

COUNCIL: 30 SEPTEMBER 2021

FINANCE, MODERNISATION & PERFORMANCE STATEMENT

Carer Confident Level 2 Accomplished Status

Cardiff Council has been awarded Carer Confident Level 2 Accomplished status. Carer Confident is the Employers for Carers benchmarking scheme and assists employers in building a supportive and inclusive workplace for employees who are, or will become, carers and to make the most of the talents that carers bring to the workplace. The award of this status is made to employers who have demonstrated that they have built an inclusive workplace where carers are recognised, respected and supported. Carer Confident employers recognise the importance of retaining valued members of staff, reducing absence and unnecessary recruitment costs, and increasing staff resilience engagement and productivity. The Council is among a distinguished list of employers who have achieved Accomplished status, including BT, Department of Work & Pensions, Crown Prosecution Service and HMRC.

Websites

The Council's website (www.cardiff.gov.uk) had 205,677 visitors last month viewing 786,513 pages of information. 68.1% of visitors chose to view the website via a mobile device. £2.4million was received in online payments, which included £299.8k from penalty charge notices, which was the highest amount received so far this year now that Covid restrictions have eased and more traffic is on the city's roads. The Council has also increased its compliance against the latest version of the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.1), which the Council has a legal duty to meet. Accessibility AA standards have increased to 90.6%, which puts Cardiff in 4th place out of the 22 Welsh local authorities, up from 13th place at the start of the year.

Visits to the OutdoorCardiff website (www.outdoorcardiff.com) have increased by 50.2% compared to last year, with users looking to get outdoors, including visiting local parks and walking trails in the city. Use of the website has increased significantly since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic. The Council has also launched a new website for the Onsite Construction Academy www.onsiteconstructionacademy.co.uk to promote training and work experience to help with career progression.

BOBi (Chatbot)

Last month, BOBi was presented with 6,504 chats, an increase of around 1,000 from the previous month. The most common transactions were collection calendar lookups and requests for details about waste collection changes, recycling centre bookings and missed collections. Feedback from customers remains good, with 79.86% of marked chats being scored as Very Good, Good or OK.

CardiffGov Mobile App

The CardiffGov app was downloaded a further 1,416 times in August 2021. The total number of downloads has reached 48,247. Currently, the development cycle continues to be focussed on accessibility improvements in the design of the app to ensure that the platform and services can be accessed by as many residents as possible. In addition, the app has been improved to enable customers to book multiple recycling centre visits on the same day, to expand the search of nearest recycling bag and food caddy liner suppliers from 1km to 5km and to include a new service for reporting drug-related littering.

Into Work Service

During the past few months, demand for the Into Work Service has risen dramatically in line with the end of UK and Welsh Government support schemes. In addition to unemployed people requiring support finding and securing employment, large numbers of people are seeking support to re-skill into different employment sectors. Last week saw the biggest increase in demand for Job Club support, with a 42% rise of people seeking support with job searching, CVs and Universal Credit – with 20 people queuing outside Central Hub's Job Club waiting to speak with Advisors. Additional spaces in Hubs have been made available to the Into Work Service to cope with the increase in footfall, as well as space within the city's three Jobcentres. Referrals to employment projects have also risen within the last month as furlough comes to an end, a rise of 40% from the beginning of the year. Mentors' caseloads are at an all-time high, with an average of over 45 per mentor (regular caseload figure pre-Covid was between 25 and 30). Managers are looking at alternative funding streams to secure additional posts in response to the pressures on the service.

Cardiff Works

Cardiff Works has seen a huge increase in demand in the past few months for skilled, work-ready candidates within council services. To cope with staffing placement orders, the team has organised Cardiff Works sign-up sessions within local communities to raise awareness of the current roles available. In partnership with Adult Learning, Cardiff Works is hosting week-long 'Get Into Cardiff Works' courses in Hubs across the city. The aim of the course is to provide an alternative pathway into Cardiff Works and feedback has shown that young people in particular, as well as those with limited work experience, struggle to register successfully and secure work within the Council. The course teaches essential administration skills and automatically registers the candidate with Cardiff Works without the need for them to sit an assessment. The new course has been piloted at Grangetown Hub and has seen 20 young people successfully complete the training. Further courses are being planned with the Adult Learning Team and will see the course run on a monthly basis, alternating from each of the Hubs across the city.

Councillor Chris Weaver
Cabinet Member for Finance, Modernisation & Performance
23 September 2021