

THE COUNTY COUNCIL OF THE CITY & COUNTY OF CARDIFF

The County Council of the City & County of Cardiff met at City Hall, Cardiff on Thursday 25 September 2008 to transact the business set out in the Council Summons dated 19 September 2008.

Present: County Councillor Kate Lloyd, Lord Mayor (in the Chair);
County Councillor Jaswant Singh, (Deputy Lord Mayor);

County Councillors Ali, Aubrey, Aylwin, Berman, Bowden, Bowen, Bridges, Burfoot, Burley, Burns, Carter, Chaundy, Clark, Richard Cook, Cowan, Cox, Kirsty Davies, Tim Davies, Dixon, Foley, Ford, Furlong, Gasson, Goddard, Goodway, Grant, Greening, Griffiths, M Holland, Hooper, Howells, Hudson, Hyde, Ireland, Islam, Jerrett, Brian Jones, Margaret Jones, Jones-Pritchard, Joyce, Kelloway, Macdonald, McEvoy, McKerlich, Montemaggi, David Morgan, Derrick Morgan, Elgan Morgan, Linda Morgan, Page, Jacqueline Parry, Keith Parry, Patel, Percy, Pickard, Piper, David Rees, Dianne Rees, Robson, Rogers, Rowland-James, Smith, Stephens, Wakefield, Walker, Walsh, Williams and Woodman.

Apologies: Councillors Ralph Cook, Finn, C Holland, Lansdown and Salway.

(At this stage of the proceedings, prayers were offered by the Reverend Dr Graham Watts)

66 : MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 July 2008 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Lord Mayor.

67 : CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

(The Chairman reminded Members of their responsibility under Article 16 of the Members' Code of Conduct to declare any interest, and to complete Personal Interest forms, at the commencement of the item of business.)

(a) Declarations of Interest

Councillor Brian Jones declared an interest in Motion 2 insofar as his son owns a car showroom in Cardiff. He indicated that he would be leaving the meeting during the debate on the motion.

(b) Awards

The Lord Mayor expressed her pleasure at the continued success of the Council as shown by the following list of achievements:

Partnership Working Leads to Dog Welfare Improvements

Cardiff Council has won the first Wales Local Authorities Innovator Award, part of the RSPCA's Community Animal Welfare Footprints.

Cardiff Council and Cardiff Dogs Home scooped the title after judges said they provided a model of good practice for any city to use in tackling the issue of stray dogs. The Council-operated dogs' home formed a partnership with a canine charity to provide free neutering for 468 dogs and a free microchip for more than 800 in a single year.

Innovative Recruitment Recognised

The Council's relationship with The University of Glamorgan has been recognised with the presentation of an award at the launch of The University of Glamorgan's Employer Liaison Project Connections. The Council has recently worked in partnership with the University on the "New Theatre's Recruitment In-Sight Programme" which is a great way for students to gain an understanding of the business and employment opportunities on offer, recruitment advertising, work tasters and industry input to the Universities curriculum.

Contact Centre Services Achieve Investor in People Status

Contact Centre Services (CCS) are extremely pleased to announce that they are now recognised as an Investor in People, as of August 21st 2008. After a thorough assessment process, CCS was congratulated on the commitment and hard work undertaken to ensure the achievements of this rigorous National Standard.

Some of the key strengths highlighted by the Assessment included:

Strong management team are effective in leading, managing and development people. People value the management style of openness and honesty.

Developing and maximising people's potential through a range of learning and developing activities. Everyone is offered the opportunities to develop.

Many examples of recognition and value across the Service. People are obviously very proud to be working for CCS.

(c) Jeff Parry

The Lord Mayor informed Members that a certificate had been awarded to Jeff Parry prior to the Council meeting to acknowledge his 40 years service with Cardiff Council.

(d) Councillor Craig Williams

The Lord Mayor welcomed Councillor Craig Williams to his first meeting of the Council following his recent election at the Pentyrch By-election.

(e) Lord Mayor's Charities

The Lord Mayor informed Members of a proposal to hold a Quiz night on 17 October at the County Hall Staff Club to raise funds for her charities -The George Thomas Hospice and The British Heart Foundation. Further details would be emailed to Members, who would be invited to enter teams.

(f) Webcasting and Recording of Proceedings

Members were reminded of a decision of the Constitution Committee on 10 July 2008 to pilot webcast the Council meeting. The new system would be used to film the meeting which would then be made available to Members via a link on Monday to enable Members to view the webcast.

It was then proposed to launch live webcasts of Council meetings from 16 October 2008. Anyone wishing to watch Council meetings would be able to view the meeting as it was happening.

Members were also reminded that the Constitution Committee had previously agreed that Council proceedings be recorded for administrative purposes.

Formal approval to record the proceedings was granted.

68 : PUBLIC QUESTIONS

Question: *Sion Tudur*

In the report on the 'disposal of surplus library stock' presented at Cardiff Council's Executive Business Meeting of 11 January 2007, the cost of retaining the 'extremely valuable' special collections in Cardiff City Library is given as 'approximately £2-3 million'. Could Cllr Nigel Howells explain how that very general estimate was reached and why the report contains no assessment whatsoever of the substantial long-term economic, cultural and academic benefits which would accrue from the retention of these renowned collections in Cardiff?

Reply: *County Councillor Howells*

The general estimate for the preservation and housing of the stock was based on estimates to cover the building of specialist storage facilities to house the stock in an environment that achieves British Standard 5454. The estimate also included cleaning, repair and cataloguing of the items to prevent further deterioration and to bring them up to a standard where they could be safely handled and displayed.

The estimate was compiled as a result of discussions with expert restorers, as well as the cost estimates for the new Central Library and the cost plans for the new Glamorgan Records Office. The advice given was that the final figure could be as much, if not more, than the current value of the stock proposed for sale.

The stock in question has already been in Cardiff's possession for the long-term and little discernible economic, cultural or academic benefit has been gained from it. Much has been made of the idea of 'lack of access' to the stock as a reason for the decline in use of the stock by anyone, including academics. In fact, many of these items are listed in standard reference catalogues (for example Wing and Pollard and Redgrave's short title catalogues which are well known research tools for academics and researchers.)

To be absolutely clear:

- No items in the Welsh language will be sold
- No items whose content is important to Welsh or local history and heritage will be sold
- No items which have gift covenants attached will be sold

These criteria have been established and the sale list reviewed in consultation with Cardiff University. As a result of this, 32 items have been withdrawn from the initial sales list of 141 items at the request of the University. This will allow the University to examine and look into the possibility of purchasing the items.

From 1988 to 2006 the stock was housed in the stacks area of the Central Library and could be retrieved for anyone on request. During that 18-year period use of this stock declined steadily to the level of a few requests a year. There was a period of a few months (Sept 06 – Mar 07) when the stock was inaccessible as a result of the stacks building in Dominions Way being unready for staff occupation. However, any requests during this period could be fulfilled through the transportation of the requested item to the temporary Central Library for viewing. No requests were received.

Despite their being available for 20 years or more, the Council is not aware of any items from the stock to be sold that were being regularly accessed by Cardiff University or any other interested parties before this issue was escalated.

It should be noted that Cardiff Council does not receive recognition of its status as capital city in its funding from the Welsh Assembly Government.

Releasing this money will represent an economic benefit for the whole community, as the income generated from the sale of selected stock will be fully re-invested into the library service.

I understand that there may be a formal request made that the matters raised by your question be referred to the Executive. I am content for this to happen at our scheduled meeting on 2 October 2008

Supplementary Question: *Sion Tudur*

What is the current cost of the upkeep of the books and also the proposed cost of the upkeep of the Welsh books that are intended to be retained?

Reply: *County Councillor Howells*

I don't have the information to hand but I will ensure that it is addressed in the report that goes to the Executive on 2 October.

It was moved by Councillor Keith Parry, seconded and resolved that under paragraph 11.11 of the Council Procedure Rules the matters raised in this question be referred back to the Executive.

The City & County Solicitor read out Standing Order paragraph 11.11.

Question: *Roger Yeo*

When the Cardiff Model Engineering Society was obliged to leave their previous site at Highfield Road in 1987 to make way for development, what reason was there for giving them a prime parkland site on Heath Park rather than a more appropriate brownfield site?

