

TACKLING POVERTY, EQUALITY & PUBLIC HEALTH STATEMENT

PUBLIC HEALTH & EQUALITY

Betty Campbell Annual Lecture & Statue Nomination

I was delighted to be a guest speaker at the very first Annual Betty Campbell Monument Lecture, a new addition to Black History Month celebrations in Cardiff. The lecture took place on 27 October at the Pierhead building in Cardiff Bay. Organised in partnership between the Council, Senedd Cymru and Monumental Welsh Women, the lecture honours the work of Wales's first black headteacher and champion of equality and diversity. I was pleased to be able to reflect on my own journey to Cardiff as well as focus on the work the Council is doing to tackle racial inequality in the city through the recommendations made by the Race Equality Task Force.

Mount Stuart Primary School Year 5 & 6 choirs also sang at the event, with the pupils being very aware of the significance of Betty Campbell as a leader, former headteacher at Mount Stuart Primary School and champion of the children and families of Butetown. The pupils have learnt about 'Mrs Campbell' and her contribution, both as part of a topic on "Inspirational People" and as part of ongoing work on the curriculum.

The lecture also marked the first anniversary of the unveiling of the Betty Campbell Monument in Cardiff. Sculpted by Eve Shepherd, the monument has been shortlisted by the Public Statues and Sculpture Association for the 2022 Marsh Award for Excellence in Public Sculpture. Voting closed on 17 November and the winner will be announced during a ceremony starting at 6pm on 24 November.

Memorial Service For Minority Ethnic & Commonwealth Servicemen And Women

I was honoured to speak and lay a wreath at a memorial service to commemorate minority ethnic and Commonwealth servicemen and women on 5 November at the War Memorial in Alexandra Gardens. Organised by Race Council Cymru, Black History Wales in partnership with the Royal British Legion, Royal Commonwealth Society Wales and the British Armed Forces, the service remembered those individuals from Minority Ethnic backgrounds, who were either living in, or came to Wales, to support the UK in her time of need during the World Wars and past conflicts. Many of these courageous volunteers lost their lives and the service recognised their sacrifice and honoured their memory.

UK Parliament Week 2022

I have been invited to address the Cardiff chapter of the Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh UK, Cardiff Balagokulam, on 20 November as part of their activity to mark UK Parliament Week 2022. Young people from the chapter will first debate selected topics, such as 'Should children be allowed to decide what time they go to bed?', in order to raise awareness about how policies are enacted in parliament following debates and voting. After the debate, I look forward to sharing my observations and thoughts about the event and the role of parliament in enacting policies, as well as how young people can get involved and influence policy at the local or national level.

Diwali Celebrations

Diwali is one of Hinduism's most important festivals and the Indian community's biggest celebration. It is a five-day festival which celebrates the triumph of light over darkness, good over evil and the human ability to overcome adversity.

I was pleased to attend the Diwali Mela, hosted by Amgueddfa Cymru and the Hindu Cultural Association Wales India Centre, on 16 October at the National Museum of History at St Fagans, which was decorated with Indian artifacts, textiles and Rangoli art. In addition to pop-up food stalls, music, and dance performances, there was an opportunity to take part in Dandiya Dance workshops, Indian yoga, Mehndi body art and classical Indian storytelling. Free arts and crafts activities were also available for children, young people and families.

I was also delighted to attend the Wales Celebrates Diwali 2022 event hosted by the First Minister for Wales, Rt Hon Mark Drakeford MS, and the Honorary Consul for India in Wales, Mr Raj Aggarwal, at Sophia Gardens on 26 October. It was a great event which brought the Indian community together to celebrate the Festival of Light and the many shared connections between Wales and India. Highlights of the event can be viewed on YouTube at: <https://youtu.be/8BtfQEEmcqs>

Ask Cardiff 2022

The annual Ask Cardiff survey is currently underway. Residents and anyone who accesses public services in the city are encouraged to share their opinions about their experiences of services as the Council seeks to gather views on what is working well in the city and areas where improvement is needed. The feedback collected from the survey helps the Council and public service partners to better understand how people experience the city and services and to know what is important to residents and the local community. The responses also help inform plans to make changes and improvements to services.

The survey can be completed online [here](#) and closes on 20 November. Paper copies are also available in community buildings including Hubs, libraries, youth centres, schools and community centres. Everyone who takes part in the 20-minute survey will have the opportunity to enter a prize draw to win a family ticket to skate at this year's Winter Wonderland or one of ten £50 FOR Cardiff vouchers, which can be spent in a wide variety of high street shops and restaurants.

