

COUNCIL: 29 SEPTEMBER 2022

LEADER STATEMENT

Death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and Accession of His Majesty King Charles III

As Leader of the Council, I want to extend my thanks to all the council services, employees and partner agencies who worked tirelessly in supporting the Welsh Government in the delivery of the programme of nationally significant events in Cardiff following the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. This included four Royal Gun Salutes, the Proclamation Ceremony for the new Monarch and the first visit to Wales by His Majesty King Charles III and the Queen Consort. Arrangements were put in place at short notice in just seven days and our successful Team Cardiff/Wales approach, once again, demonstrated its event hosting pedigree. I am extremely grateful for the professionalism, commitment and dedication of everyone involved in delivering this historic occasion in our capital city.

From a Council perspective, there were key contributors including the Protocol Office, who managed the civic and corporate requirements of the various events, together with the City Hall Functions and Catering Teams. The Events Team played an important role in supporting the accreditation process, which ensured that 1,000 staff across all the partner agencies were safely accredited and/or deployed accordingly to deliver the programme of events, as well as covering the health and safety, security and logistical requirements of the city's event sites. The Council's Communications Team also led the city's media and information response, working through the Welsh Government media cell and supporting the world's media asks across the event sites.

The Highways Team put in place the highway management arrangements and infrastructure required to facilitate not only the critical security and crowd management overlay, but also the smooth transition of all the production and media infrastructure required to deliver and broadcast the events across four sites. The Parks and Waste Management Teams ensured that grass was cut, trees were pruned and that the waste management and cleansing requirements associated with the event were all met.

I'm sure Members will want to join me in thanking all our staff who helped ensure that the city played its full part during these historically significant events.

Investment in Cardiff

The Council continues to work with partners to promote Cardiff as a location for high value-added Civil Service jobs and, to this end, I led a delegation to London earlier this month, which presented the city's investment offer to leading officials from UK Government Departments in Whitehall. This approach has brought previous success to the city, and it is clear that enthusiasm remains high for further investment from UK Government Departments.

I am also due to speak at a meeting of the Cardiff Business Events Partnership on 28 September 2022 at the Principality Stadium, alongside representatives from FOR Cardiff, Cardiff Hoteliers Association, event venues and other hospitality businesses. Our 'Stronger, Fairer, Greener' policy agenda included the commitment to engage closely with the retail and hospitality sectors to enable their successful renewal post-Covid and enhance the promotion of Cardiff as a visitor destination by establishing a new events strategy, including business events and conferences. Business events play a vital role for Cardiff and the wider region by helping to bring in business and supporting jobs and a wide range of suppliers directly. They also play a fundamental role in supporting business itself, whether through networking or simply showcasing what Cardiff has to offer.

Pride Cymru 2022

I was pleased to join the march from Windsor Place through the city centre to City Hall Lawn on 27 August 2022 to mark the start of Pride Cymru 2022 alongside other Councillors and council employees. I also spoke on stage at the end of the march and was pleased to welcome Pride Cymru back to the city for the first time since 2019 after an enforced absence due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The theme of this year's event was 'Unique and United' and provided a great way to celebrate individual identity. The Pride Cymru weekend provides a fantastic opportunity for Cardiff to celebrate individuality, diversity and equality, and to show its solidarity and support for the LGBTQ+ community.

Llanishen and Lisvane Reservoirs Visitor Hub

On 1 September 2022, I joined Llanishen Councillors in visiting Llanishen and Lisvane reservoirs to see the good progress that is being made by Dŵr Cymru/Welsh Water to develop the new visitor hub. The construction of the below ground elements of the building had been completed and the building framework was nearing completion. Work will then start on the internal structure of the building, with the building expected to open in spring 2023. In addition, Dŵr Cymru/Welsh Water has been working with its contractors to make the whole site accessible for the public and to create conservation zones to protect the site's wildlife and ecology. Throughout the summer, contractors have been installing brand new fencing and footpaths around the reservoirs, and this work is due to be completed by the end of autumn 2022.

Meeting with Radyr & Morganstown Community Council

On 21 September, I attended a meeting with the Chair and members of Radyr & Morganstown Community Council following an invitation that I received earlier this year. The meeting was also attended by the two County Councillors for the electoral ward and provided the opportunity to discuss a number of matters affecting the local community, including potential improvements to Station Road, the drainage works at Drovers Way Play Area, active travel and public transport provision, as well as issues relating to the Replacement Local Development Plan.

Councillor Huw Thomas
Leader of the Council
23 September 2022