contacted by phone, a letter was sent jointly by the Leader and Chief Executive asking them to contact the team. For those who still had not made contact with the Council, over 1,100 home visits were completed to check on their welfare. In addition, customers have been supported with emergency food parcels, weekly food boxes from the Welsh Government and assistance using PPE for those unable to take the delivery in over their doorstep.

With some uncertainty around when shielding will end and the food provision that goes with it, work is currently underway to ensure there is no cliff edge and those who cannot afford food due to Covid-19 are supported to increase their income and those who cannot access food are helped to do so. The Money Advice team will be contacting people currently receiving Welsh Government food boxes to prepare them for when the scheme ends. They will also write to those not receiving food help offering support and advice.

Volunteering

To support some of the smaller organisations that have emerged as a response to the Covid-19 pandemic, an Anchor Organisation task group was established. This saw more established community groups in the city supporting the new, smaller groups and ensuring that safe practices were shared. This task group was supported by Cardiff Council, Public Health Wales and Cardiff Third Sector Council (C3SC) and provides a point of contact for sharing information about the provision of services and how to access them. The Volunteer Cardiff website is also used as a source of information, which any group can upload their information to. There has been a sharing of ideas and projects but, most importantly, a policy of trying to ensure that all areas of the city are covered in terms of volunteering support provided. This has been so successful that the group will now continue to meet regularly and build on the fantastic work that has been done to date.

Bereavement & Registration Services

Bereavement Services staff have been extremely busy over the last few months, particularly during the peak of the Covid-19 pandemic in May 2020 where staff operated the service continually for 24 hours over a three-week period to ensure that demand was met and families were not kept waiting for funerals for an extended period, which would have only caused them further distress. The service has started to return to normal in terms of the number of funerals per week, which is back to average numbers for this time of year.

When lockdown began, the Registration Service had to suspend both marriage and birth registration services, with staff only able to deal with death registrations. This followed guidance from both Government and the General Registry Office and was necessary to deal with the increased volume of deaths due to Covid-19. Both birth registrations and weddings are now taking place again and bookings are being taken for weddings that had to be postponed. There is a significant backlog currently in the service, particularly with birth registrations, due to the enforced suspension of services; however, staff are working hard to deal with the workload and to get services back to normal.

Culture & Leisure

Reopening of Children's Play Areas

The Cabinet Member for Culture & Leisure wrote to all members following the First Minister's announcement on 10th July 2020 that children's playgrounds and outdoor gyms will be able to reopen gradually from Monday 20th July 2020 when safety checks and other measures have been put in place. This announcement is welcome, particularly as we enter the school holiday period; however, the Council will only reopen play areas when it is safe to do so. Officers are undertaking Covid-19 specific risk assessments for each of our 116 play areas, in addition to carrying out detailed technical inspections of equipment, safety surfacing and associated infrastructure, as well as ensuring that repair and maintenance works are undertaken in order to meet safety standards. We fully understand the demand for bringing these important

community assets back into use, but would ask Members and residents to be patient while the all the necessary work to ensure safe use is completed. A total of 30 play areas across the city will reopen in the initial phase from 20th July 2020 and regular updates on the further reopening of play areas will be provided in the coming weeks.

Reopening of Sport & Leisure Facilities

Following the Welsh Government decision to ease lockdown restrictions relating to outdoor sport and leisure, tennis courts, multi-use games areas (MUGAs) and basketball courts have now been reopened in the city. Bowling greens are also available for use, along with croquet and beach volleyball. There have been no reported issues during the first few weeks of use, with customers adhering to government advice.

Discussions on restart plans with our leisure partner, GLL, are well advanced, pending ministerial announcements relating to the reopening of leisure centres in Wales. The reopening of these facilities will be on a phased basis giving consideration to social distancing and other requirements determined to prevent the transmission of the virus. In the interim, the Council has been able to support Cardiff Blues in restarting professional rugby training by enabling them to use Pentwyn Leisure Centre, with the support and assistance of GLL, while facilities at Cardiff Arms Park are being used as part of the Calon Ddraig/Dragon's Heart temporary hospital at Principality Stadium. Local children have been enjoying watching regional and international rugby players training on the outdoor 3G pitch at Pentwyn and the Blues players have been engaging with the local community.

