

Appendix B

Following a meeting with the executive to discuss the draft report, requests for amendments were received for accuracy reasons. The amendments requested are in red text.

CASSC Members will need to consider if they wish to accept the following amendment requests:

The advice service teams are all based in Cardiff Central Library Hub and operate an outreach service visiting identified hubs **and community locations** across Cardiff on a rota basis. Resource constraints do not allow advice services to have a constant presence in all parts of the city. Presence of the team is determined by need and where it is known the demographic may have a higher risk of poverty and low-income.

KF2

Senior Managers who engaged with the inquiry identified the following as the key challenges the services currently face:

- Raising awareness of the Councils support to tenants in the private rented sector.
- Uncertainty over what will happen once government led initiatives end. With significant concern this will lead to surge of demand with little support available for the teams to offer.
- Sustainability of resource – many of the advice services are grant funded resulting in the staff delivering services being on temporary, annual based contracts; this lack of employment security provides a high level of anxiety and worry for staff members.
- More resource and funding is required to allow services to be provided in more parts of the city. **Due to the council budget deficit, external funding is required, and the service area has a dedicated bid writer who supports with this.**

KF6

The typical answer rate for the Advice Line is 9 seconds. At busy times in Cardiff Central Library Hub, residents can be waiting 2-3hours to see an advisor **for specialist advice**.

Reasoning for the lengthy wait time was attributed to the length of time it takes to provide cost-of-living related support (average 1hour).

KF11

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It is requested point 24 of the report (page 26) also be amended to advise the 2-3hour wait is aligned to specialist advice:

24. When Inquiry Members were informed that at busy times in Central Library Hub, residents could be waiting 2-3 hours to be seen **for specialist advice**. Staff confirmed Central Hub does operate on a ticketing system which does provide an estimated wait time. Further, the hub has also trialled an 'appointment based' system but found individuals were not returning for help or showing up at their allocated time.

Mortgage and Debt Officers (page 21 of Report)

These officers have recently been aligned with the Advice Services, moving from the Housing Options Centre. Mortgage and Debt Officers provide support to those in mortgage arrears. In 2021/2022 the team assisted 131 clients with mortgage or debt arrears with a 94% success rate.

Warm Welcome Spaces (page 21/22 of Report)

Autumn 2022, saw 'Warm & Welcome spaces' launched across Cardiff's hubs and libraries and at Llanover Hall. Providing residents with a dedicated space that offers free tea and coffee, library provision, Wi-Fi, public PC use, and tablet hire. In October 2022, it was reported 750 Cardiff residents had made use of the spaces. When Inquiry Members questioned the limitations of this service due to hub opening times, they were informed demand for the provision would be monitored to inform consideration of providing this space out of hours, whilst considering the current economic and fiscal challenges.

To further support the Warm Welcome Spaces initiative, Cardiff Council and Cardiff Third Sector Council have partnered to deliver a 'Loneliness and Isolation' fund which provides successful applicants a grant of up to £1,500 towards setting up a warm and welcome space in their community buildings.

Alongside this, a Welsh Government 'Warm Spaces' fund was also made available, offering £500 to local groups to provide their own welcome spaces. The Council was involved in managing applications for this fund with applications for the grant open for three weeks.

During the Inquiry, Members were informed the reason for the short time frame (**within round 1, of a two round process**) for applications to be submitted was due to limitations set by the Welsh Government. It was acknowledged this in turn may have resulted in difficulties for organisation being able to apply.

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Below is from page 31 of the Report:

56. During the Inquiry, Members were informed the Money Advice Team have an 'advice contract' with Citizens Advice which has been in place since 2016, with the two services working together and co-locating in Central Library Hub and several out-of-town hubs on a timetable basis¹.

Below is from page 32 of the Report:

59. During the Inquiry, Members engaged with the local food bank, who confirmed they hold a strong working relationship with the council and the two organisations work together to:
- Provide cost of living leaflets detailing the council's advice services with each food parcel.
 - Money advice officers attending 9 Cardiff Foodbanks a week providing help and support to those accessing food parcels.
 - Money advice team provide training to foodbank volunteers to ensure their knowledge is current and able to give accurate information and signposting effectively.
 - The council's Meals on Wheels teams are also helping with distributing food parcels **when the hubs are closed for seasonal holidays such as Christmas and Easter.**
 - The Advice Service have also supported the foodbank with essential item purchases via the Household Support Fund.

¹ For information purpose the funding provided under this contract is just for Central Librabry Hub, not outreach services.