

My Ref: T: Scrutiny/Correspondence/Cllr NH

Date: 20 January 2022

Councillor Huw Thomas
Leader
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Neuadd y Sir
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Dear Councillor Thomas,

City Centre Recovery Action Plan

Thank you for attending the Economy & Culture Scrutiny Committee on 19 January 2022, along with Andrew Gregory, Michael Barnett, and Jon Day, to discuss the report to Cabinet regarding the proposed City Centre Recovery Action Plan. This letter captures the comments and observations from Members, as discussed during our way forward.

Overall, Members support the recommendation to Cabinet to approve the Action Plan. Members support the nine key themes, which reflect the findings from consultation with stakeholders. Members agree that implementation of the Action Plan is key. Members note that there are over 100 actions in the Plan. At the meeting, Members sought assurance that these were deliverable. Members note the response that a substantial percentage of these actions are already being delivered or have business cases being prepared and costed. Members note the points made by Andrew Gregory that proposals will only be implemented if there is a robust business case, with agreed costings, and that the aim of the Action Plan is to give focus and to pull work into a single programme, thus giving clear sight of actions underway and proposed.

However, Members remain concerned that some of the actions, particularly the larger transport scheme actions, relate to schemes that have been talked about for years with little sign of progress to date. Work with partners will be essential to deliver these schemes and Members note that work via the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal

has assisted discussions with the Department of Transport and Network Rail regarding Cardiff Central Train Station.

Members also discussed the need for other partners, such as the Police, to be involved in the delivery of the Action Plan and are pleased to note your assurance that the Police have given commitments.

Members are particularly concerned to ensure that this Action Plan supports delivery of the Physical Activity and Sport Strategy 2022-2027, which we also considered at this meeting. Members questioned whether planned developments from Central Quay through to Dumballs Road redevelopment included sufficient open and green space, particularly alongside the riverfront, to enable increased levels of physical activity and sport. Members note your response and Andrew Gregory's response that these developments incorporate new open and green public spaces, new bridges, and a continuous riverside park to join these developments and spaces together.

Members raised the specific issue of decluttering streets and note Andrew Gregory's response that the Equalities Group is involved in assessing the plan to declutter St Mary Street and Queen Street. In the response to this letter, Members request clarification as to which Equalities Group this is and whether the RNIB is represented on this group.

Finally, Members sought to understand how the Council would know if some of the aims of the Action Plan had been achieved, for example that the city centre becomes more child-friendly and wondered whether footfall data would assist with this. Members note Jon Day's response that current footfall data does not supply this level of detail but that other sources, such as Google Analytics, may. In the response to this letter, Members seek clarification on these possible data sources.

Requests following this scrutiny:

This letter contains two requests, as follows:

1. In the response to this letter, please clarify which Equalities Group is assessing the plan to declutter St Mary Street and Queen Street and whether the RNIB is represented on this group.
2. In the response to this letter, please clarify which possible data sources could be used to evidence changes in footfall that would demonstrate the action plan

is achieving its aims, for example that the city centre is becoming more child friendly.

Thank you again to all for attending committee. I am sure a future committee will wish to scrutinise progress in implementation and outcomes. We wish you well in delivering the Action Plan, which should assist Cardiff to move from having a good city centre to having a great city centre, to the benefit of all.

Yours sincerely,



COUNCILLOR NIGEL HOWELLS
CHAIR, ECONOMY & CULTURE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

cc Members of the Economy & Culture Scrutiny Committee
Cllr Goodway – Cabinet Member, Investment & Development
Cllr Wild – Cabinet Member, Strategic Planning & Transport
Cllr Robson – Group Leader
Cllr Taylor – Group Leader
Cllr K Parry – Group Leader
David Hugh Thomas – Chair, Governance & Audit Committee
Andrew Gregory Michael Barnett Jon Day
Neil Hanratty Clair James Imelda Seymour
Cabinet Support Office
Chris Pyke Tim Gordon Jeremy Rhys