Reply: *County Councillor Howells*

The site currently occupied by the Cardiff Model Engineering Society was the former Heath Park Mews which served as a Parks Depot comprising of mess, out-buildings and storage facilities. Owing to poor condition the buildings were demolished and it was determined that it would be beneficial to have a presence within the parkland from a well established and active local club with links to the community.

Of course, it should be remembered that these decisions were taken by a previous Council Administration. The former City Council's Leisure & Amenities Committee approved in principle on 28 November 1983 (para 3029) a relocation to Heath Park. This resolution was approved by the full City Council on 21 December 1983.

Planning permission was obtained pursuant to an application dated 13 January 1984 (para 83/1930).

On 20 and 27 June 1984, the proposed lease of public open space land was advertised in the South Wales Echo. No objections were received.

Supplementary Question: *Roger Yeo*

Could you please explain why the Council is so intent on giving away more public parkland to the Cardiff Model Engineering Society rather than relocating them to a more suitable brownfield site?

Reply: *County Councillor Howells*

Any decision regarding the granting of any further land to the Cardiff Model Engineering Society will be the subject of a separate report to the Executive and the Executive will consider that when the time comes and with all the information in front of it.

Question: *Elaine Davey*

Have you assessed the short term and longer term damage to Cardiff's ambitions to be an international city of culture, and consequently to Wales as an aspiring internationally important small nation, resulting from the loss of these books and the bad publicity Cardiff is receiving internationally as a result of their sale.

Reply: *County Councillor Howells*

Before I answer this question I would like to re-iterate for clarification:

- No items in the Welsh language are to be sold
- No items whose content is of Welsh or local interest are to be disposed of
- No items with gift covenants will be sold
- No manuscripts are to be disposed of (including the Book of Aneurin)
- The items to be auctioned have seldom been consulted over the last 20 years and are not considered to be 'popular' stock by Cardiff library users

It should be noted that these are not items that make up a valuable or important collection in their own right; they are, in fact, an ad hoc collection of printed works. They are by no means a comprehensive collection in any sense of the word. They may make a useful starting point for someone wanting to build up a good collection of printed work, but this does not constitute a collection in its own right.

The cultural role of a public library service is to provide a vibrant and relevant service whose core function is reading – to generate joy through active participation in reading. Culture needs to be relevant, participative, communal, engaging. Cardiff's cultural aspirations as a city lie in this direction.

Supplementary Question: *Elaine Davey*

I would like to make the point that if they were not considered popular stock before people had consulted them, were they actually aware of what was in the collection. But more importantly, you say at the end of your response that you would like to provide a vibrant and relevant service – surely they would have made a good learning resource for children and other people who are setting up websites and exhibitions and various other displays like they have in other major cities across Britain and Ireland. In Dublin, in Edinburgh, in Liverpool and in the British Library they have very important exhibitions which bring in lots of people who are interested, other than academics, and certainly lots of tourists and it provides a resource through a website for people interested in this area from all over the world. I think that's a fairly modern interactive way of including everybody in using this as a resource for the City.

Reply: *County Councillor Howells*

In relation to your first point regarding the cataloguing of items, as I said in my answer to the first question, many of these items were listed in standard reference catalogues and they were being accessed - so people were aware of what was there, albeit not accessing them very frequently.

In respect of making libraries accessible and making people aware of what is in libraries, I look at libraries from a completely different outlook. Libraries are places for communities to learn in and the very fact that every single penny we raise from the sale of the books will be re-invested in the Library Service is something that I welcome and fully support. This will allow us to roll out library provision, virtual libraries, into some of our most deprived communities that don't benefit from a library at the moment. It will allow our staff the freedom to interact with our customers. It will allow us to be more flexible with our opening hours – extending the hours they are open, looking at the possibility of opening in the evenings or even extending hours on the weekend.

Certainly I welcome the publication of 'Libraries for Life', which was launched by the Welsh Assembly Government earlier this year because it encourages different types of libraries - delivering modern facilities, investing in the skills of the library workforce and above all putting the citizen at the heart of the Library Service. An interesting quote from that document: 'We need to make sure that libraries remain vibrant and relevant to modern life in Wales' and that's exactly what we as an Executive are trying to do. Some of the priorities in 'Libraries for Life' include workforce development, improvement in ethnic library services and the promotion of new technology. That's exactly what we are planning to do through the proceeds of the sale of these books.

Question: *Professor Judi Loach*

The Council is planning to use the monies raised from this 'windfall' income obtained from sales of capital assets, as represented by sales from its library's rare books collection, to fund developments which are not exclusively capital investments but rather imply considerable ongoing revenue funding (e.g. the move to RFID will involve ongoing updating of its software, replacement of machines, etc.). Could Councillor Nigel Howells please detail how the Council has planned to sustain the ongoing revenue expenditure entailed, in the medium and long term?

Reply: *County Councillor Howells*

In a departure from normal Council policy, which was agreed as part of the Executive process, the income generated from the sale of selected stock will be fully re-invested into the library service. The projects to be funded will include technological improvements as well as ensuring that all Cardiff's public libraries are able to provide improved, high quality and up-to-date services for current and future residents.

These improvements will include RFID across all libraries by the end of this financial year. This will introduce self-issue and return systems and allow for a re-focusing of our staff to better serve customer needs. This, in itself, will assist in the introduction of more flexible operating hours including the potential for evening and Sunday opening.

The following 2-3 years will see the rollout of 'virtual' library provision where library services have never previously existed, again extending access

to services to Cardiff's tax payers. There will exist some revenue costs following the roll-out of these projects. However, these will represent a considerably lower amount than the staffing requirement that would be necessary to achieve the same results in terms of improved access.

Funding for future upgrades and system replacements will remain available for some time. In the meantime, library users will benefit from the improved services we will be able to offer by freeing staff time from administrative tasks to directly helping and advising customers.

Libraries for Life, launched in April this year by the Welsh Assembly Government encourages different types of libraries delivering modern facilities, investment in the skills of the library workforce and above all putting the citizen at the centre of the library service.

This income will help us to meet these challenges.

Supplementary Question: *Professor Judi Loach*

Is there any evidence of a detailed long term cost analysis based on value as opposed to price, taking account of revenue costs as opposed to just capital costs? I have no evidence here of a properly costed long term proposal as opposed to one just based on immediate costings and, in terms of value, it does not take into account at all the loss in potential in terms of a cultural and tourist resource for local inhabitants, helping to create a sense of civic pride and provide school facilities in the same way as is proposed, somewhat ironically, at the same time by the same Council a major investment to create a Cardiff Museum.

Reply: *County Councillor Howells*

Those issues will be addressed in the report that comes before the Executive on 2 October in line with my response to Sion Tudur earlier on.

(The Lord Mayor thanked all public questioners for their contributions).

69 : PETITIONS

The following petitions were submitted:

1. Councillor Piper – 29 residents of Ty Glas Road, Llanishen, Cardiff would like the Council to address their concerns about speed, safety when crossing, repair of the road and pavement access in Ty Glas Road.
2. Councillor Piper – 55 residents of Llanishen call on the Council to introduce traffic calming measures to Newborough Avenue and Bluehouse Road.
3. Councillor Bob Smith – 6,634 petitioners in support of Traders of High Street/St Mary Street who believe that the traffic restrictions imposed throughout High Street and St Mary Street do nothing to improve road safety or the general appearance of the area. The petition calls on the Council to reconsider its plans and return the street to its former state.
4. Councillor David Morgan – 200 petitioners call on the Council to extend double yellow lines, with associated signage, on both sides of the road, onto Powderham Drive as far as the first roundabout and Bessborough Drive. The petitioners also call for an environmental improvement scheme for the junction of Powderham Drive and Virgil Street to improve the appearance and safety of the area.
5. Councillor Cox – 72 signatures and a letter signed by a further 11 residents calling on the Council to seek a contribution from Tesco, Pengam Green, towards assisting with litter collections and the collection of abandoned shopping trolleys.
6. Councillor Cox – 63 signatures expressing concerns of disturbances and anti social behaviour stemming from the Splott Conservative Club and calling for action from the Council's Licensing Department
7. Councillor Richard Cook – 263 Canton residents express their concern about cars for sale which are parked on Cowbridge Road East by Victoria Park. These cars present a considerable problem for people visiting local businesses, St Luke's Church and Church Hall where there are many classes for the disabled requiring to be dropped off and collected from outside the Church Hall

8. Councillor McEvoy – 145 residents expressing their support of a change in licensing hours for the Lansdowne Hotel during a time when many pubs are closing.
9. Councillor Ford – 40 Fairwater residents call on the Council to gate close the lane at Ash Place and Hazel Place.
10. Councillor Ford – 70 Fairwater residents call on the Council to gate closure of Birdies Lane, the iron bridge at Wroughton Place and the lanes behind the Fairwater Pub, with the right of way to be preserved during daylight hours.

