

Well-being Objective 2.1:

A capital city that works for Wales

A successful Wales needs a successful capital city. Recent data shows that Cardiff's economy is growing faster than all other UK competitor cities. However, whilst Cardiff has the building blocks for a competitive economy – including a skilled workforce, a strong higher education base and real sectoral strengths in areas including the creative industries and financial technology – productivity still lags behind a number of the UK's leading cities. The challenge over the years ahead is to ensure that Cardiff's economy becomes more productive, providing better jobs for the people of the city and the city-region.

Key Successes in 2018/19

- A new Economic Vision for Cardiff was developed, consulted upon and approved by Council in March 2019.
- The regeneration of Central Square has continued with No 2 Central Square complete and now occupied by Cardiff University's School of Journalism, Media & Culture and Hugh James Solicitors. The BBC Wales building has been handed over to the BBC for fit-out and the new 350,000 sq. ft. Government Hub office building is nearing completion. £40m has also been secured from the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal to re-develop Cardiff Central Train Station to maximise the impact of the new Metro investment. Discussions are also ongoing with the UK Government to secure an additional contribution.
- Planning approval has also been awarded for the first major element of the Central Quay development, providing 1.1 million sq. ft. of Grade A office space, student accommodation as well as residential and retail space south of the Central Station.
- Major inward investment continues to be attracted into the city with financial companies such as Monzo Bank and Allium Lending Group committing to office space in Cardiff. The Council has also helped create 1,166 jobs and safeguarded 904 jobs in 2018/19. In total an additional 28,000 people were working in Cardiff in 2018 compared with the previous year.
- A property deal for Cardiff's bus station has been agreed between the Council, Rightacres Property Ltd and Welsh Government, allowing development to move forward without having to wait for a tenant to be secured. A new planning application was approved by Planning Committee in November 2018. Preliminary site works have been completed with construction due to commence in the summer.
- £2.5m of Town Loan Funding has been secured for the regeneration of two of Cardiff's Grade II listed buildings; Cardiff Bay Train Station and Cory Buildings, Bute Street.
- A comprehensive assessment of the music ecology was completed with key stakeholders – including musicians, promoters and venues – as part of work to support the music industry and wider creative sector, with a new Music Strategy prepared and launched in April 2019.
- Cardiff successfully staged the Volvo Ocean Race, where over 180,000 people across two weeks visited the race village that hosted the stop-over for competitors following the transatlantic leg. Cardiff also hosted the first ever 'urban' Eisteddfod in the summer of 2018, attracting half a million visitors to the Cardiff Bay maes over the summer. At our venues, we saw over 300,000 paid visitors to Cardiff Castle, whilst the Cardiff Story Museum was awarded a Gold Award by Visit Wales. Overall the city's destinations and venues all contributed to a growing visitor economy that saw over 22 million visitors over the course of the year.
- The Council secured 177 business pledges to the Cardiff Commitment to link our city's enterprise sector with schools (see Well-being Objective 1.1).



Key Challenges and Risks

Brexit

- Brexit uncertainty continues to affect business planning and investment decisions. Cardiff is also currently positioned in the top five British cities most reliant on EU markets, with 61% of Cardiff exports going to EU countries.

Future of Regional Funding

- Funding from the EU has been the biggest single financial contributor to regional and local economic development in Wales, with per capita funding far exceeding that in Scotland, Northern Ireland or England. Changes to regional funding post-Brexit therefore represent a significant funding risk for Wales. For example, had the current EU funding round been allocated using the Barnett formula, Wales' allocation would reduce from €2.2 billion to €562 million. Even though Cardiff has not benefitted directly from substantial EU funding over recent years, the reform of regional funding and the proposed creation of the Shared Prosperity Fund will be a significant issue for the funding of city-regional infrastructure and skills in the future.

Visitor Market Demand

- The growth in the total number of visitors and the number of staying visitors in 2018 are below the Corporate Plan targets. Whilst this is a national trend experienced by all major UK cities, Cardiff's performance is more robust than comparator cities where market demand has led to a reduction in visitors for a number of cities.

Proposed Regional Working Arrangements:

- Effective city-regional strategy, governance and funding is vital for Cardiff's future development. Emerging proposals for regional collaborative arrangements relating to, amongst others, economic development and land use planning functions therefore need to reflect the unique circumstances of Cardiff as a capital city; its growth, population density and role as employment centre and job creator.

Forward Look: Areas of Future Focus

- The Council will continue to work with Business Wales to support Cardiff businesses to plan and prepare for Brexit, with an immediate need to host a support event in the city centre.
- We will progress the city's Indoor Arena development, to trigger the next phase of Cardiff Bay's development. Building upon this we will also be bringing forward further proposals for the development of the International Sports Village as an adventure tourism destination.
- A masterplan will be prepared for Dumballs Road that will outline a new mixed-use development for the area and a draft strategic masterplan for East Cardiff is also being prepared, identifying key infrastructure needs and opportunities in one of Cardiff's most deprived and disconnected communities.
- Following publication of the Music Strategy, arrangements for a New Music Board for the city will be established in September with responsibility for responding to and progressing the recommendations of the Sound Diplomacy Review. More broadly, a new Major Events approach will be adopted, including the potential for more 'home grown'

major events.

- There is a clear case for a strong cross-border relationship between the Western corridor spanning Swansea to Swindon – including Bristol and the Cardiff Capital Region – to counter-balance the scope and scale of the Northern Powerhouse and the Midlands Engine. The 'Great Western Powerhouse' region's priorities for infrastructure and inward investment support will be developed and submitted to the UK Government in 2019.

Self-Evaluation of Performance: **Satisfactory Progress**