

Date: 15 October 2021

Councillor Huw Thomas,  
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Dear Huw,

### **Policy Review & Performance Scrutiny Committee: 11 October 2021**

As Chair of the Policy Review and Performance Scrutiny Committee Members have asked that I pass on their thanks for your attendance at Committee for consideration of the Cardiff Public Services Board (PSB) Annual Report 2020/21. Please also pass on our appreciation to Charles Janczewski, Alun Michael, Paul Orders, Fiona Kinghorn, Abigail Harries and Gareth Newell, for their comprehensive presentation of progress and response to our questions and comments. We offer the following observations for the Boards consideration and response.

#### **Teamworking culture**

The Committee acknowledges that all statutory partners recognise the value of having a successful PSB in place, and we concur that, had it not existed at the onset of the pandemic, such a partnership of key frontline public service organisations would need to have been created. We particularly note the Chair of Cardiff & Vale UHB's observation that the PSB has facilitated a high level of trust and a spirit of co-operation that results in agility in the speed of decision-making. We are also happy to record the Police & Crime Commissioner's view that content and culture rather than frequency of meetings can unlock the power of partnership working. Clearly partners agree with the Committee's observation that, faced with the urgency and complexity of the pandemic, the committee format quickly merged into teamworking. To maintain that positive team culture change we encourage the PSB to discuss this transformation and how new and improved ways of operating can be maintained as further challenges, already in evidence, present themselves.

## **Maintaining the momentum**

Clearly, your main focus now is on maintaining the momentum of the past 18 months, and we note the Board's stated four priorities going forward, *Climate Emergency*, *Tackling Inequalities*, *Young People & a Child Friendly City* and *Prevention (understanding and responding to the common drivers of demand on public services)*.

In acknowledging the stronger partner relationships Members are keen that you capture the energy of all PSB partner organisations, in addition to those at the forefront of dealing with the pandemic. We note that the PSB provides the platform and mechanism for applying a shared public service response to long term challenges such as climate change. We were also pleased to hear that coordinated work on matters such as sustainability, childhood obesity, childhood immunisation rates, and substance misuse is underway.

## **Re-offending indicators**

The Committee expressed some concern about increasing re-offending rates listed under Well-being Objective 4, *Safe, Confident and Empowered Communities* (now 40.6% compared with 38.4% when last recorded in 2019). We note that this is partly due to the time lag between the range of steps put in place. A variety of diversionary activity programmes introduced to tackle youth crime and aimed at the most vulnerable were reported. We also note the Police and Crime Commissioners view that first time offending rates are showing significant decline and therefore higher re-offending rates do not necessarily mean higher crime levels. Further work is ongoing to understand the nature and seriousness of the types of re-offending crimes now being reported.

## **Population needs assessment**

In respect of the Boards measurement of progress Members acknowledge there are some gaps in the data reporting due to the recent crisis of the past 18 months. We note that there will be an opportunity to look at the trend analysis report merging PSB data with the population needs assessment data currently being compiled by the health board in November 2021. We will consider this for our work programme.

## **Community perception of safe neighbourhoods**

The Committee was keen to establish what partners could collectively do to create safer neighbourhoods. We consider it necessary to understand that people's perception of safety is important, even when reported offending levels appear to be reassuring. We heard that Cardiff compares well with most core cities, particularly on levels of violent crime. We note also that the work of the Community Safety Partnership feeds into the PSB and, for some time, there has been concern at the resourcing of frontline policing in the city. We were pleased to hear of new police initiatives on issues such as domestic violence and abuse. Above all we consider it important that PSB partners continue working closely together on neighbourhood safety issues, and the Council ensures the public realm of the city is family and age friendly.

## **Asset sharing strategy**

Members highlighted the value of asset sharing across partner organisations. We note there are ongoing conversations between partners' estate managers and that there have already been some agreements to share publicly owned space. We note also that partners have started to share space within hubs and are talking about further shared touchdown points. However, these are examples of shared working rather than a result of a fully formed city-wide asset sharing strategy. Sharing assets is clearly still at an early stage and we **recommend** further coordinated progress in this area and the formulation of a PSB strategic plan.

## **Leading on tackling big issues**

Finally, beyond 2021 the PSB must maintain its strategic view and provide leadership in tackling the major challenges ahead. Members heard that health inequalities remain an important focus of partnership work, underlying PSB work already in progress. We note the importance of maintaining the momentum and that the focus in forthcoming meetings will be on the Director of Public Health's Annual Report. We also note your reference to other players who are not statutory partners that can work alongside the PSB in helping to tackle health inequalities.

Once again, on behalf of the PRAP Scrutiny Committee the attendance of yourself and key partners to assist us in our consideration of the Cardiff PSB Annual Report 2020/21 is much appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Walker". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "David" being more prominent than the last name "Walker".

**COUNCILLOR DAVID WALKER**

**CHAIR, POLICY REVIEW AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

cc Members of the Policy Review & Performance Scrutiny Committee,  
Charles Janczewski, Vice Chair of Cardiff PSB, C&V UHB,  
Alun Michael, South Wales Police & Crime Commissioner,  
Paul Orders, Chief Executive, Cardiff Council,  
Sarah McGill, Corporate Director Communities  
Fiona Kinghorn, Executive Director of Public Health, C&V UHB,  
Abigail Harries, Executive Director of Strategic Planning, C&V UHB,  
Gareth Newell, Head of Partnerships and Performance, Cardiff Council,  
Minister for Housing and Local Government,  
Future Generations Commissioner for Wales,  
Auditor General for Wales,  
Andrea Redmond, Committee Support Officer,  
Debi Said, Cabinet Support Officer  
Joanne Watkins, Cabinet Office Manager