70 : STATUTORY IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The Wales Programme for Improvement (WPI) required the Council to prepare and publish an annual Improvement Plan summarising:

- its assessment of performance;
- its position in relation to securing continuous improvement.

The Improvement Plan could be used to:

- provide a picture of the Council's performance against the agreed aims, objectives, targets, future challenges and key risks facing the Council;
- communicate improvement information that is timely and accurate to Members, officers, citizens, communities, stakeholders, other Councils, the Welsh Assembly Government and regulators;
- further develop the performance management culture within the Council.

This year the Wales Assembly Government had established 3 year 'Improvement Agreements' to replace the Policy Agreements.

The Improvement Agreement had grant funding attached in the form of an Improvement Agreement Grant which was worth £3.12m per year to Cardiff for the 3 years of the Agreement.

The Draft Improvement Plan included the Draft Improvement Agreement which was currently the subject of negotiations with the Welsh Assembly Government and was subject to amendment as a result.

The Leader endorsed the Plan and responded to comments and questions from Members.

RESOLVED – That

- (1) the Statutory Improvement Plan be 2007/08 be approved for publication;
- (2) the Improvement Agreement be endorsed, subject to any minor amendments made by the City and County Solicitor, in consultation with the Leader of the Council following receipt of the Wales Audit Office opinion;
- (3) in the case of major amendments, Council receives a fuller report on the content of the Improvement Agreement.

71 : INTEREST ON SECTION 106 PLANNING CONTRIBUTIONS AND EXECUTIVE RESPONSE TO THE REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Council in April 2007 had passed a motion calling for a report on interest on financial contributions made pursuant to Planning Obligations contained in Section 106 Agreements and unilateral undertakings in respect of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990. This report was to highlight the current legal and financial position relating to the accrual of interest on Section 106 contributions and to provide the background for Council to determine future policy with respect to such interest.

In addition the Economic Scrutiny Committee had carried out a short scrutiny into the same topic and the Wales Audit Office had also undertaken a wider study into the operation and management of Section 106 agreements in Cardiff.

The report demonstrated the involvement of service areas in actually spending S106 balances and highlighted the particular responsibilities of planning, finance and legal.

It was pointed out that if the Council policy of taking interest accrued on Section 106 agreements corporately was changed, then it could have a detrimental effect on Council resources.

The Executive on 18 September 2008 had agreed the response to the Economic Scrutiny report and had noted the recommendations from the Wales Audit Office.

RESOLVED – That

- (1) the current practice of including interest accruing on Section 106 agreements in its general cash balances be continued;
- (2) the Planning Committee shall consistently apply the Council's policy as determined pursuant to recommendation 3(a) when dealing with future section 106 financial contributions.

72 : CARDIFF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PLAN

The Children and Young People's Plan was one of the four statutory strategic plans required to be produced in each local authority area in Wales and had been the subject of a 12 week consultation period. The Plan represented the agreed vision of partnership organisations in service delivery to children and young people until 2011. Submission of the Plan to the Welsh Assembly Government would comply with the legislative requirements of the Children Act.

The Plan had been considered by the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee.

The Lord Mayor invited debate on the report and the Executive Member responded to comments from Members.

RESOLVED – That the Cardiff Children and Young People's Plan 2008-2011 as set out in Appendix A to the report be approved for submission to the Welsh Assembly Government

73 : ANNUAL ACCOUNTS 2007/2008

(Councillors Hyde, Kelloway and Patel declared their interests in the addendum to the report relating to the South Wales Fire Authority, the Councillors being Council representatives on the South Wales Fire Authority)

The Council's Statement of Accounts for the financial year 2007/08 was presented and approved at Council on 26 June 2008. Following the production of the accounts the Wales Audit Office had undertaken a full audit of the accounts and had submitted a report to Council.

The report highlighted that there were

- no significant concerns about the qualitative aspects of the accounting practices and financial reporting. However, improvement was required in some key areas of the working papers provided for audit
- no uncorrected misstatements identified during the audit
- no material weaknesses in internal control identified
- no other matters which need to be reported as required by other auditing standards
- no other audit matters of governance interest to report

During the audit, four material misstatements were identified in the Council's accounts and a number of other corrections were identified.

The Executive Member submitted an addendum to the report. The Wales Audit Office had confirmed that fire authorities in Wales were not permitted to retain balances and reserves. The removal of such balances and reserves had implications for each of the constituent authorities.

Any money paid by constituent authorities in excess of the requirement to meet the net expenditure of the fire authorities to 31 March 2008 must be refunded.

As a constituent of the South Wales Fire Authority the Council estimated that it needed to recognise a payment due from the Fire Authority of £1.939m in its 2007/08 Accounts.

The Executive Member commented that until such time as the Council was officially notified by the South Wales Fire Authority of its intentions in respect of this issue, this surplus would be held in an earmarked reserve.

RESOLVED – That

(1) the report of the Wales Audit Office on the Statement of Accounts for the year ending 31 March 2008 be noted;

(2) it be noted that the Leader of the Council and the Council's Section 151 Officer will formally sign the Letters of Representation at the conclusion of the meeting;

(3) the information provided in the addendum to the report be noted.

74 : FUNDAMENTAL OPERATIONAL REVIEW

During the consideration of the Budget for 2007/08, a view was expressed that a far reaching 'root and branch' review of the entire Council's operations and running costs should be undertaken. This was taken forward as a Fundamental Operational Review (FOR) when the Council established an in-house project team and appointed PricewaterhouseCoopers(PwC) to provide independent specialist advice

The FOR had been one of the most comprehensive data gathering exercises that that the Council had undertaken. The Review examined four models of public sector working proposed by PwC, which were simplified in a public consultation Green Paper – Partnerships for Change. The Green Paper was widely circulated to seek views of all stakeholders in the city, including elected Members, staff, Trade Unions and Local Service Board Partners, businesses and members of the public.

The four models of public sector working were assessed in terms of their revenue impact, together with cash flow and the impact on Full Time Equivalent comparisons.

Two thirds of respondents had indicated the continuation of the 'status quo' as their preferred model of service provision. This was the 'direct service model' outlined in the Green Paper, which included services mainly delivered by the Council with some partnerships and some procurement. Two fifths would like to see a greater use of partnerships and a tenth chose the procurement service delivery option.

The report was introduced by Councillor Stephens, Executive Member, Finance and Service Delivery. He welcomed contributions from all Members on the Green Paper and offered a series of workshops for further discussions on the models prior to the Executive considering an action plan later in the year. There followed a wide ranging debate on the issues of FOR with Members expressing their initial comments on the proposed models and the manner in which the Council should deliver services to the public. All Members welcomed the opportunity to have further discussions

RESOLVED – That

(1) the Fundamental Operational Review high level Case for Change and the results of the Green Paper consultation be noted;

(2) the Executive be asked to consider the views and opinions expressed by Council following a series of workshops when formulating and agreeing an action plan to the report.

(There followed a 30 minute break and Council was re-convened at 7.25pm)

75 : COMPLAINT OF MALADMINISTRATION AGAINST CARDIFF COUNTY COUNCIL

The Public Services Ombudsman had investigated a complaint made by Mr and Mrs B who had complained that the Council had failed to move them from their tenancy either permanently or by accepting them as homeless as a result of their neighbours' conduct and threats made against them.

Alternatively Mr and Mrs B had complained that the Council had failed to move their neighbours who had caused the anti social behaviour they had complained about.

The Ombudsman's report was submitted with recommendations to be adopted.

RESOLVED – That the recommendations contained in the Ombudsman's report be accepted and the sum specified in the report be paid to Mr and Mrs B.

76 : THE CONSTITUTION

The Constitution Committee on 8 September had received an updating report concerning the ongoing review of the Constitution.