Winter Vaccinations

Following on from my Council Statement last month, the Autumn 2022 Covid-19 booster programme is continuing. Two pop-up sessions have already been delivered in Butetown. Cardiff & Vale University Health Board are linking with key community leads and contacts to arrange future pop-up clinics to support and maximise vaccine availability in areas of low take-up. The roll-out of flu vaccinations is also continuing with a particular emphasis on improving uptake for 2- and 3-year-olds. Young children can be seriously affected by flu but can be protected by a vaccine delivered through a painless nasal spray. More information about flu vaccination is available at: www.phw.nhs.wales/flu vaccine

HIV Action Plan for Wales

The draft three-year HIV Action Plan for Wales was published earlier this year for consultation and encompassed five key areas of priority: Prevention, Testing, Clinical Care, Living Well with HIV and Tackling HIV-related Stigma. Cardiff Council submitted a detailed response to the consultation in September, which supported the vision of the action plan. I am looking forward to welcoming the finalised version of the action plan when it is published and working with the Welsh Government on improving the quality of life for people living with HIV in Cardiff. With this in mind, HIV Testing Week will be taking place from 21 to 27 November 2022. The week, which will be co-ordinated by Fast Track Cardiff & Vale, provides an opportunity to raise awareness and educate people about HIV. The Council has collaborated with Fast Track Cardiff & Vale to produce a leaflet entitled “21st Century HIV: What are the facts?”. It includes a series of key facts, presented simply and impactfully, information on HIV testing and prevention, and where to go for support. This useful resource will be available in all Cardiff Hubs and Libraries during the week, as well as other community settings.

Bowel Cancer Screening

The Council works in partnership with Public Health Wales to deliver a targeted health education programme within the south of the city that aims to develop greater awareness within communities of the importance of participating in bowel cancer screening. Bowel screening aims to find cancer at an early stage when treatment is likely to be more effective. Early diagnosis is therefore really important. At least 9 out of 10 people will survive bowel cancer if it is found and treated early. Uptake of all screening programmes in Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan are amongst the lowest in Wales and the south of the city is particularly affected. The education programme includes group sessions within our Community Hubs as well as visits to community locations, for example local temples. I'm really pleased to be able to announce a new initiative that the Health Engagement team have been working on with Bowel Cancer UK, Public Health Wales, Wales Interpretation and Translation Service (WITS) and the Council's Film Unit to achieve. The teams have been working on the translation, interpretation and overdubbing of a Bowel Cancer Screening information video into Urdu, Arabic, Somali and Bengali. The finalised videos will shortly become available and will be used to target this prevention programme effectively within Cardiff. We remain committed to providing information in different languages to increase awareness of the screening programme among all communities within the city.

TACKLING POVERTY & SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE

Cost-of-Living Crisis

The Advice Line continues to feel the pressures of the huge demand on advice services. Since April this year, almost 32,000 people have been assisted. The main calls being received by the team relate to Welsh Government support grants such as Winter Fuel Payments, Cost-of-Living Payments, as well as emergency support for those struggling with the cost of living. The team has an average answer time of 9 seconds and an answer rate of 90%. On average, over 81% of queries are resolved at first contact, although the current cost-of-living crisis has also increased the amount of more complex enquiries being received by the team.

The Benefits Assessment Team continues to support those in need with Cost-of-Living Discretionary Scheme payments. Over £250,000 has been paid to date, helping 1,296 people who are struggling with the cost of living. Since its launch in September, over 33,000 applications have been received for the Winter Fuel Scheme, with 24,032 applications approved and paid by the Benefits Team. The demand for this assistance continues, and the Advice Line and Benefits Team continue to work hard to ensure that funds are allocated to those who need it as quickly as possible.

A new section on the Money Advice Team website (www.cardiffmoneyadvice.co.uk), is also being created, which will allow residents to search for various types of Cost-of-Living Support in their area, by list or map view. Initially, this will include information about food banks, food pantries, community fridges and local organisations that can offer support. The page will be easily navigated and promoted via other Council websites. If Members would like any information to be added to the website which they feel would be both relevant and helpful, then please email Advicehub@cardiff.gov.uk

Ukrainian Employment Support

The wraparound Ukrainian Employment Support project continues to help high numbers of Ukrainian guests in accessing employment, volunteering and training opportunities. Since support began in July 2022, the team has assisted 179 people and helped to secure employment for 43 people, with an additional 14 helped with volunteering opportunities. Due to the increase in demand for the service, the Into Work Advice Service has employed one of the Ukrainian guests as an Employment Mentor to assist with translation.