Cardiff International Food & Drink Festival

As Members are aware, the Cardiff International Food and Drink Festival has been one of the highlights in Cardiff's summer events calendar for more than 20 years, bringing crowds of food lovers into the city to enjoy the offerings of more than 100 artisan producers, independent food traders and street food vendors. This year's event, which was scheduled to be held on 3rd to 5th July 2020, had to be cancelled due to Covid-19. However, in order to ensure that the Council could continue to support the small businesses who rely, at least in part, on the opportunities that the event offers, the Council's Events team, in partnership with Production 78, decided to take the festival online. They developed a festival website to host recipes, video demonstrations and music as well as an online market place, so that visitors could still order a range of premium quality food and drink directly from the businesses who make them. The Cabinet Member for Culture & Leisure would like to thank all the businesses who have supported this virtual initiative and looks forward to welcoming them back to Cardiff Bay in 2021.

Workforce

Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (furloughing)

The Council has taken advantage of the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (furloughing) for services which have had to close and are reliant on external income for their sustainability. In June 2020, a total of 471 staff were furloughed. This has reduced to 447 in July 2020 as some staff were brought back into work to cover work that was required in order to reopen the city centre.

Homeworking

The Council's move to homeworking and agile working has happened very rapidly over a very short space of time. Following its success, it is likely to play an increasing role in the way that the organisation operates in the future. To support this change in working practice, HR People Services are undertaking a full review of all policies and procedures to incorporate homeworking arrangements and to ensure that all processes can continue to be carried out wherever an employee and manager are based. In addition, now that people have been homeworking for a few months, it is an opportune time for managers and staff to take some time to consider their current working practices to establish whether habits and patterns are still effective in supporting staff to deliver and perform their roles in the best way for them as individuals, their teams and the wider organisation. To assist with this, a guide has been provided to all managers and staff. Finally, work is being carried out to build upon the current Homeworking Policy to ensure both it and the associated terms and conditions are still fit for purpose and applicable in light of the increased numbers of posts which will be designated as home based in the future.

Other Issues

Youth Justice Service

The HM Inspectorate of Probation Inspection Report was published on 2nd July 2020 and a detailed action plan and overarching strategy is being prepared by the Youth Justice Board in response. Workshops have been held to develop the plan, including input from workers from across the wider partnership. An elected member seminar has also been held with presentations from all key partners, including staff from the Youth Justice Service.

Newly-Appointed Social Workers in Children's Services

Allocation of newly-appointed social workers to teams is agreed via the Children's Services Management Team. Priority is given to locality teams where demand is high. A system is in place to determine which agency workers can be released as permanent staff come into post in a way that minimises disruption to children and families, and the service.

Global Social Leaders Programme

The Council's Child Friendly City team has partnered with Future Foundations and Wellington Leadership & Coaching Institute based in Berkshire to provide the opportunity for Cardiff pupils aged 11-15 years who attend a state-funded school to take part in the Global Social Leaders virtual leadership programme during the summer holiday period. This free programme, which is funded by Innovate UK, helps young people to build future world of work skills during three hours of online lessons and workshops every day for one week. Participants from Cardiff will need to commit to only five mornings of lessons at a time convenient to them and will also have access to online resources and a pastoral mentor. They will then form a team and set up their own social action project in the autumn term with the support of the Child Friendly City team. The opportunity will be allocated on a first come, first served basis and further information is available at <https://www.globalsocialleaders.com/gsl-summer-catalyst-at-home/>