The Committee had approved, subject to Council, proposed amendments to the Constitution. The Committee had also authorised the Monitoring Officer to amend the Constitution to reflect other proposed amendments, which fell within its terms of reference.

The Committee had considered a track changed document which had highlighted proposed changes to the Constitution under the following categories:

- updating to reflect legislative changes
- drafting improvements to enhance clarity and remove minor anomalies
- correcting inconsistencies, inaccuracies and omissions
- updating to reflect the Council's current practices

The following amendments required the approval of Council:

1. Article 10 – Joint Arrangements
add para 10.1.C

“The Executive may appoint Executive members to a Joint Committee. The Executive may also appoint non-Executive members to represent the Executive, and in doing so the non-Executive member shall report to the Executive not the Council. Such members need not reflect the political composition of the local authority as a whole”.

2. Council Procedure Rules

- (a) Delete CPR 9 and replace with:-

“If an item of business has not been concluded within the period of time recommended by the Council's Business Committee the Lord Mayor may ask the meeting to indicate their agreement by a majority vote of those present to extend the period of time to debate on the item”.

158.

(b) CPR 10.10.1

Delete 'Tuesday' and replace with 'Thursday'.

(c) CPR 15

Delete the provision relating to the State of Cardiff debate.

(d) CPR 19

Delete and replace with:-

"All Councillors present during the whole or part of a meeting must accurately record their attendance on the record of attendance provided for the purpose".

RESOLVED – That the amendments to the Constitution set out above be approved

77 : APPOINTMENT AND REMOVAL OF LEA SCHOOL GOVERNORS

(Councillor Walsh declared an interest in this item in relation to the nomination of school governors)

The Council was recommended to approve the appointment of LEA School Governors as listed in the appendix to the report, and as shown on the Amendment Sheet.

RESOLVED - That the following appointment of School Governors and Parent Governors be approved;

<u>School</u>	<u>Ward</u>	<u>Start of Vacancy</u>	<u>Applications</u>
Allensbank Primary	Gabalfa	31/01/08	Miss C Price
Bishop Childs C/W Primary	Trowbridge	8/05/08	Mr R Leyshon
Cathays High	Gabalfa	18/06/08	Cllr E Clark
Hywel Dda Primary	Ely	01/09/08	Mr S Arnold
Llanishen Fach Primary	Rhiwbina	21/09/08	Rev P Dunning
Mary Immaculate High	Caerau	17/05/08	Mrs D Rose
Michaelstone College	Ely	01/09/08	Ms C Asante
Moorland Primary	Splott	21/09/08	Mr A Cooper
Roath Park Primary	Plasnewydd	24/09/08	Cllr R Berman
Roath Park Primary	Plasnewydd	21/09/08	Cllr M Stephens
Rumney High	Rumney	21/09/08	Mr D Bevan
Rumney High	Rumney	26/06/08	Mrs M Ireland
St David's C.W Primary	Pentwyn	19/09/08	Cllr P Chaundy
St Paul's C.W Primary	Grangetown	21/09/08	Mrs C Davies
The Hollies Special	Pentwyn	03/05/08	Cllr Woodman
Tongwynlais Primary	Whitchurch	21/09/08	Cllr B Griffiths
Tongwynlais Primary	Whitchurch	21/09/08	Ms K Haggarty
Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Plasmawr	Fairwater	10/06/08	Dr A Midah
Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Plasmawr	Fairwater	17/06/08	Mr H Herbert
Ysgol Y Berllan Deg	Pentwyn	21/09/08	Cllr R Berman
Ysgol Y Wern	Llanishen	14/06/08	Mrs A Dods

Future Vacancies

<u>School</u>	<u>Ward</u>	<u>Start of Vacancy</u>	<u>Applications</u>
Coed Glas Primary	Llanishen	19/10/08	Mr R Minshall
Coed Glas Primary	Llanishen	19/10/08	Mr M Bryan
Llysfaen Primary	Lisvane	28/09/08	Mrs S A Machon
Ysgol Gymraeg Melin Gruffydd	Whitchurch	19/10/08	Cllr T Davies

Parent Governors to Temporary Governing Bodies of Welsh Starter Classes

<u>School</u>	<u>Ward</u>	<u>Start of Vacancy</u>	<u>Applications</u>
Holy Family RC Primary	Fairwater		Ceri Boulton
Holy Family RC Primary	Fairwater		Sylvia Davies
Holy Family RC Primary	Fairwater		Keith Gallimore
Ninian Park Primary	Grangetown		Dr Kathryn Walters
Ninian Park Primary	Grangetown		Ashok Ahir
Ninian Park Primary	Grangetown		Megan Jenkins- Patmore

78 : PENTYRCH BY-ELECTION

Council noted that Councillor Craig Williams had been elected at the Pentyrch By-election on 31 July 2008.

79 : COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Council noted the following changes to Committee membership:

Councillor Craig Williams appointed to the Community and Adult Services Scrutiny Committee in place of Councillor Jon Burns.

Councillor Richard Foley filling the vacancy on the Planning Committee.

Councillor Derrick Morgan appointed to the Licensing and Public Protection Committees following the resignation of Councillor Clarissa Holland from those Committees.

80 : NOMINATIONS OF MEMBERS TO SERVE ON OUTSIDE BODIES

Members considered nominations to SAFLE, formerly known as CBAT The Arts and Regeneration Agency following the resignation of Councillor McEvoy from this organisation and to the Cardiff Community Health Council.

RESOLVED - That

- (1) Councillor Islam be appointed to fill the vacancy on SAFLE for the duration of this Administration;

- (2) Mrs Alex Evans be confirmed as one of the Council's nominations on the Cardiff Community Health Council to 31 March 2010

81 : NOTICES OF MOTION

MOTION 1

It was moved by Councillor Linda Morgan and seconded by Councillor Jane Rogers as follows:

This Council expresses its deep concern at the recent failure of Children's Services to deliver 18 out of 20 key targets.

This Council pledges to take all necessary action to improve the performance of Children's Services and notes our determination not to fail our most vulnerable young people.

Therefore Council calls on the Executive to prepare and bring forward a report to Council at our next meeting that:

- 1) Identifies the causes of the failure to deliver on key targets.
- 2) Outlines a performance improvement plan with clear objectives and deadlines.

It was moved by Councillor Jayne Cowan and seconded by Councillor Brian Jones that the motion be amended as follows:

The deletion of all after "This Council expresses" and the substitution of the following:

This Council expresses its grave concern at the recent failure of the Liberal Democrat and Plaid Cymru Executive to ensure that Children's Services are achieving targets set by the Council, National Assembly and other external bodies.

This Council notes from the most recent Children's Services Performance Management Information Report that :

- 1 The percentage of core assessments carried out within 35 working days has persisted in not reaching the target.
- 2 The percentage of initial assessments where there is evidence that the child has either been seen by the social worker, or has been seen alone by the social worker remains below target with improvement expected by the end of Quarter 3.
- 3 Some children are still not allocated to a qualified social worker.
- 4 The average time taken to complete initial assessments that took longer than 7 working days to complete has surpassed the Care Standards Inspectorate Wales' (CSIW) threshold of concern.
- 5 The average time taken to complete those required core assessments that took longer than 35 days has surpassed the CSIW threshold of concern. The latest data shows it is now taking over 140 days.

This Council acknowledges that the examples above are not a comprehensive list of the problems we are facing as a Local Authority, but show a snapshot of the problems facing social services staff.

In light of the above, this Council calls on the Council's Liberal Democrat and Plaid Cymru Executive to produce a report to the next Council Meeting responding to the devastating Childrens Services Performance Management Information Report which went before the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee on September 2nd and outlining a plan of action .

The mover of the original motion (Councillor Linda Morgan) accepted the above amendment proposed by Councillor Jayne Cowan and seconded by Councillor Brian Jones.

It was moved by Councillor Dixon and seconded by Councillor Berman that the motion be amended as follows:

The deletion of all after "This Council" and the substitution of the following:

This Council recognises the Performance Reporting arrangements put in place by the administration, and values the open way in which

information is provided on an ongoing basis as good practice in allowing early identification of issues in need of management attention.

