

My Ref: T: Scrutiny/PRAP/Comm Papers/Correspondence

Date: 18 January 2016

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Dear Councillor Bale,

**Policy Review & Performance Scrutiny Committee: 12 January 2016
Cardiff Partnership Board, What Matters Review 2015.**

The Policy Review & Performance Scrutiny Committee has asked that as Chair I thank you, and representatives of the Cardiff Partnership Board (CPB), for your recent attendance at Committee for consideration of the What Matters Review 2015. Members have asked me to advise you of their comments and observations for the Board's consideration at its forthcoming meeting.

Following this timely scrutiny against the national policy context for partnership working, the Committee recognises the benefits of the CPB as a platform for addressing big issues within the City, such as inequality and the challenge of changing behaviours. Members accept your assurance that external regulators recognise the quality of the Council's partnership work; however note that partners consider there is way to go on the journey. The Committee feels some of the responses were a little defensive and lacked a clarity that would enable it to take an assured view on the achievements of the Board to date.

The Committee acknowledges What Matters is the overarching strategic plan from which priorities within the Council's Corporate Plan, Cardiff Liveable City document, and Directorate Delivery Plans flow. However it feels scrutiny of the Action Plan that breathes life into What Matters will facilitate a more satisfying scrutiny of the Board's activities, and will therefore programme scrutiny in line with your indication that the Plan will be produced by April 2016.

Members are looking for evidence of outcomes that are a direct result of the CPB's existence. We therefore note the significant achievement that the Board has secured a common, consistent connection between the Corporate Plans of all partners, without which work could not begin. Members recognise that the first five years have delivered secure partner relationships that will be key to resolving disagreements that might arise amongst partners as they tackle the difficult issues.

Clearly those relationships have resulted in a preparedness to share data. However Members have no mechanism for measuring whether those outcomes are what was expected, and were disappointed that the presentation lacked a focus on achievements to date, and evidence of how the Board measures its own achievements.

Specifically the Committee is requesting greater clarity of what the CPB is currently working on, and feels What Matters 2015 would benefit from a higher profile of the outcomes for citizens resulting from the work of the Board. Members look forward to greater detail of what the CPB will be addressing over the next 5 years.

The Committee values the improvement in understanding, the development of neighbourhood profiles, and the benefit of an overarching needs assessment, made possible by partners sharing data. They note that both the Social Services and Well-being Act 2014, and the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015, require needs assessments. Members wish to endorse the Board's representation to Welsh Government to ensure needs assessments, and other data set developments, are shared to avoid duplication of effort, and one set of outcomes produced.

The Committee was pleased to hear that the Chief Executive considers there are conversations to have around how the Council resources its statutory partnership and scrutiny responsibilities, introduced by the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015. We acknowledge that partners bring different skills and approaches to delivering partnership work and note that our health partner has tried to embed rather than isolate partnership roles making it difficult to quantify and compare contributions. We also note that Welsh Government has recently removed some funding for partnership work. Taking all this into consideration there is clearly a cost to supporting the work of the CPB, on which we would like more clarification than you were able to provide at the meeting. You suggested the Council provides a small

core secretariat to the Board, which consists of a proportion of the Operational Manager's role, and one and a half neighbourhood support officers. We would be grateful if you would provide us with more detail, and costings.

Members are pleased to hear that through the Cardiff Third Sector Council partner the Board is engaging effectively with eight hundred organisations, but wish to stress the importance of engaging with the most vulnerable through networks and social media when relaunching What Matters. We would therefore be grateful to have sight of the Board's consultation/stakeholder plan.

The Committee feels it is important that the commitment the Council and its partners apply to the CPB has an impact on the end service user experience. We are pleased the Board considers services are now better designed around individuals, and note the examples that health clusters around neighbourhoods are based on critical information derived from the needs assessment; the redesign of frontline service specifications around child mental health using intelligence shared by other partners; and the improved neighbourhood involvement with Members and hard to reach groups. We therefore concur with partners that there is scope for further improvement in service integration.

Whilst the Committee is unconvinced that it is clear to the ordinary citizen which partner is responsible for which service, Members are interested that in no other part of Wales are all key service partners brought together to focus on such small neighbourhood areas. We acknowledge that the police service considers the neighbourhood structure enables them to be more responsive in dealing with issues such as the night time economy.

The Committee is keen to ensure greater collective transparency and accountability around the decision-making processes that involve all partners, for the benefit of the citizen. Whilst you assure Members that there are currently arrangements in place for the CPB to scrutinise its own operations, and to provide quarterly and annual reports to Welsh Government, with the temporary decommissioning of the LSB Scrutiny Panel we consider there is a need for Cabinet, CPB, and Scrutiny to consider how best to meet the requirements of forthcoming legislation.

The Committee agrees that successful partnership working means partners must be held collectively to account and cannot use strategic level decision making to pass responsibility onto one partner. Partnership rather than individual accountability must be retained. Members feel it is important that the level of scrutiny of partnership work is proportionate to the responsibility vested in the CPB. Therefore as you indicated you are open to suggestions as to how the Board can improve its accountability arrangements we will seek to clarify arrangements in discussion with all scrutiny committee chairs, yourself and the Board.

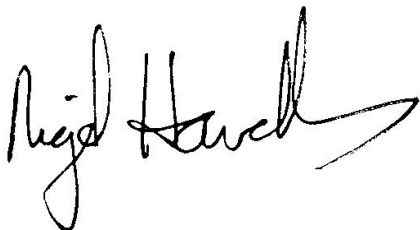
The Committee will encourage all scrutiny committees to undertake deep dives relevant to their Terms of Reference into the What Matters work streams and wish to commission desk based secondary research that enables it to take an informed overview of how best to firm up governance arrangements going forward.

To recap, the Committee:

- Will programme scrutiny of the What Matters Action Plan in line with your indication that the Plan will be produced by April 2016;
- Would be grateful for a briefing on what the CPB will be addressing over the next 5 years in advance of scrutinising the Action Plan;
- Would be grateful if you would provide us with more detail, and costs to the Council of supporting the work of the CPB;
- Would be grateful to have sight of the Board's consultation/stakeholder plan.
- Will seek to clarify future governance arrangements in discussion with all scrutiny committee chairs, Cabinet and the CPB.

Once again many thanks for your engagement with the Committee on this matter. As the Council's Committee with designated responsibility for overarching scrutiny of the Board I look forward to welcoming you on a regular basis in the future. The Committee would be grateful for a formal response to this letter.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nigel Howells', with a stylized flourish at the end.

COUNCILLOR NIGEL HOWELLS
CHAIR, POLICY REVIEW AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

cc

Members of the Policy Review & Performance Scrutiny Committee;
Paul Orders, Chief Executive;
Sarah McGill, Director Communities, Housing & Customer Services;
Rachel Jones, Policy, Partnerships and Citizen Focus Manager for Cardiff;
Sharon Hopkins, Executive Director of Public Health, Cardiff & Vale UHB;
Sheila Hendrickson Brown, Chief Officer, Cardiff Third Sector Council;
Superintendent Steve Jones, South Wales Police;
Gareth Newell, Head of the Cabinet Office;
Joanne Watkins, Cabinet Business Manager.