

COUNCIL: 28 MARCH 2024

CULTURE, PARKS & EVENTS STATEMENT

St David's Hall

I want to take this opportunity to update members on progress with St David's Hall and to also pay tribute to the professionalism and commitment demonstrated by the staff at St David's Hall as they worked with the Council to close the current business. Staff have worked tirelessly to ensure that, where possible, shows were relocated and where we were unable to reschedule, patrons received their refunds. This was no small undertaking and I am grateful for the positive attitude that council staff continued to display throughout what was undoubtedly a difficult time for them. I would like to wish them well in all their future endeavours and, once again, thank them for their role in developing St David's Hall into one of the UK's highest ranking classical music venues.

I can confirm that an outline design proposal for a replacement roof at St David's Hall has been developed, with the lease agreement with AMG being signed on 26 February 2024. AMG are now developing a works programme for the refurbishment of the venue on which they will consult with the Council's conservation officer. I will, of course, continue to keep Members abreast of developments whilst we continue to work with AMG towards the reopening of a newly refurbished St David's Hall that will ensure a sustainable future and new opportunities for our residents and visitors to enjoy all that the venue will have to offer.

Cardiff Music City Festival

The Council's Culture and Events Teams are leading on the development of an exciting music signature event that will take place in the city this autumn, titled the 'Cardiff Music City Festival'. I am pleased to confirm the dates of this pilot festival, which is funded and supported by the Council and the Welsh Government's Event Wales Team, will be Friday 27 September to Sunday 20 October 2024.

Cardiff Music City Festival aims to reinvent what a 21st Century city-based music festival could be and help define Cardiff as a culturally progressive international capital city. We aim to attract over 20,000 people to the city later this year for this new festival, which will bring together international and local talent, including household names and emerging talent. Programme announcements will be revealed sequentially over the coming months. The renowned Sŵn Festival and Wales Millennium Centre's international arts festival, Llais (Festival of Voice), are also vital partners of the Cardiff Music City Festival, alongside many other local and international music sector stakeholders. Further information about the festival can be obtained by registering at: <https://cardiffmusiccity.wales/>

Community Safety in Parks in Adamsdown

I'm pleased to report the progress being made with partnership working in response to concerns raised by the local community about anti-social behaviour within parks and green spaces in the Adamsdown ward. Very positive feedback is being received on the impact of the Council's Urban Park Ranger service and other stakeholder council services, which has helped to reduce the burden on policing resources and improve community accessibility to valuable green spaces. As a consequence of information sharing and joint operations/working, South Wales Police has seen a significant drop-off in reports of crime and anti-social behaviour and there has also been a noticeable increase in footfall, including children and families, at Anderson Fields, Brewery Gardens and Cemetery Park. Building on the improvements made to date, community events are being organised by agencies promoting community safety and social cohesion in the city and I know that local ward members have welcomed activity in the local area.

Canal Park Masterplan

In anticipation of Section 106 contributions being secured in the Butetown ward, preparations for the development of a masterplan for the area have commenced. Consultation will assist in ensuring that the Council provides the most appropriate facilities for the local community, and a number of workshop sessions with stakeholder groups, as well as an open forum, with information being available in English, Welsh and Arabic have taken place. As a next step, a draft masterplan will be shared with local ward members and the local community with a view to implementing improvements to Canal Park as part of our 2024/25 and 2025/26 Parks Infrastructure Programmes.

Shelley Gardens Consultation

Consultation is due to take place early next month in the Plasnewydd ward, which aims to seek views and ideas on how improvements to Shelley Gardens can be secured through the use of Section 106 funding. An online platform and a local community forum are key features of the consultation, which seeks to ensure that community input is maximised. Following the consultation, proposals will be shared with local ward members prior to delivery as part of the 2024/25 Parks Infrastructure Programme.

One Mow Regime

Officers are finalising the annual review of mowing regimes across the city and, in doing so, are exploring opportunities for the inclusion of further areas within our well-established one mow regime programme. As Members will be aware, the area of grassland dedicated to one mow has increased year on year and the regime underlines the Council's commitment to promoting and enhancing biodiversity. Officers will be writing to local ward members shortly with proposals for including areas within their wards as part of the programme.

Pentwyn Leisure Centre

Revised plans for Pentwyn Leisure Centre were presented to the local community at two drop-in events on Tuesday 26th and Wednesday 27th of March.

The plans, which have been revised following Cardiff Rugby's decision to withdraw from the centre, include a 25-metre swimming pool, which will have an adaptable moving floor to allow varied water depth to enable a wide range of swimming and 'splash' activities, as well as reducing energy requirements to heat the water. In addition, the current slide, sports hall, and outdoor mini 3G pitch will be retained, and the studio and gym facilities reopened. The changing rooms will also be given a full refurbishment.

The energy infrastructure of the centre will be enhanced via roof-mounted solar panels and an air source heat pump to heat the pool, reducing the operational costs and improving the carbon performance.

These revised plans offer an affordable pathway towards doing what the Council have always remained committed to doing – getting Pentwyn Leisure Centre, including a swimming pool, reopened for the use of the community.

Tennis Wales Investment Programme

Excellent progress is being made following Cabinet approval in June 2023 to develop a partnership project with Tennis Wales in order to secure significant funding from the Lawn Tennis Association and Department for Culture, Media & Sport that can be invested in the improvement of the Council's tennis facilities. Contractors have undertaken works, including resurfacing, replacing posts/nets and installing new gate entry systems, at Llandaff Fields, Hailey Park, Victoria Park, Roath Pleasure Gardens, Heath Park and Rumney Hill Gardens. As soon as weather conditions improve, line marking of the courts will also be undertaken in advance of the re-opening of the refurbished facilities. We have already seen the impact on participation through previous investment in Heath Park and I'm confident this will be replicated through our partnership with Tennis Wales, which will see them managing the sites and a dedicated Tennis Development Coach helping to support and increase participation within the local communities.

Schools Swimming

Following the recent report by Swim Wales about the state of schools swimming in Wales and through a joint venture with Cardiff Metropolitan University and key stakeholders, including pool operators and swim lesson providers such as GLL, Parkwood Leisure, Urdd Gobaith Cymru, Splash and the Council's Education Service, a development plan and swim charter has been created for schools swimming in Cardiff. The aim of the plan/charter is to standardise the cost, quality of offer, access to the nearest facilities for primary schools and quality of swim instructors to ensure that every Year 4 pupil has the opportunity to learn to swim. All stakeholders are committed to the approach and will change and adapt their current models of delivery, with the aim that Cardiff will improve from one of the

poorest performing Local Authorities in Wales to the best performing Local Authority by 2027.

Councillor Jennifer Burke
Cabinet Member for Culture, Parks & Events
22 March 2024