

## **INVESTMENT & DEVELOPMENT STATEMENT**

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### **Economic Outlook**

There are a significant number of positive signs for the Cardiff economy, with August 2022 city centre footfall numbers at their highest level since December 2019.

I can confirm that there is continued interest in investment in the city. The recent announcement by Legal & General of a £200m investment in the Central Quay development, will help the regeneration of the area south of the railway station.

I can also confirm that plans to expand the Great Point Seren Studios in Wentloog have now been submitted showing the confidence the creative industries have in the city, which continue to thrive.

Councillors will welcome the results of the latest analysis of the latest ONS data that highlight that Cardiff has the highest positive margin between new start-up firms and failures in the UK. This reflects significant confidence across the city's start-up community. In addition, Cardiff continues to experience a significant Covid-19 recovery across the commercial sector recover, with data for the first half of 2022 showing that office take-up in Cardiff reached 215,000 sq.ft. This is the highest half year take-up since 2016, according to a recent report by property consultancy Savills. It is critical that other policy initiatives that the Council proposes to take forward do not have an adverse impact on this impressive record of recovery.

The Administration also continues to work hard to promote the county. I am hopeful that the Council will be able to announce a number of new commercial investments with the potential to create thousands of well-paid jobs during the coming months, which will include two new major office lettings in the city centre.

However, it is also clear from speaking with businesses that they, like householders, will be severely impacted by the global cost-of-living crisis, and the Council will be working with the Welsh Government to explore further ways of mitigating the impact on those businesses to ensure a sustainable future. These costs pressures, as well as other issues such as recruitment and supply chain constraints, will undoubtedly impact on our city's economy and the Council will work with all partners to seek ways to mitigate these issues. It also raises the need to ensure that the Council continues to do those things that can help the city's businesses, which includes investing in projects which help to attract visitors.

The Council continues to seek and attract investment in the city centre, including new hospitality and retail activity, with a strong demand pipeline for Transforming Towns loan funding that has already supported a number of local investments. There is also strong demand for repurposing of traditional office accommodation space, as well as circular economy projects in the retail sector.

### **Major Projects**

Work continues apace in taking forward the Administration's portfolio of major projects, including the Arena, Atlantic Wharf and the International Sports Village. I will bring forward reports to Cabinet later this year that will conclude the development agreement for the Arena and appoint the contractor for the velodrome. The Administration will continue to engage with key stakeholders and the community in progressing these projects which will be important for both visitors and residents in providing world class facilities and new public spaces.

### **Death of HM Queen Elizabeth II**

I would like to personally thank Council officers within the Economic Development and Estates Teams, who supported staff at the Castle and across the Council, for their exemplary response, at short notice, to secure the successful delivery of events in the city following the death of Her late Majesty. Once again, local government demonstrated that it remains the indispensable delivery arm of government. These events involved huge logistical operations across the city and our officers did the city proud. There is no doubt that Cardiff shone on the occasion of the Proclamation and on the occasion of the King and Queen Consort's visit to Llandaff Cathedral, the Senedd and to the Castle when the eyes of the world were upon us. I thank all those involved.

**Councillor Russell Goodway**  
**Cabinet Member for Investment & Development**  
**23 September 2022**