

COUNCIL: 20 JULY 2023

LEADER STATEMENT

Cardiff Cycle City

On 28 June 2023, I attended an event organised by Cardiff Cycle City at the Bike Lock in Windsor Place, where I spoke about the Council's plans to improve cycling facilities in the city and answered lots of questions from the audience on a range of issues, including how we can make cycling safer and more accessible, improve traffic light phasing, provide more bike storage facilities and address bike crime in the city. The Q&A session and opportunity to engage directly with cyclists and representatives of cycling organisations was really useful from my perspective, with the debate being described by the organisers on Twitter as "*lively and encouraging*".

Centre for Cities Conference

I joined the Leaders of Swansea and Newport Councils in participating in a panel discussion at a conference on 29 June 2023 in Cardiff, which was organised by the Centre for Cities. The debate focused on the significance of Cardiff, Newport and Swansea to Welsh and UK prosperity, the challenges and opportunities facing each of our cities, and how we are working with the Welsh and UK Governments to further improve our respective city's performance and contribution to the regional, Welsh and UK economies. The event also included a discussion involving Eamonn Boylan, Chief Executive of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority, about the challenges and opportunities for cities, experiences of devolution and the future for city-regions in England and Wales.

Move More Cardiff Strategy

I was pleased to attend and speak at a celebration event held on 3 July 2023 at the Cardiff City Stadium to mark the first anniversary of the 'Move More Cardiff' Physical Activity and Sport Strategy 2022-27. The event provided an opportunity to share the progress achieved so far, examine related data on physical activity in the city, and explore how partner organisations can all work together towards achieving the vision for Cardiff to be the best city in the UK to be physically active and renowned as one of the most physically active cities internationally, from walking, cycling and activities in daily life to playing and competing in sport. The event also saw the launch of the Active Soles campaign in Cardiff, which aims to get people to wear comfortable shoes at work and embrace a more active lifestyle throughout their daily routines.

Butetown & Grangetown Citizens ‘Brighter Future of Young People’ Action Plan

The Butetown and Grangetown Citizens ‘Brighter Future for Young People’ Action Plan was launched on 6 July 2023 at St Mary’s CIW Primary School in Butetown. The event was organised by Cardiff Citizens and I was pleased to join the Executive Director of the Youth Endowment Fund, Jon Yates, and the South Wales Police & Crime Commissioner, Alun Michael, at the event, which was also attended by my Cabinet colleague, Councillor Sangani, as well as some of the local councillors for Butetown and Grangetown. The Youth Endowment Fund has provided funding to support the development and delivery of the action plan, and the event celebrated the work that has been undertaken to date to develop the action plan, which has been led by community organisations from Butetown and Grangetown, working in collaboration with Cardiff Council, South Wales Police and the Wales Violence Prevention Unit to develop and deliver the action plan.

Tafwyl 2023

This year’s Tafwyl festival is being held in Bute Park on 15-16 July 2023. The annual Welsh language arts & culture festival has relocated this year from Cardiff Castle to Bute Park, and the Council is pleased to have been able to support Menter Caerdydd in their transition to the new venue. The free, two-day festival offers something for everyone, with three music stages showcasing over 40 artists, in addition to a sports area, kids’ village, street food and market stalls. Tafwyl was also listed recently among The Guardian’s [best free festivals in the UK of 2023](#).

Cardiff Bay Rugby Codebreakers Statue

On 19 July 2023, a new statue celebrating three legendary Welsh ‘Rugby Codebreakers’ from Cardiff Bay is due to be officially unveiled at Landsea Square in Mermaid Quay. The new statue has been created by sculptor Steve Winterburn following significant fundraising efforts over the last three years, which have been led by businessman and philanthropist, Sir Stanley Thomas OBE, who chaired the fundraising committee and kick-started the fundraising campaign with his own significant personal donation.

The statue celebrates three Rugby League legends – Billy Boston MBE, Gus Risman and Clive Sullivan MBE – who grew up within a 3-mile radius of the Cardiff Bay area and who were selected following a public vote. It will be the first statue in Wales ever to feature non-fictionalised, named black men and will serve as a fitting tribute to three sportsmen who did so much to improve race relations across Britain. It will also be the first formal recognition of the three sporting heroes in their hometown of Cardiff, which is both long overdue and much deserved.

Cost-of-Living Crisis in Devolved Nations

On 19 July 2023, I am also due to participate in an online panel discussion organised by Centre for Progressive Policy (CPP) and the Inclusive Growth Network (IGN), of which Cardiff Council is a member. The discussion will focus on the cost-of-living crisis from the perspective of the UK's devolved nations. It will provide an opportunity for me to outline the impact of the cost-of-living crisis on Cardiff and what is being done by the Council to try and support local people and communities. The event will also coincide with the publication of new research by the CPP and IGN, which looks at the cost-of-living crisis across the devolved nations.

Councillor Huw Thomas
Leader of the Council
14 July 2023