
FINANCE, MODERNISATION & PERFORMANCE STATEMENT

UNISON Cymru Wales Anti-Racism Charter

I was pleased to join the Leader of the Council, the Chief Executive and my Cabinet colleague, Councillor Sangani, at the official signing by the Council on 12 March 2024 of the UNISON Cymru Wales Anti-Racism Charter. Cardiff Council is one of the first Local Authorities in Wales to sign up to UNISON's Anti Racism Charter and my Cabinet colleagues and I are pleased to be working in collaboration with trade union colleagues from UNISON to support this initiative. The signing of the Charter reaffirms the Council's commitment to combatting racial discrimination and promoting inclusivity and diversity in the workplace. As a major employer, the Council has established equal opportunities and race equality policies in place, undertakes equality impact assessments, provides equality training, and works to address racial disparities in recruitment and promotion in employment. By signing the Charter, the Council as an organisation has pledged to introduce a number of ongoing commitments within the next 12 months, including having a clear and visible anti-racism programme of initiatives and actions, and providing a racism reporting process for notifying, investigating and recording outcomes.

Modern Slavery Statement 2024/25

The Council has recently published its sixth annual Modern Slavery Statement (Tackling Exploitation and Supply Chain Transparency) for 2024/25 and continues to make good progress in tackling exploitation throughout our supply chains. The Council has also been highly commended throughout the UK for its work on Modern Slavery, with other Local Authorities being signposted to us as an example of best practice.

In 2023, the National Crime Agency recorded 559 potential victims of trafficking in Wales, an increase from 536 in 2022. Of these, 53 referrals (9.5%) were made by Cardiff Council. Maintaining the number of referrals of potential victims of trafficking into the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) has been achieved in Cardiff due to the increased awareness training that has been provided to practitioners.

The number of Council staff who have completed the Modern Slavery online training module has increased to 4,860, which is up from 4,069 last year. This is in addition to the 84% completion rate for our Corporate Safeguarding training.

Through the Ardal collaboration, Cardiff Council has supported Monmouthshire County Council and Torfaen County Borough Council in formulating their first Modern Slavery Statements. The Council also provides support to Category Managers within the procurement process on the risk assessment and due diligence elements of contract management with a view to identifying 'red flags' and high-risk sectors.

Current risk is associated with recruitment in adult social care and the solar/PV industry, which we are actively assessing. An Ardal briefing paper on the Risk of Exploitation in Adult Social Care is due to be published next month.

The Council is working with suppliers to help them achieve commitments made through social value relating to Modern Slavery and will seek to pilot a self-assessment questionnaire to identify risks of exploitation within supply chains. We have also started on-site awareness raising sessions for some of our major suppliers, including ISG at the new Fairwater Campus development.

In addition, the Council is currently exploring the links between Modern Slavery and climate change as a result of the need to transition to a low carbon economy, and we are monitoring the development of the use of AI to improve the accuracy and efficiency in the identification of risk, as well as supply chain transparency and traceability.

CardiffGov Mobile App

At the end of last month, the CardiffGov mobile app reached a total of 91,633 downloads since its launch. There was also an increase of 1,927 downloads in February 2024 compared to the previous month.

The number of people accessing the CardiffGov mobile app is split by the type of device they use (iOS or Android). There were 1,058 downloads to iOS devices in February. The app was opened 19,569 times by iOS devices last month, which was a 2.8% increase in comparison with the previous month. 869 new Android users downloaded the app to their device in February. There were also 12,291 active Android users last month, which was a 2.3% decrease from the previous month.

The App Team's work has been focused mainly on changes within waste & recycling services, including the rollout of the second phase of the segregated recycling scheme. The team has also been provided with information by the Parks Service, which will support the development of requirements for the reporting of fallen trees to be made via the app in the future.

Chatbot (BOBi)

A total of 7,293 conversations took place last month using our chatbot, BOBi, which represented an increase on the average number of 5,000+ conversations per month. Users engaged mostly with waste options, Council Tax and housing scenarios, and interacted the most about waste bins & bags, Council Tax, and benefits information. Of the 542 people that provided feedback following use of the chatbot, 79% of the feedback scores were rated as Ok, Good or Very Good, with Very Good making up the highest proportion of these scores (39%).

Website

Key statistics from February 2024 in relation to the Council's website:

- 251,000 people visited www.cardiff.gov.uk and viewed 534,000 pages, with 77% of visitors using a mobile device to access the website.
- 28,800 online payments were received totalling £2.9million.

- 201,000 residents checked their waste collections online, which was a decrease compared to January 2024.
- 99.9% (15,800) of recycling centre bookings and 94.5% (6,400) of bulky item collection bookings were made online.
- 13,300 A-Z of Recycling and Waste lookups were made, with 'Tetra Pak cartons' being most searched for topic. Household recycling collections as part of the new segregated recycling scheme will accept this item, whereas they should not be included within co-mingled recycling in green bags. The A-Z has been updated to help residents find out how to recycle this item whichever scheme they are on.
- 93.6% of problem parking reports (1,100) were made online, along with 87.1% of street lighting reports (108).
- 7,400 online forms were submitted, with Housing Repairs being the most used online form on the website.
- Customers accessed their Council Tax account 20,900 times via the website and CardiffGov mobile app.

Cardiff.gov.uk scored 98% in the February 2024 audit by SOCITM's accessibility partner, Silktide. This puts www.cardiff.gov.uk in 3rd place among local authorities in Wales and 22nd in the UK among over 375 websites that were reviewed.

Councillor Chris Weaver
Cabinet Member for Finance, Modernisation & Performance
22 March 2024