

**COUNCIL: 26 JANUARY 2023**

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## **FINANCE, MODERNISATION & PERFORMANCE STATEMENT**

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### **Budget Consultation 2023/24 & Provisional Settlement**

Members will be aware that the Welsh Government announced the Local Government Provisional Settlement on 14 December 2022. I am pleased to report that the settlement was higher than the indicative figure local authorities had been given prior to that and, rather than the assumed 3.5% increase in our funding from Welsh Government, Cardiff received a 9% increase.

Despite this, we still face a 'budget gap' – a shortfall in our real terms funding – of £23.5 million. This is because, despite the settlement exceeding the indicative figure we were given last Spring, rising prices and demand pressures for council services mean that we need an additional £75 million for 2023/24. Inflationary pressures this year have been exceptional.

At the Cabinet meeting on 22 December 2022, we agreed to launch our [budget consultation 2023/24](#), which runs until 12pm on Sunday 29 January 2023 and highlights a number of potential savings that are being considered to help the Council to set a balanced budget in March this year. I know many members have already shared and promoted the consultation in their communities and on social media, and I would encourage all members to do so in the final days before the consultation closes to ensure that we hear from as many residents as possible in all parts of the city.

### **Local Broadband Fund**

The Council has recently been successful in securing a £7.7 million grant from the Welsh Government to provide works to support improved broadband connectivity for premises in the city that are currently poorly served. I would like to thank those council officers responsible for submitting the bid and preparing plans to implement it, as well as members of the Economy and Culture Scrutiny Committee who scrutinised this item at their December 2022 meeting. The recommendations of the report, entitled '[Local Broadband Fund – Improving Connectivity to Poorly Served Premises](#)', were approved by Cabinet on 15 December 2022 and authorised the procurement of these works.

### **Website**

[www.cardiff.gov.uk](http://www.cardiff.gov.uk) had 183,000 visits last month, with 567,000 pages viewed. In December 2022, 69.6% of website visitors used a mobile device and 21,100 online payments were made via the website totalling £2.7million. 98.7% of recycling centre bookings and 91.3% of graffiti reports were completed online. A record 90.9% of Penalty Charge Notice appeals and 65.3% of Moving Traffic Contravention appeals were also completed online.

## **BOBi Chatbot**

The Council's chatbot, BOBi, had a total of 4,729 conversations last month, with only 309 resulting in a hand-off to agents. Feedback from chatbot users was also positive, with 88% of feedback scores rated as Ok, Good or Very Good, with Very Good being the highest percentage (54%).

**Councillor Chris Weaver**  
**Cabinet Member for Finance, Modernisation & Performance**  
**20 January 2023**