Digital Helpers Scheme

The Digital Helpers Scheme has started and encourages people to attend digital support sessions or training to increase their digital and social skills. It is aimed at those people who do not have access to a suitable device or internet connection at home. The scheme runs on a weekly basis from Hubs where the trainees and officers are able to create a learning plan and assist people in working towards an end goal of their choosing. Once they are engaging regularly (after they have attended at least three sessions), a tablet and necessary data is gifted to them. There has been excellent feedback from customers in Radyr regarding the scheme and it is great to hear excellent feedback about the work that the Digital Support Team is doing in the community.

Employment & Cost-of-Living Events

The Into Work Advice Service's Employer Liaison Team has been busy organising employment events across the city; a Retail & Hospitality Jobs Fair was held at Central Library Hub, which saw 93 people attend. Over half of the attendees applied for job opportunities on the day. A Cost-of-Living and Wellbeing event was also held at the beginning of November, which showcased the support available through the Into Work Advice Service, and Money Advice and Housing Support Teams. Help and support was on hand from the Food & Fuel Champions and Energy Advice from National Energy Action. Alongside advice and assistance, attendees were able to take part in reflexology, massage, and 'cooking on a budget' taster sessions.

Supporting Community Groups

The Into Work Advice Service supported United2Change (U2C) with an autumn youth event that was held on 5 November 2022 at Channel View Leisure Centre. The Into Work Advice Service provided funding to U2C to host a motivational speaker and pay for the awards and other event costs. The aim of the event was to engage young people on Bonfire Night with a range of activities organised, such as empowerment workshops, stall holders promoting services and a football tournament. U2C has worked closely with the Into Work Advice Service with the aim of developing an effective pathway for disengaged young people in Butetown, Riverside and Grangetown to access employment, volunteering and training provision available. The event was well attended with over 200 people attending. The Into Work Advice Service was able to engage attendees, promoting service provision available to individuals looking to upskill, re-enter employment or requiring support with cost-of-living costs.

Alongside activities and engagement, U2C hosted a panel which consisted of local Councillors, the South Wales Police & Crime Commissioner and third sector/voluntary organisations. Panel members were encouraged to raise awareness of local provision and support available. Promotion was varied and focussed on current topics such as the cost of living, mental health and employment opportunities within the police service with the aim of diversifying the workforce.

Cardiff City Football Club Foundation

On 28 October, I visited Cardiff West Community High School to see first-hand the Cardiff City Football Club Foundation's Inspire programme in action. The Inspire programme is a secondary education and training programme that supports children and young people to achieve their full potential as they move through the education system and early adulthood.

Cardiff Influencers Programme 2022

As part of the Power to the People: Cardiff Influencers Programme 2022, 18 students from schools across Cardiff spent a day on site as the new Fitzalan High School is being built. They attended interactive sessions discussing the fundamentals of construction, innovation in the industry and the future of the education system.

The Cardiff Influencers Programme is designed to enable young people to become directly involved in shaping strategy and influence how Cardiff Council will invest millions of pounds in education across the city over the next 10 years. It also aligns with the city's Child Friendly Cardiff Strategy, ensuring that every child and young person has their voice, needs and priorities heard.

Cardiff Youth Service

The Post-16 Team recently attended the Ajuda Mental Health & Wellbeing Awards 2022 as finalists in the 'Outstanding Impact in Education' Category for their Breaking Barriers Course. Breaking Barriers was initially put together due to the rising figures of young people struggling with social isolation and anxiety, only made worse by the impact of Covid-19. The project provided opportunities for young people aged 16-25 to engage in practical activities and wellbeing sessions that encouraged engagement and participation within a group. It also provided techniques to help improve self-confidence and interaction with other young people and gave the young people tools to deal with difficulties they are experiencing and prepare them to move on to other opportunities.

As a reminder the Cardiff Youth Service has been shortlisted for the *Digital Innovation Award* at the Youth Work Excellence Awards 2022. They were shortlisted because of innovation in co-producing an online community for young people aged 13-17, which offers youth worker support, allows young people to meet new people and engage in activities. Special recognition for this shortlist goes to Youth Worker Sarah McCreadie, who has worked on this project to offer a safe and inclusive online community for young people. The winners will be announced at the Youth Work Excellence Awards Ceremony, which will take place in Swansea on 1 December 2022.

Councillors Julie Sangani & Peter Bradbury
Cabinet Members for Tackling Poverty, Equality & Public Health (Job Share)
18 November 2022