

FINANCE, MODERNISATION & PERFORMANCE STATEMENT

Credit Unions of Wales Awards

International Credit Union Day is on Thursday 15 October this year and to mark the day, Credit Unions of Wales have announced the winners of their annual awards. I am pleased that Cardiff Council has been highly commended in the Payroll Partner (Public) category. The Council was recognised for its commitment to a payroll partnership with Cardiff & Vale Credit Union, which offers staff access to ethical savings and affordable loans. Currently, over 1,500 staff are members, making it one of the largest payroll schemes in Wales. The annual awards celebrate the positive impact that credit unions and financial co-operatives have on people's lives. Cardiff & Vale Credit Union is an award-winning credit union, which has been operating for over 25 years, and the award comes just weeks after they opened their new office in Working Street in the city centre.

Website

The new version of the Cardiff.gov.uk/Caerdydd.gov.uk website was released on 24 September 2020, providing better accessibility for citizens and meeting Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG). Work continues to both review and implement further accessibility changes on all platforms, including the mobile app. In September 2020, Cardiff.gov.uk had 242,360 visitors viewing 909,569 pages, an increase of 60,000 page views from the previous month. The Covid-19 related pages on the website have now had 782,062 page views since they were set up in the early stages of the pandemic. In addition, information and guidance provided to citizens about the current restrictions has had 20,367 page views (up to 9 October 2020).

Mobile App/ Digital Services

The ability to book and pay for bulky waste collections was released across the Council's mobile app and website during September 2020. This was in response to customer demand and, since the launch, over 60% of all bookings have been made through these channels. The app has now been downloaded 34,297 times, which is a 5.3% increase on the previous month; this represents one of the biggest monthly increases in downloads since the app was launched in 2018.

A booking system for Household Waste and Recycling Centres (HWRCs) is currently being developed, and remains on track to be released in November 2020, with reports for missed collections planned for release by February 2021. These services, when released, will be available on both the app and website.

BOBi (ChatBot)

BOBi had 3,357 conversations with citizens in September 2020, with 83.1% of customers rating the experience as Very Good, Good, and OK. Following the successful implementation and launch of bag ordering through BOBi in September 2020, the development team is reviewing areas of re-use to work on other platforms. The team has created a proof of concept for an Alexa skill, which will allow citizens to use their Alexa devices to enquire when their bins are due for collection and to order free bags. The skill remains in the development stages; however, the team is on track to release the skill to beta testers over the next few weeks to gather user feedback and refine the process before a production version is released.

Connect to Cardiff (C2C)

C2C has remained busy throughout September 2020, with 49,760 calls and 5,390 emails offered; this is within the context of many call centre staff continuing to work from home where possible. The team within the contact centre also handled 12,074 social media messages and 2,437 web chats. The most popular subject for posts was "Coronavirus", with 4,281 messages on this topic. Both Facebook and Twitter saw an increase in followers during this period.

Wales Interpretation and Translation Service

Wales Interpretation and Translation Service (WITS) had another successful month with 1,471 assignments completed in September 2020; 55% of the assignments were for Health partners. A further 555 requests have been scheduled for the coming months, with interpreter provision at 99.35% of all requests.

CIPFA Trainee Accountants

The Council has continued to invest in the provision of Trainee Accountant positions. Three Trainee Accountants (Jessie Atkinson, Amanda Atkins, Jim Wilcox) have recently passed their second year exams. It is particularly pleasing that, this year, Jessie has won three national awards from CIPFA, the sponsoring accountancy body, and is one of the best performing candidates in CIPFA's Professional Qualification exams. All three trainees are expected to qualify next year.

Councillor Chris Weaver
Cabinet Member for Finance, Modernisation & Performance
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