

My Ref: T: Scrutiny/Correspondence/Cllr NH

Date: 18 November 2021

Councillor Peter Bradbury & Councillor Russell Goodway  
Cabinet Members  
Cardiff Council  
County Hall  
Cardiff  
CF10 4UW



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Neuadd y Sir  
Caerdydd,  
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Dear Councillor Bradbury and Councillor Goodway,

### **Economy & Culture Scrutiny Committee: 8 November 2018**

Thank you for attending Committee for pre-decision scrutiny of the report to Cabinet titled '*Old Library & Norwegian Church*'.

Members are pleased to see the exciting and interesting proposals for these iconic buildings, which secure their future and are a good proposition for the city.

#### Old Library proposals

Members note there will be a 99-year full repairing and insurance lease, at a peppercorn rent, with Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama (RWCMD). Members note the lease includes ensuring continued occupancy by Museum of Cardiff and Menter Caerdydd as well as the monies from the Virgin Money lease going to Cardiff Council. Members note discussions are ongoing regarding an early break in the lease, to give the opportunity to review prior to any major investment in the building and that the timing of this break is to be agreed.

Members were pleased to learn about how the RWCMD proposes to use the building and surrounding area, particularly their aim to increase public engagement and to continue public access to the building. Members note that tourist information leaflets will be available in the building.

In the interests of transparency, Members questioned the other bid received and note that this bid had not been as detailed as the RWCMD bid and was more of an expression of interest.

#### Norwegian Church proposals

Members were pleased that Dr Martin Price, Chair of the newly established Norwegian Church Cardiff Bay Charity, gave up his time to attend the meeting and explain their proposals for the Norwegian Church. Members support the proposals to focus on the heritage and history of the Church, to offer an arts programme and

community venue and to operate a scandi-style café. Members are particularly pleased to hear that links with Hordaland, and Norway overall, will be strengthened and that the charity is building links with its neighbours, such as the Urdd.

Members note the proposal is to write-off the current operating deficit debt and to ensure the building is fit and proper, prior to the transfer of the assets of the existing Trust to the new Charity. Members queried the level of the current debt, as the figures in the draft report to Cabinet are as at March 2021; Members note the response that, as the Church has been closed since then, the debt should not have changed, as it comes from an operating deficit, but that this will be clarified in the final report to Cabinet. Members also sought confirmation that the debt required write-off and we note the response that, as the debt comes from an operating deficit, the Trust would not be able to recoup the debt without changes to the operation which it is unable to do, and that it would not be expected for the new charity to take on the operating deficit of the previous Trust. Members are content with these explanations.

Following consideration of the report and information provided at the meeting, Members are content with the proposals and wish you, the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama and the Norwegian Church Cardiff Bay Charity every success with implementation. We look forward to the public being able to enjoy these buildings and all they will offer and congratulate you, officers, and partners for finding creative solutions to ensure these heritage assets can be enjoyed in the future.

Once again, thank you for your attendance and for bringing this report for pre-decision scrutiny. This letter does not require a response.

Yours sincerely,



**COUNCILLOR NIGEL HOWELLS**  
**CHAIR, ECONOMY & CULTURE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

cc Members of the Economy & Culture Scrutiny Committee  
Neil Hanratty Kathryn Richards Donna Jones Jon Day  
Dr. Martin Price – Chair, Norwegian Church Cardiff Bay Charity  
Clair James Cabinet Support Office