

POLICY REVIEW AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

14 DECEMBER 2022

Present: Councillor Williams(Chairperson)
Councillors Ash-Edwards, Chowdhury, Ferguson-Thorne,
Henshaw, Hunt, Stubbs and Thomson

35 : APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies had been received from Cllr Waldron.

36 : DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Joel Williams declared a personal interest in his capacity with Diverse Cymru.

37 : MINUTES

The minutes of 18 October 2022 and 15 November 2022 were agreed as a correct and signed by the Chairperson subject to the inclusion in the attendance of Cllrs Ash-Edwards and Waldron for the meeting on the 18/10/22 and the inclusion of Cllr Waldron's apologies for the meeting on the 15/11/22.

38 : RACE EQUALITY TASKFORCE: RESPONSE

Members were advised that this was an opportunity to consider the Council's response to the recommendations of Cardiff's Race Equality Taskforce (RET) report as published in March 2022. The report sets out the progress made and proposed actions of the new Cabinet since the original report was published, outlining the Council's response to each of the Taskforce recommendations.

The Chairperson welcomed Councillor Huw Thomas, Leader of Cardiff Council, Sarah McGill, Corporate Director People & Communities, Gareth Newell, Head of Performance & Partnerships, Cardiff Council, and Charlotte Amoss, Senior Policy Officer to the meeting.

The Leader was invited to make a short statement after which Officers provided a presentation to Committee.

The Chairperson invited questions and comments from Members.

Members discussed whether frontline staff were confident they had been trained accordingly in Race Equality issues and whether there was bespoke training available for staff with no access to a PC. Members noted that there was a need to refresh the Council's equalities training to include elements on unconscious bias and micro-aggressions. Members were pleased to hear that the BAME staff network will help to inform bespoke training for frontline staff.

Members discussed what training was mandatory and were reassured that this would be reviewed to determine what elements of equalities training should be made

mandatory in future. Members were also reassured that the training offered to staff would be in a hybrid format.

Members also highlighted a need for a bystander element to the training, assisting staff and members in how to handle incidents of racial discrimination viewed first hand. Members offered a note of caution that the quality of providers of anti-racism training needs to be well researched.

Discussing the reporting of issues, Members sought assurance that staff were clear on the Council's zero policy and reporting processes. Officers considered that the current arrangements for reporting discriminatory incidents are robust, and there are also Human Resources policies.

Officers stated that it is important to ensure such incidents are reported and that mandatory training should address this. Officers stated that they anticipate an increase in referrals following training.

Members asked about the progress made in encouraging BAME operational managers, through promotion and recruitment etc. Officers noted it was a recommendation from Committee in March 2022 and this was being addressed in the medium-long term career development opportunities for ethnic minority staff.

Members were pleased to hear that Officers are committed to taking a proposal to the Senior Managers Forum and the Cardiff Managers Forum; and will continue to work with the BAME staff network; and subsequently plan to follow up the proposal with a communications campaign.

Members asked for more information on the recording and monitoring arrangements for discriminatory issues, both by staff and residents. Officer advised that arrangements for recording and monitoring incidents witnessed by staff are not comprehensive at the moment and there was more work to do in this area, however the Police and the Community Safety Partnership have such recording arrangements in place. Members asked where, for example, would a Councillor report a hate crime? Officers considered this would depend on where the complaint originates from. Officers also stressed the importance of analysing the intelligence gathered through such recording mechanisms.

Members sought assurances that the Council's clear policies and measures for recording incidents are also extended to those companies that have tendered contracts with the council. Officers assured Members that the Council are very clear about the expectations of those who are working with us, including social values. These areas are included in the planning and commissioning powers and there are regular conversations around this commitment.

Members expressed concern about the low numbers of BAME teaching staff. The Leader explained this was a national issue however pointed Members to the response 'to support the diversification of the teaching workforce through a teaching assistant 'Step into Teaching Programme' (2.4); and 'increase representation of ethnic minority residents in school leadership through a school Governors entry programme (2.5). The Leader added that it was also important to train Governors and that interview panels should reflect the City's diversity.

Members considered it would be useful to analyse data further by different types of school – English-speaking, Welsh-speaking and special schools, and by geographic area, to understand where there are particular gaps.

A discussion took place around the engagement strategy, lessons learnt from previous consultations, ideas for increasing community engagement in the future. Members noted that there was an ongoing programme of work to improve consultation and engagement with minority communities who often fall into hard-to-reach categories. Members were pleased to hear about the work underway as part of the Participation Strategy to deliver a baseline assessment, collaborating with community groups and learning from partner bodies with existing access routes. Members were assured to hear that response levels from ethnic minority groups in some areas were beginning to mirror communities, and that the Cabinet had already achieved a good level of diversity. Members also noted that Cardiff has signed up to the WLGA Diverse Council Declaration and an action plan is under development to deliver the Diverse Council Commitments.

Members referred to Health and Police partners and discussed the fact that some communities don't have total trust in the Police and that during a mental health crisis, it is usually the Police that they encounter. Members asked about a mechanism for the right people to attend the right incidents. Members were advised that partners recognise this is an issue and that work is underway to offer a *sanctuary* safe space.

Members referred to specific disabilities/illnesses within BAME groups and asked about tailoring provision of services. Members were pleased to note the work being undertaken with Health colleagues to develop accurate data on the vulnerability to specific illnesses amongst ethnic minorities and that a community engagement officer for the Southern Arc of the city will be appointed.

Members asked about issues with access to GP's by people in the BAME communities. The Leader advised that this was something he would pick up with the wider PSB.

Members asked for more information on Cultural Competency training. Officers advised that there would be a roll out of Cultural Competency training by the Criminal Justice Board, supported by the Community Safety Partnership, and that minority communities will assist in developing the training.

Members discussed the experience and legacy of Racism and asked what the Council can do to lead by example and make the Council a good place to work, the City a good place to live in and create and foster a culture of being proud and having conversations about racism. The Leader echoed and agreed with the comments and stated that this was a continuing journey. The establishment of the RET ensures the Council is at the forefront and takes seriously the role of being an exemplar.

AGREED: that the Chairperson, on behalf of the Committee, writes to the Cabinet Member conveying the observations of the Committee when discussing the way forward.

39 : COMMITTEE BUSINESS

The Chairperson drew Members attention to the extensive correspondence sent and received since the first formal meeting as a new committee in July 2022.

Members were asked to note the Forward Work Programme for January – March 2023.

The Chair advised Committee that he had attended the Economy & Culture Scrutiny meeting for the item on St David' Hall. Members discussed and agreed that they should seek a joint scrutiny meeting with Economy and Culture Scrutiny Committee to consider this item further.

40 : URGENT ITEMS (IF ANY)

None received

41 : DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 17 January 2023 at 4.30pm

The meeting terminated at 6.15 pm