This Council recognises that its scrutiny service has been acknowledged as amongst the best in the UK, and agrees that the processes currently in place are the most appropriate method by which to monitor and scrutinise the Council's performance.

This Council notes the scrutiny of Children's Services Performance Management Information by the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee on 2nd September 2008, and the Performance Report: Performance for Quarter 1 2008/09 (April - June), presented to and agreed by the Executive on 18th September 2008, containing the comments of the Scrutiny Committee.

This Council realises that it is the job of opposition groups to provide honest challenge to the policies and record of the administration, but regrets the opportunistic use of a scrutiny report for party political advantage, particularly when such use occurs before the scrutiny committee itself has had the opportunity to question the relevant members and officers and discuss the report itself and agree its way forward.

This Council notes the request for additional information from the Scrutiny Committee on issues which it considers require management attention, and agrees that this information should be provided, as is currently the practice, in order for it to conduct its ongoing scrutiny of the service.

In reaffirming its determination to achieve the best possible outcomes for vulnerable young people, this Council recognises that such action will assist in identifying 1) areas where performance against indicators may currently not be projected to reach target by the end of the current financial year, 2) the underlying causes behind any performance that is currently not on target and 3) the actions which can be taken to help secure relevant performance improvements.

Following a request for a recorded vote, voting on the amendment moved by Councillor Dixon was as follows:

For

Councillors Aylwin, Aubrey, Berman, Bowden, Bowen, Bridges, Burfoot, Burley, Carter, Chaundy, Clark, Richard Cook, Cox, Kirsty Davies, Dixon, Ford, Gasson, Grant, Greening, Hooper, Howells, Jerrett, M Jones, Kelloway, McEvoy, Montemaggi, David Morgan, Elgan Morgan, Keith Parry, Patel, Pickard, David Rees, Rowland-James, Stephens, Wakefield and Woodman.

Total 36

Against

Councillors Burns, Cowan, Foley, Griffiths, Hudson, Ireland, Islam, Brian Jones, Jones-Pritchard, Macdonald, McKerlich, Morgan, Page, Percy, Piper, Dianne Rees, Robson, Rogers, Smith, Walker and Walker.

Total 21

Abstentions

Councillors Furlong, Goodway, Lloyd, Joyce, Derrick Morgan, J Parry, and Walsh

Total 7

The amendment moved by Councillor Dixon was carried as the substantive motion and approved as follows:

This Council recognises the Performance Reporting arrangements put in place by the administration, and values the open way in which information is provided on an ongoing basis as good practice in allowing early identification of issues in need of management attention.

This Council recognises that its scrutiny service has been acknowledged as amongst the best in the UK, and agrees that the processes currently in place are the most appropriate method by which to monitor and scrutinise the Council's performance.

This Council notes the scrutiny of Children's Services Performance Management Information by the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee on 2nd September 2008, and the Performance Report: Performance for Quarter 1 2008/09 (April - June), presented to and agreed by the Executive on 18th September 2008, containing the comments of the Scrutiny Committee.

This Council realises that it is the job of opposition groups to provide honest challenge to the policies and record of the administration, but regrets the opportunistic use of a scrutiny report for party political advantage, particularly when such use occurs before the scrutiny committee itself has had the opportunity to question the relevant members and officers and discuss the report itself and agree its way forward.

This Council notes the request for additional information from the Scrutiny Committee on issues which it considers require management attention, and agrees that this information should be provided, as is currently the practice, in order for it to conduct its ongoing scrutiny of the service.

In reaffirming its determination to achieve the best possible outcomes for vulnerable young people, this Council recognises that such action will assist in identifying 1) areas where performance against indicators may currently not be projected to reach target by the end of the current financial year, 2) the underlying causes behind any performance that is currently not on target and 3) the actions which can be taken to help secure relevant performance improvements.

MOTION 2

(Councillor Brian Jones declared an interest in this motion in that a member of his family owns a car showroom in Cardiff and left the meeting during its debate)

It was moved by Councillor Richard Cook and seconded by Councillor Ramesh Patel as follows:

The problem of cars for sale on the public highway blocking parking spaces is prevalent all over the city. Areas affected include, Cowbridge Road East and Lansdowne Road in Canton, Newport Road in Rumney, Corporation Road in Grangetown, and Whitchurch Common.

These cars block access to shops, affecting trade in local shopping centres such as Canton, and prevent residents parking close to their homes.

This Council does not wish to stop private residents from legitimately advertising their cars for sale, but it does want to stop businesses selling cars on the Council's roads.

Therefore Council calls upon the Executive to investigate whether a bye-law, or other method, can be introduced to prevent large numbers of cars being advertised for sale on main roads in the city, blocking access to shops and to residents' homes.

It was moved by Councillor Adrian Robson and seconded by Councillor Jayne Cowan that the motion be amended as follows:

In paragraph 1 and 4 substitute the word 'cars' for the word 'vehicles'.

In paragraph 1 substitute the words 'and Whitchurch Common' for the words 'Whitchurch Common and Thornhill Road in Rhiwbina'

In paragraph 2 substitute the word 'cars' for the words 'vehicles can'.

In paragraph 2 delete the words 'such as Canton' and add an additional sentence – 'This can also cause distress for garage owners who sell vehicles in showrooms adjacent to public highways where cars are sold.'

In paragraph 4 substitute the words 'and to residents homes' for the words 'residents' homes and causing distress for garage owners who sell vehicles in showrooms adjacent to public highways and parking areas where vehicles are sold.'

The amended motion would read as follows:

The problem of vehicles for sale on the public highway blocking parking spaces is prevalent all over the city. Areas affected include, Cowbridge Road East and Lansdowne Road in Canton, Newport Road in Rumney, Corporation Road in Grangetown, Whitchurch Common and Thornhill Road in Rhiwbina.

These vehicles can block access to shops, affecting trade in local shopping centres and prevent residents parking close to their homes. This can also cause distress for garage owners who sell vehicles in showrooms adjacent to public highways where cars are sold.

This Council does not wish to stop private residents from legitimately advertising their cars for sale, but it does want to stop businesses selling cars on the Council's roads.

Therefore Council calls upon the Executive to investigate whether a bye-law, or other method, can be introduced to prevent large numbers of vehicles being advertised for sale on main roads in the city, blocking access to shops, residents' homes and causing distress for garage owners who sell vehicles in showrooms adjacent to public highways and parking areas where vehicles are sold.

The mover of the original motion (Councillor Richard Cook) accepted the above amendment as moved by Councillor Adrian Robson.

Councillor Delme Bowen withdrew his amendment to the motion and accepted the amended motion subject to a caveat of officer advice which he referred to.

The amended motion was accepted as the substantive motion and was carried as follows:

The problem of vehicles for sale on the public highway blocking parking spaces is prevalent all over the city. Areas affected include, Cowbridge Road East and Lansdowne Road in Canton, Newport Road in Rumney, Corporation Road in Grangetown, Whitchurch Common and Thornhill Road in Rhiwbina.

These vehicles can block access to shops, affecting trade in local shopping centres and prevent residents parking close to their homes. This can also cause distress for garage owners who sell vehicles in showrooms adjacent to public highways where cars are sold.

This Council does not wish to stop private residents from legitimately advertising their cars for sale, but it does want to stop businesses selling cars on the Council's roads.

Therefore Council calls upon the Executive to investigate whether a bye-law, or other method, can be introduced to prevent large numbers of vehicles being advertised for sale on main roads in the city, blocking access to shops, residents' homes and causing distress for garage owners who sell vehicles in showrooms adjacent to public highways and parking areas where vehicles are sold.

82 : CORPORATE STATEMENT

(County Councillor Berman)

Leckwith Development

Excellent progress has been made with the Football Stadium, now approximately 75% complete and on schedule to be completed next Spring. Members of the Economic Scrutiny Committee visited the site on 4 September and I attended a "topping out" ceremony on 9 September. The ground sharing arrangements between Cardiff City FC and the Cardiff Blues have been finalised.

The Athletics Stadium has been handed over and the residual works regarding the track and inner field are nearing completion (having been delayed by bad weather).

Design and operational specifications have been agreed for the Park & Ride facility and the tenders for the House of Sport development received. Work is ongoing on the Glamorgan Records Office development and completion is anticipated in Spring 2009. There are further discussions to be had on funding and other arrangements for the proposed Vision 21 development.

