

COUNCIL: 25 JUNE 2015

STATEMENT OF THE LEADER

AGENDA ITEM:

UN Public Service Day

The United Nations has designated 23rd June as Public Service Day to celebrate the value of public service to the community and recognise the work of public servants. This week, the City of Cardiff Council promoted UN Public Service Day with a social media campaign that saw staff tweet photographs and publish stories on Facebook about the work the Council does in the community. Cabinet Members, councillors and the workforce also took part tweeting selfies and stories using #publicserviceday from their place of work or when out and about meeting members of the public. The Council also used its Facebook and Twitter accounts to publish stories celebrating some of the work carried out by individuals.

Cardiff's campaign was co-ordinated with partner organisations – including the Police, Fire Service and Health Board. It was encouraging to see so many people participate on the day and for the Council's contribution to be recognised in a message from UN General Secretary, Ban Ki-moon. With respect to raising the profile of Cardiff and our public servants, the day was a success with our number of followers on Twitter increasing, more people accessing our Facebook page, and a tweet from the Council's account retweeted to over 4 million people across the world by the UN twitter account.

UN Public Service Day was an opportunity to make people aware of the contribution public service makes across Cardiff and to showcase and celebrate our staff – our most important asset.

I think we achieved that – thank you to all who got involved.

The Future of Local Government in Wales

The Welsh Government has announced its proposed map for local government reorganisation and is proposing a smaller number of larger councils. Under the proposals, the City of Cardiff Council would merge with Vale of Glamorgan Council. The Welsh Government will consult on these proposals and a draft 'Reform and Mergers' Bill in the autumn.

The Minister for Public Services, Leighton Andrews AM, provided further clarity on the benefits of re-organisation during his speech at the Welsh Local Government Association's annual conference. While we in Cardiff are open to change, and recognise that the current way of working is unsustainable, the business case for funding the cost of re-organisation, making savings and delivering better public services has to stack up.

We also have to bear in mind that the financial challenges that council's like Cardiff face are immediate and our public services will be placed under huge pressure over the next few years. The forthcoming Chancellor's Budget is also likely to have significant and immediate consequences for councils across Britain. Local government re-organisation is not going to happen overnight, and neither will it be a quick fix for the big challenges facing local public services right now.

That aside, we are committed to progressing the opportunities afforded by re-organisation in partnership with the Welsh Government and other local authorities.

City Deal Update

Council leaders and other stakeholders across the Cardiff Capital Region are working together, and with the Welsh Government and private sector, to develop a business case to take to Central Government by the end of the year.

Local authorities in the Cardiff Capital Region are taking reports to their respective cabinets requesting that a contribution is made on a pro-rata (per population) basis to a £500,000 fund. This fund is required to undertake the preparatory work necessary to develop a City Deal proposal on behalf of the region.

In addition, a number of local authority Leaders also met with the Secretary of State for Wales earlier this month to update on local progress for the development of a City Deal. We have also agreed with the Minister for Finance that a Welsh Government representative would attend future meetings.

I will update you as these discussions progress.

60th Anniversary of Cardiff Stuttgart Twinning Arrangements

This year marks the 60th anniversary of the twinning of the cities of Cardiff and Stuttgart. Stuttgart is Cardiff's oldest and closest sister city and the links between our cities are deep rooted.

These links go beyond the ceremonial and have helped to enrich the lives of people in Cardiff and Stuttgart. Our universities, schools and institutes of learning have a track record of successful collaboration. The Cardiff-Stuttgart Association, for example, has been promoting the use language in Cardiff. This includes running competitions with Cardiff schools to encourage uptake of German language lessons.

More recently our business start-up communities have been working with each other to explore new business opportunities—through the development of apps and virtual hack events. Stuttgart is also recognised by many commentators as a

leading example of a functioning city-region, and has much to contribute to the development of the Cardiff Capital City Region.

A delegation from Cardiff will therefore be visiting Stuttgart to participate in a series of commemorative events that should lead to further successful collaborative opportunities between our cities.

Councillor Phil Bale

Leader, City of Cardiff Council / Arweinydd, Cyngor Dinas Caerdydd

25 June 2015