Digital Inclusion and Learning

Adult Learning, working with FutureDotNow/ Good Things Foundation, have launched their exciting new initiative DevicesDotNow. The new initiative will target the most vulnerable individuals who have been referred to the scheme by the organisation supporting them. These households who do not have access to the Internet and are digitally excluded will be given a tablet that comes fully loaded with the Internet, apps and links. Digital skills training modules will also be preloaded to help the recipients get to grips with their new device. The Digital team from Adult Learning keep in regular contact with the recipients and the organisations which referred them, and provide online support through digital surgery sessions. So far, the team has given out nearly 30 tablets to people referred by Cardiff People First, Oasis Cardiff, Welsh Refugee Council, Women's Connect First, Ty Canna and the Council's Independent Living Services. Following this successful pilot, this initiative will continue to be rolled out further. A new Adult Learning YouTube channel has also been launched where videos have been uploaded by the team about cookery, drawing and other learning activities.

Money Advice Website

The new Money Advice website (www.cardiffmoneyadvice.co.uk) has been launched to support those in need of money advice. It has been designed to be clear, simple and require as few clicks as possible in order to guide people to the help and advice available from the Council. Since its launch, the website has had nearly 4,000 page views and is being developed continuously, including the provision of a news story feature on the home page to promote topical services.

Cardiff Life Awards 2020

Cardiff Castle has won the Leisure & Tourism Award at this year's Cardiff Life Awards. Given the current situation, the award ceremony this year was held virtually and Cardiff Life said that: "Cardiff Castle has stepped up to the mark this year. It's playing its wondrous space with great ingenuity, attracting 300,000 annual visitors while deftly promoting Cardiff's culture."

Tudor Street Regeneration Scheme

Consultation has commenced on the new business environment and transport improvement scheme for Tudor Street in Riverside, which is being funded by the Council and Welsh Government. The scheme will extensively regenerate the street and includes proposals for a new two-way segregated cycleway; enhanced green infrastructure and sustainable drainage, and public realm improvements such as new paving, street furniture and lighting. Consultation responses must be submitted by 17th August 2020.

Electric Vehicle Charging

Work has been ongoing to continue to develop and expand Electric Vehicle (EV) charging stations across the city. We will shortly be engaging with local Members on an additional five locations in the city where on-street chargers will be installed, specifically in areas with limited off-street parking. It is hoped that work to install these chargers will be undertaken in September 2020, but this is dependent on contractors being able to work safely and conform to social distancing restrictions. Work is also progressing on our pilot project for Rapid EV charging locations in the city, with work commencing shortly at five additional sites in conjunction with the current location on Bute Crescent.

Cardiff District Heat Network

The Council's grant application for government funding for the Cardiff Heat Network has been successful. Following this important milestone, the procurement process has begun to engage Design, Build, Operate and Maintain contractors to deliver the scheme. The tender period will run through the summer and autumn and it is hoped that contracts can be approved before Christmas 2020. All being well, the first construction activities is expected to start in spring 2021 as part of a three-year build programme to deliver Phase 1 of this important low-carbon project.

Lamby Way Solar Farm

Work is well underway on the Lamby Way Solar Farm site despite a recent pause during lockdown. The main construction works are expected to be completed by the end of August 2020, with the first energy generation from the site feeding into the national grid soon after that. The next phase of work will be to complete the 'private wire' connection between the Solar Farm and the nearby Welsh Water treatment works, and it is hoped that this work will be completed before the end of 2020.

Flood Risk Management

Following the devastating floods experienced in February 2020, extensive flood prevention and recovery work has been undertaken in the city. A full cleanse and detailed survey has been completed of the A48 highway drainage systems and any identified issues of asset failure have been programmed for remedial works to help prevent further flooding. Extensive large-scale cleansing of the surface water system at Rover Way resulted in the removal of approximately 350 tonnes of material.

A flood protection project at Llanishen Brook has also been delivered, which includes the installation of a new trash screen, electronic monitoring and CCTV to enhance flood protection through improved monitoring and associated flood water management.

Councillor Huw Thomas
Leader of the Council
16 July 2020