On the retail development, the Costco store is open and the Asda store opens next month. The Highways developments are substantially complete.

Plans for the redevelopment of Ninian Park for social housing are well advanced and a planning application is anticipated shortly. South Wales Police report, through the Safer Cardiff Partnership, that the community developments linked to the scheme are having a significant beneficial impact on anti-social behaviour in the Cowbridge Road East area (the Tesco store/Albert Street Car Park).

Officers are also meeting the local members shortly to address any other issues.

International Sports Village

Both the Cardiff International Pool and Temporary Ice Rink continue to trade above their Business Plan.

The revised planning application for Bayscape a mixed commercial use development on the site of the existing Cambrian Marine site has now been submitted.

The new Olympic-standard slalom canoe course and white-water rafting centre construction has started on site in September for completion in early 2010.

SD2

Work continues to programme for both the main mixed-use development and the new Central Library

Forthcoming Executive Business

I wish to remind Members that the next scheduled Executive Business Meeting will be held at 2.00pm on 2 October 2008. In accordance with the usual arrangements, I wish to advise Members that reports on the matters set out below will be coming forward for consideration by the Executive in the near future. The consideration of each item of business will be subject to the Council's established business arrangements and timetabling constraints. In accordance with legal requirements, the papers for Executive Business Meetings will be circulated at least three clear days prior to each meeting and posted on the website prior to the meeting taking place.

The following items are currently scheduled to be considered on 2 October 2008.

Corporate: Councillor Rodney Berman

- Complaints Report for Period 2007/08

Communities, Housing & Social Justice: Councillor Judith Woodman

- Development of a Singles Assessment Centre for Homeless Services

Education & Lifelong Learning: Councillor Freda Salway

- School Organisation Planning: Proposals For Welsh-Medium Primary Schools, English-Medium Schools In Caerau Ward And Closure Of Cefn Onn Primary School – Catchment Area Arrangements

Environment: Councillor Margaret Jones

- Graffiti Policy for Cardiff Council
- Progressing the Local Development Plan

Finance & Service Delivery: Councillor Mark Stephens

- Council Land at :
 - a) Former Castlefields Centre, Rumney;
 - b) Willowbrook Road/Brython Drive, St Mellons
 - c) Hawthorn Junior School, Llandaff North

Health, Social Care & Wellbeing: Councillor John Dixon

- Supporting People Operational Plan 2008

Sport, Leisure & Culture: Councillor Nigel Howells

- Amendment to Operating Time of Western Leisure Centre
- Pont-Y-Werin

83 : CORPORATE QUESTIONS

Question: *County Councillor Walker*

Is the Leader aware of the widespread outrage caused by his decision to sell the city's unique collection of rare books? Will he reconsider his decision and come forward with proposals to retain and display these unique 'Cardiff treasures'?

Reply: *County Councillor Berman*

I am aware that some concerns have been voiced in recent weeks in response to matters that relate back to the collective decision that was made by the Executive back in January 2007.

However, I would point out that intended sale has the potential to generate significant receipts that will be re-invested in the further improvement and modernisation of the city's library service, which will, in turn, benefit the people of Cardiff as a whole.

The books in question, which have been in Cardiff's possession for some time, are perhaps best referred to as rarely accessed books (though not as a result of a lack of access through our library service). To date, these items have generated limited interest from, or benefits for, local people.

To an extent therefore, this debate, is about whether the concerns of one group of people outweigh the benefits which could accrue to the wider population of the city.

There are clearly legitimate viewpoints on both sides of the debate. However, I am not currently convinced that the benefits of the proposed substantial investment in our public library service should be dismissed.

The Executive, however, remains open to explore what opportunities might be available to retain items in Cardiff or Wales in ways that would not jeopardise this intended investment. To that end, the Council is involved in ongoing discussions with the Welsh Assembly Government and Cardiff University in relation to the future sale of these items.

As you may be aware, an agreement has been reached between the Council and Cardiff University to withdraw certain items, which have been identified by the University, from the initial auction. This will provide the University with an opportunity to acquire these books outside of the agreed auction process.

Supplementary Question: *County Councillor Walker*

Do you now regret agreeing to sell the City's "Crown Jewels" and what other funding options have you explored to fund library improvements?

Reply: *County Councillor Berman*

I would refer you to the fifth paragraph of my response to your original question where I say I am not currently convinced the benefits of the proposed substantial investment in our public service should be dismissed. So the corollary from that is that I am saying I am not convinced that we shouldn't be proceeding with the sale. We are obviously looking for ways in which we can work with other organisations such as the University, maybe with some input from the Welsh Assembly Government, to see if there are ways in which we could still get funding in, but the books be retained. But that is not taking away from the fact that I think the benefits of getting in the income from the sale, which can greatly enhance our library services to the wider public, are worth pursuing.

Question: *County Councillor Ralph Cook*

Do you agree that in the interests of openness and transparency that reports to Executive Business Meetings should include all the significant material facts and issues pertaining to any specific decision Executive Members are required to take?

Reply: *County Councillor Berman*

Yes, and this Administration has consistently stated, and indeed proven, its commitment to openness and transparency in decision-making. Furthermore, I believe our record on such matters bears favourable comparison with any administration – and particularly so in comparison to this Council's previous Labour administration.

Question: *County Councillor Robson*

When the Leader took his well deserved holiday this summer which of the Deputy Leaders was the acting Leader in his absence?

Reply: *County Councillor Berman*

Neither.

Supplementary Question: *County Councillor Robson*

Can I ask the Leader that if for any reason you were unable to answer this question tonight would it be Councillor McEvoy or Councillor Woodman who would respond on your behalf?

Reply: *County Councillor Berman*

I would consider such an eventuality when it occurs.

Question: *County Councillor Dianne Rees*

Liberal Democrats often campaign along side Conservatives to retain post offices, which are at the heart of our communities and vital for the most vulnerable. The Local Government Association says that “If Post Offices are being considered for closure, then local councils must look at alternative ways of keeping services available”.

What action did you take to try to keep services available in the recent spate of closures and will you follow the example of Conservative Essex County Council and 150 other local authorities keen to follow its lead ,in re-opening closed branches in Cardiff, such as Old St Mellons Post Office, as a “community service” providing a computer terminal, with free access to the Council’s website, provided from a community projects budget and do you agree that this is what effective local government should be about?

Reply: *County Councillor Berman*

I am not sure if it is so much the case that Liberal Democrats are now campaigning alongside Conservatives on this issue as that, in more recent years, Conservatives have decided to join Liberal Democrats and also Plaid Cymru in campaigning on this issue. The Conservatives were indeed much less active and, as the evidence would show, significantly less effective in campaigning to retain local post offices during the period between 1979 and 1997 whilst in Government at Westminster. During that time the Conservatives in fact oversaw the closure of around 3,500 post office branches across the UK.

As I outlined in my response to a similar question from Councillor Robson back in March of this year, I have previously discussed this matter with the

Chief Executive and – like many other local authorities across the UK – the Council has been monitoring the situation in Essex, where a post office in Epping was recently re-opened with the financial support of the County Council.

Unfortunately, this kind of initiative did not emerge in time to save those post offices in Cardiff that were closed most recently by Post Office Ltd. as part of the Network Change Programme. Furthermore, such an initiative requires a significant financial investment by local authorities and, as the new Conservative Chairman of the Local Government Association has pointed out, it will not be possible for every local authority to go down this route and those who do will not be able to save every post office.

We also have to be cautious in giving the impression that local authorities can easily pick up and fund services that the UK Government walks away from. In that context, I would remind you that this Council is already working with South Wales Police to keep the 101 single non-emergency number going in Cardiff after the UK Labour Government withdrew all funding for the service earlier this calendar year. Given the tough financial constraints under which we the Council operates, there is a limit to the extent to which we can take such action.

The Executive has, however, made a political commitment to taking forward the development of ‘one-stop shop’ advice centres in local communities around the city, as outlined our Capital Vision document. This will assist in providing better public access to Council services and will be linked to the expansion of the ‘Connect to Cardiff’ (C2C) contact centre.

We will also explore the establishment of partnerships with local post offices and other community-based organisations in order to develop new mechanisms for allowing people to access the local services they value and need within their local communities.

