

**COUNCIL: 26 JANUARY 2023**

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## **LEADER STATEMENT**

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### **Levelling Up Fund**

The Council received confirmation this week that the UK Government has awarded £50m from its Levelling Up Fund to support the first phase of Cardiff Crossrail, which will provide a new rapid transport link between Cardiff Central station and Cardiff Bay. The Welsh Government will also provide a further £50m in match funding for the project. This vital transport link, which will provide a regular tram service between new platforms at Cardiff Central and Cardiff Bay train stations, will support the future development of Callaghan Square, Bute Street, Lloyd George Avenue and delivery of the Atlantic Wharf masterplan, including the new Arena development. The investment will also act as a catalyst for the wider Cardiff Crossrail scheme, which aims ultimately to link the north-west of the city with the proposed Cardiff Parkway station in St Mellons, unlocking opportunities to provide a number of new stations in the east of the city. We look forward to working with the UK and Welsh Governments to deliver the scheme at pace.

### **Defence Employer Recognition Scheme Gold Award**

I was pleased to receive, on behalf of the Council, the prestigious Defence Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS) Gold Award at an event that was held on 1 December 2022. This is the highest badge of honour available for organisations that employ and support serving members of the Armed Forces, veterans and their families, and align their values with the Armed Forces Covenant. In order to achieve the ERS Gold Award, organisations must meet an extensive list of achievements, such as signing the Armed Forces Covenant, proactively demonstrating their Armed Forces-friendly credentials and helping leavers of the Armed Forces to transition into employment. The Council is a proud signatory of the Armed Forces Covenant and is committed to supporting veterans, reservists and the whole Armed Forces community in Cardiff and within our organisation. As part of our efforts to achieve the ERS Gold Award, the Council's Veterans Advice Team has helped to identify staff who are from an Armed Forces background, and have worked with colleagues from HR People Services to implement supportive HR policies, such as special leave for Reservists.

### **Cardiff Public Services Board**

The Cardiff Public Services Board (PSB) met on 30 November 2022 and will meet again next month on 15 February 2023. The 12-week consultation on the Draft Cardiff Local Well-being Plan 2023-28, which sets out the PSB's priorities for partnership actions over the next five years, is due to close on Friday 20 January 2023. The next PSB meeting will provide the opportunity for partners to discuss the responses received as part of the consultation process and to consider any amendments that need to be made to the draft plan prior to formal sign off by partners by May 2023.

As Chair of the Cardiff PSB, I also want to pay tribute to the contribution made by the outgoing Future Generations Commissioner for Wales, Sophie Howe, who steps down from the role next month. The PSB has worked closely with the Commissioner and her office during the last seven years to develop the city's Well-being Plans and we look forward to continuing a constructive relationship with the new Commissioner, Derek Walker, in the future.

### **Holocaust Memorial Day Wales Online Commemoration 2023**

Cardiff Council has worked once again in partnership with the Welsh Government to develop an online commemoration of Holocaust Memorial Day in Wales. This year's commemoration is conducted by The Reverend Canon Stewart Lisk, Honorary Chaplain to Cardiff Council, and hosted by the First Minister and myself. The film will be available to view from 11am on Thursday 27 January 2023 on the Council's YouTube channel at: <https://www.youtube.com/user/cardiffcouncil>

**Councillor Huw Thomas**  
**Leader of the Council**  
**20 January 2023**