

Date: 27 October 2022

Councillor Huw Thomas,
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Dear Huw,

Policy Review & Performance Scrutiny Committee: 18 October 2022

The Policy Review and Performance Scrutiny Committee welcomed the opportunity to consider the Cardiff Public Services Board (PSB) Annual Report 2021/22 and to engage with the draft Well-being Plan 2023/28. As Chair, Members have asked that I thank you for attending, and also that you pass on our appreciation to Charles Janczewski (UHB), Alun Michael (PCC), Paul Orders and Gareth Newell, for their comprehensive presentation of progress and responses to our questions and comments. We offer the following observations and recommendations for the Boards consideration and response.

Building a culture of trust

The Committee was reassured to hear all partners speak in positive terms of the strength, benefits and effectiveness of the PSB, particularly as a vehicle to facilitate understanding, and to powerfully convene public sector organisations to practically solve system issues. We noted the Cardiff PSB culture means new members of the partnership feel welcomed, and Members consider that significant trust has developed between PSB partners. This was in clear evidence during the scrutiny and should result in positive contributions from all partners going forward.

Interface with Welsh Government and Future Generations Commissioner

All Members welcomed partnership working as the way ahead. We were assured that the interface between the PSB, Welsh Government and the Future Generations Commissioner (FGC) is considered appropriate. This is strengthened by positive access to Ministers on key issues, enjoyed by all partners, in addition to the PSB

channels of communication. Partners consider access to government ministers is notably better than in other areas of the UK, commenting that frank conversations with officials across Welsh Government have been a positive development of PSB pandemic working. We note that the unified presentation of challenges the partnership faces has led to a new phase of maturity in the development of relations between PSB's and Welsh Government. We therefore recommend that the culture and successes of all PSB's across Wales are celebrated by Welsh Government and the FGC, and where good practice is in clear evidence it is shared.

Public profile of the PSB

The Committee explored public understanding of the PSB, we feel the Board does not currently have a public profile. We note that the PCC considers improvement within communities is the most important, rather than a high profile for the PSB itself. The PCC reflected that, at its best, the PSB should be invisible, as its work is evident in communities despite the public being unaware of work behind the scenes to secure improvement. However, Members consider the PSB needs to celebrate its collaborative successes more visibly, particularly where a significant public challenge has been overcome.

Well-being Plan 2023/28 Consultation

The Committee is keen to ensure that the consultation approach for the Well-being Plan 2023/28 secures a good level of response and has a clear strategy for mitigating a low response, particularly from minority communities. We note that achieving a good response to any consultation on a strategy document is a particular challenge. We note also that your officers have met individually with ward Councillors to better understand individual community needs, networks and groups. This is a good approach.

However, given the disproportionate impact on minority populations and increasing diversity in the population, the PSB is well placed to broaden the reach of the consultation. We urge that the recommendations and work of the Race Equality Taskforce, created by the Council, are taken forward by the wider public sector, and we wholeheartedly commend the Council to lead on sharing the findings of the Taskforce with its partners.

Members therefore urge you to continue the quest to improve the quality of data held on minority populations to support consultation reach and ensure we have enough data to plan ahead effectively. We request clarification of your plans to mitigate communities that do not engage.

Workforce

Members were interested to hear all partners in agreement that there had been no fall in demand for public services over the summer months of 2022, as would usually be the case; across the public sector summer demand has felt like winter demand. This has highlighted the dual challenges of workforce and finance. Both UHB and PCC reported they face significant recruitment challenges, due to both Covid sickness and stress. We were therefore assured that the PSB is delivering a joint response to workforce pressures, and work is ongoing to analyse comparative terms and conditions between partners.

Measuring progress

The Committee is re-assured that you will continue to measure progress on all indicators in the Well-being Plan and maintain a live City Dashboard that will enable the tracking of 55 indicators within the Well-being Report at any point in time.

Recommendations following this scrutiny:

We commend the work of the PSB. To re-cap the recommendations in our letter:

- That the culture and successes of all PSB's are celebrated by Welsh Government and the FGC, and where good practice is in clear evidence it is shared across Wales.
- That the collaborative successes of the PSB are celebrated more visibly, particularly where a significant public challenge has been overcome.
- That you continue to improve the quality of data held on minority populations to support consultation reach, clarify your plans to mitigate for communities that do not engage, and ensure we have enough data to plan ahead effectively.

Once again, on behalf of the PRAP Scrutiny Committee the attendance of yourself and key partners to assist us in our consideration of the Cardiff PSB Annual Report 2021/22 is much appreciated. I look forward to the Board's response.

Yours sincerely,



COUNCILLOR JOEL WILLIAMS
CHAIR, POLICY REVIEW AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

cc Members of the Policy Review & Performance Scrutiny Committee,
Charles Janczewski, Vice Chair of Cardiff PSB, C&V UHB,
Alun Michael, South Wales Police & Crime Commissioner,
Paul Orders, Chief Executive, Cardiff Council,
Gareth Newell, Head of Partnerships and Performance, Cardiff Council,
Minister for Housing and Local Government,
Future Generations Commissioner for Wales,
Auditor General for Wales,
Andrea Redmond, Committee Support Officer,
Debi Said, Cabinet Support Officer
Joanne Watkins, Cabinet Office Manager