Supplementary Question: *County Councillor Dianne Rees*

I am pleased that you are monitoring and learning from the excellent action of Conservative Essex County Council but you haven’t answered my question. What action did you take to try to keep services available in the recent spate of closures in Cardiff? Can you outline what action this Council took when the closures were announced?

Reply: *County Councillor Berman*

Obviously your memory is not quite what it was because I would have thought it is quite apparent to all Members what action we took – because we certainly involved all Members in the actions. We invited representatives of the Post Office to come to the Council to hear the concerns of Councillors. All Members who wished to were invited to attend that. In fact, I seem to recall that you were one of those Members who attended that meeting and raised your concerns. So it does strike me as a little bit odd that you are trying to say you have no knowledge of any action that was taken when, actually, you participated in some of the action that was taken.

We put in a very strong response to the consultation which was agreed through the Executive as well. But ultimately the fact of the matter is that the consultation, as many people felt, was pretty much a sham because a decision had already been taken that so many Post Offices had to go. Therefore, we were quite clearly told that in fighting to try to save some Post Offices, the likelihood was that other Post Office branches would just have to shut instead. So we worked as hard as we could within the options that were available to us.

But really you are trying to seek to blame us when the blame really should go to the UK Government who have created the situation whereby Post Offices are in such dire financial straits because they have been completely deprived of income.

But as you can see from my original answer to your question, it's not just something that has come about under the present Labour Government because under the previous Conservative Government 3,500 Post Offices closed. So when we hear that *one* Conservative-led Council has saved *one* post office I think we have to take that as something that rings quite hollow when it is taken against 3,500 Post Offices the Conservatives presided over closing.

Question: *County Councillor Jackie Parry*

As a strong supporter of the Welsh Language I am keen to ensure that, as the Council of the Capital City, we are seen to effectively promote the use of the language. Is the Council's policy on the use of the language supposed to be compatible with the other Council policies or does the language take priority over all other considerations?

Reply: *County Councillor Berman*

The Council has a statutory Welsh Language Scheme 2006-2009, which states that the Council *“has adopted the principle that in the conduct of public business and administration of justice in Wales, it will treat the Welsh and English languages on the basis of equality”*.

The Scheme sets out exactly how the Council will give effect to that principle when providing services to the public in Cardiff, including a section on policies and initiatives, in order to ensure that the Welsh language is mainstreamed into all the Council’s key policies.

The updating and introduction of policies and initiatives enables the Authority to promote and facilitate the use of Welsh in its services and to progress towards achieving the objectives of this Scheme. Wherever this opportunity occurs it is pursued and every opportunity taken to move closer towards implementing the principle of equality, within the resources allocated to this by Council.

For example, the promotion of the Welsh language is one of the key issues that form the foundations of the Proud Capital Community Strategy 2007-2017, along with sustainability, health and wellbeing, equality of opportunity, social inclusion and citizen engagement.

All of the above provide the foundation on which the Cardiff agenda is based and all are considered to be as important as each other. Therefore, the language does not take priority over all other considerations, but is an integral part of all other key issues that form the foundations of Cardiff’s Community Strategy.

Supplementary Question: *County Councillor Jackie Parry*

I note the reply where it says “the Council has adopted the principle that in the conduct of public business and administration of justice in Wales, it will treat the Welsh and English languages on the basis of equality”. Actually that isn’t the reason for the question. The question really relates to environmental issues relating to using less and not more of paper so my question is can you explain why the English and Welsh versions of the invitations to the Cardiff in Bloom celebration next week needed to be on separate letterheads when they could be in contravention of the Council’s stated Environmental Policies

and accepted standards when both versions could have been quite easily printed back-to-back on a single piece of notepaper?

Reply: *County Councillor Berman*

Thank you for drawing attention to the severe waste of resources that seems to have resulted from the printing of English and Welsh versions of an invitation on separate bits of paper when they could have been, as you say, on either side of one piece of paper. It is great to know that it's not just Councillor Cowan that is very concerned with these great wastes of resources, and I will endeavour to ensure that such an eventuality does not occur again.

84 : TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION QUESTIONS

Question: *County Councillor Dianne Rees*

Which databases are used to access information about concessionary travel passes and what controls are in place to ensure those databases are accurate and up to date?

Reply: *County Councillor Bowen*

The framework for the database now used for concessionary bus passes was developed by the Welsh Assembly Government. The Cardiff database was based on the records of those who had previously applied for bus passes, but was checked as far as possible against Council Tax records and the Electoral Roll. This has not been fully successful in identifying those who should receive new passes, and I am aware of some problems as a result.

Whilst pass-holders are asked to keep the Council informed of changes of address, and relatives do sometimes return passes of deceased relatives, this has not proved to be reliable. To help keep information up to date, records of deaths held by the Registration Service are being checked and the database is being updated as a result.

For the future, accuracy of records will be improved by the fact that the passes will operate as smartcards, so there will be information available on passes in current use. However I have asked officers to consider alternative approaches to identifying current users, for any future pass issue.

Supplementary Question: *County Councillor Dianne Rees*

I am relieved to find that records of deaths found by the Registration Service have been checked and updated but how do you explain the fact that my parents, who died 6 years ago and 3½ years ago respectively, each received two separate concessionary bus passes with entirely different photographs issued at the same time and how many other people in Cardiff have had the same experience?

Reply: *County Councillor Bowen*

I will have the question investigated.

Question: *County Councillor Bridges*

When was the last time a street in Gabalfa ward benefited from a Highway Renewal Scheme?

Reply: *County Councillor Bowen*

Extensive work to improve facilities for pedestrians and cyclists at Gabalfa interchange was completed recently. This has included some road surfacing. Prior to that, Maelog Place benefited from footway reconstruction and carriageway resurfacing in 2004/05.

The resources available for highway renewal are limited, and the specific highways to be renewed are determined by condition surveys, rather than an allocation per ward. This targets resources to secure the greatest value from its investment and ensures that the roads in greatest need of renewal are addressed first.

Question: *County Councillor Robson*

What action does the Council currently take in relation to people who are caught illegally using blue disabled badges?

Reply: *County Councillor Bowen*

Following any allegation of Blue Badge misuse, officers write to the badge holder to remind them that misuse is an offence and that they may be liable to a fine.

They are also advised that if there are further instances of misuse the badge will be withdrawn. If subsequent misuse is reported, the badge is cancelled and its return is requested.

As a result of concerns about abuse of Blue Badges, officers will be meeting with the Police to consider what action the Police may be able to take to assist with misuse of Blue Badges and also the potential legal action that could be taken.

Supplementary Question: *County Councillor Robson*

Councillor Bowen you may be aware that Birmingham City Council has taken a tough stance on this issue, particularly if the badge holder is not in the vehicle. Apparently fines could be up to £1,000 collected through private prosecutions by the Council. Has Cardiff considered this possibility?

Reply: *County Councillor Bowen*

Not to my knowledge as yet but thank you for your lead. We will ask Officers to look at what is happening in Birmingham and report back.

Supplementary Question: *County Councillor Gasson*

Are you aware Councillor Bowen that the expiry date is one side of the blue badge, which is issued by the Local Authority and the photograph of the blue badge holder is on the other side. It would be better if the photograph was displayed because people could see if there is any abuse of the system. I see it everyday with people using other people's blue badges - relatives and so forth and parking in disabled bays - whether it be in shopping malls or whatever. But if the photograph was displayed and it coincided with the driver it wouldn't be an offence. If the holder of the blue badge is in the car when it is being driven by somebody else it wouldn't be an offence but the trouble is that people use other people's blue badges illegally?

Reply: *County Councillor Bowen*

Thank you for your advice. Yes we will do what we can to investigate improvements.

Question: *County Councillor Kelloway*

Can the Executive Member confirm that this Council has a policy to use parking orders to protect access to commercial premises and another policy not to use parking orders to protect access to residential premises?

Reply: *County Councillor Bowen*

The Council does not have a policy to use parking orders to protect access to commercial premises.

There is a policy not to provide waiting restrictions to protect private accesses. This is because obstruction of private accesses is an offence which can be dealt with by the police under existing legislation. This policy applies to all private accesses whether they are residential, commercial or any other category.

Supplementary Question: *County Councillor Kelloway*

Thank you for your reply but will you help to bring some clarity to the situation because the Council does have a policy not to not use Parking Orders to protect access to commercial premises and if I may quote from a letter courtesy of Councillor Cox from Splott “Following approaches from the management agent of the Cardiff Bay Business Park regarding the obstruction of goods vehicles requiring access to the Business Park by parked vehicles, a Traffic Regulation Order, in the form of double yellow lines indicating no waiting at any time, was introduced along Titan Road throughout its length”. So quite patently there is no policy which forbids the use of Traffic Orders to protect commercial premises but there is a policy it seems to forbid the use of Parking Orders to protect private premises. So can I ask you, as the Executive Member, to undertake the necessary measures to achieve parity of treatment between private and commercial individuals and organisations when considering the use of Parking Orders to protect access?

Reply: *County Councillor Bowen*

The responses seem to have been ambivalent here but I will help you, yes, and offer you a meeting with myself and Officers to see whether this ambivalence can be sorted out.

Question: *County Councillor Robson*

When replacing pavements, does the Council prefer to use paving slabs or tarmac?

Reply: *County Councillor Bowen*

Pavements are maintained and reconstructed in materials appropriate to their location and their use. Different surfaces are used depending on whether the location is in the city centre, district shopping centres, conservation areas or residential areas.

Repairs will generally replace like with like, but in some areas there is extensive and repeated damage to paving slabs, caused by vehicles driving on pavements. In these areas, existing concrete slab paving will be replaced with flexible “tarmac” surfacing where appropriate and as funding permits. This has benefits in terms both of safety and ongoing maintenance costs.

Question: *County Councillor Burley*

The recent flooding of eight houses in Heol Yr Odin and nine houses in Woodlands Park Drive were both caused by culverts overflowing. Was the budget for inspection, cleaning and the digging of culverts cut in the last budget?

Reply: *County Councillor Bowen*

There have been no cuts in budget that relate to the incidence of flooding at this location. It has become apparent, particularly given recent high levels of rainfall, that drainage systems in this area are currently inadequate. Officers from the Parks Service have investigated the matter and are preparing proposals to rectify the situation. Liaison with occupiers / owners of the affected properties is ongoing.

Supplementary Question: *County Councillor Burley*

Can I ask you to investigate why your department staff are telling my residents that there is no money left in the budget to dig out existing culverts and that they should contact their Councillors, if and when they find them, because I have been told they can't find them anyway? Also if all the budget has been spent in this financial year what is your department going to do to stop those houses flooding again this winter and save the Council from a lot of litigation costs?

Reply: *County Councillor Bowen*

I am not sure that I do have a department but I will put you in touch with the Service Area that we do have and attend to the question that you ask.

Question: *County Councillor Gasson*

May I congratulate the work of the Road Safety Department, enabling me to take an Advanced Motorist Assessment. Further – and more importantly – may I congratulate the Road Safety Unit in securing £461,000 for the Caerau/Ely “Safer Routes to School Project” for the first year funding of a three year project following the work of Jacob’s consultants.

- 1) Can I be reassured that the department will continue to bid for years 2 & 3 of the project?
- 2) I understand other schools in Llandaff and Fairwater have benefited from these projects. Will you list the Ward school and amount already received from the Welsh Assembly for this essential work?

Reply: *County Councillor Bowen*

I will pass on your congratulations to those involved.

Yes, the Council will bid to the Welsh Assembly Government for years 2 and 3 of the project. Bids have recently been invited for year 2.

The schools that directly benefited from the earlier Cardiff West project were:

Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Plasmawr – Fairwater
The Bishop of Llandaff High School – Llandaff

Cantonian High School – Fairwater
The Cathedral School – Llandaff
Howell's School – Llandaff

The whole approach was to consider journeys to and from **all** these schools, and many schemes will have benefited more than one school. All schemes were intended to provide benefits for pedestrians and cyclists within the community, to encourage walking and cycling and to improve safety.

The total settlement received from the Welsh Assembly Government in respect of the Cardiff West bid was £865,000 over the three financial years, 2004/05 to 2006/07.

Question: *County Councillor Kelloway*

Can the Executive Member confirm that this Council has a blanket policy not to progress requests for 'Access Only' orders?

Reply: *County Councillor Bowen*

Yes, South Wales Police has confirmed that they will not enforce new "Access Only" orders. As you are aware, a letter dated 6th August 2008 from Chief Inspector Davies, the Officer responsible for roads policing states that:

"I can assure you that our long standing policy of not supporting this type of order is still our formal response to any proposals to implement 'Except for Access' or 'Access Only' traffic regulation orders and I would ask you that you treat this as a formal response from South Wales Police on this issue".

Without enforcement, Access Only orders are ineffective.

Supplementary Question: *County Councillor Kelloway*

I note with interest your reply and I would refer you to the answer given to me on 26 June by the representative of the South Wales Police Authority in this Chamber which states that it is not the policy of South Wales Police to either support or not support access only road traffic orders. The Police support is based on evidential fact and historical data around individual location road safety, for example the amount of road traffic collisions in that area; the amount of potential disruption to the local community; and the potential harm being caused to the public. This must be evidentially supported.

The response would seem to be at odds with the advice that you have had and I am wondering if in having a blanket policy in this Authority not to support access only traffic orders that this Authority in some instances may not be paying due regard to harm being caused to the public as a result?

Reply: *County Councillor Bowen*

Well obviously you will see the response that I have had from the Police and you have had a different response at different times. I simply note that this response, which I have put before you, is to be regarded as their final response. I don't know whether your response was formal or not but we will ask the Police whether they wish to revise the formal statement they have given. At the moment the situation you have pointed out does appear to be ambivalent so this needs sorting out. I will ask the Officers to approach the Police yet again and advise you accordingly.

Supplementary Question: *County Councillor Piper*

We have had a long-standing problem with an access only street in my ward that never seems to be dealt with. So Councillor Bowen, given your statement here about access only orders being ineffective what action will you be taking to rectify the situation on a number of roads throughout the City where the breaching of access only is causing considerable problems?

Reply: *County Councillor Bowen*

I will be happy to answer that question when I have had the definitive statement from the Police.

85 : COMMUNITIES HOUSING AND SOCIAL JUSTICE QUESTIONS

Question: *County Councillor Smith*

Some time ago in open Council I asked a question about the failings of the housing department in dealing with emergency re-housing due to harassment, overcrowding and neighbour problems. I highlighted the failings of responses by our officers. What, if any, re-training has taken place, and can we be assured that these failings do not lead to this Council being embarrassed in the media again, with the ombudsman forcing an apology to the parties concerned?

Reply: *County Councillor Woodman*

I think you are referring to the problems highlighted by the Ombudsman in a recent judgement, which is the subject of a statement at today's Council.

The issues raised have been addressed and they concerned the interpretation of legislation and the guidance received by the Council in March 2006. Since that time, new procedures have been developed and relevant officers are working with the recently appointed housing solicitor to ensure compliance with the legislation. Officers have recently met with the Ombudsman to discuss this issue and are providing him with evidence of the change of policy and procedure.

Housing officers receive briefings and more extensive training in all aspects of legislation and guidance and this is an area which the Council is seeking to address through structural changes and training improvements.

Supplementary Question: *County Councillor Smith*

I have a problem in my ward with a constituent who has sent me a letter and it has some disturbing sections to it. I did mention it to you on Monday as I wanted to give it to Sarah McGill. Nobody else has read this letter, not Members of my Group, nor Members of my ward. I am just wondering if you can tell me who I can give this letter to because I don't want it to go through the normal channels because I don't think it's a letter that anyone else should be reading because there are Officers' names mentioned in it and there are certain favours of the Council mentioned in it. It ticks all the boxes – child at risk – there's no overcrowding but it's a terrible area for a child to be brought up in and I am just wondering if I can pass this letter to somebody here today to remain in confidence, perhaps Kate Berry, so it can go to Sarah McGill to sort out from there?

Reply: *County Councillor Woodman*

Thank you Councillor Smith. Sarah McGill was actually sick on Monday but she is now back at work. Today you can hand it to Kate Berry, our Chief Legal Officer. You are welcome to hand it to me as well in confidence. It is entirely up to you or you can take it to Sarah McGill yourself tomorrow. You have three options, I hope that is helpful.

Question: *County Councillor Dianne Rees*

Why has your service area taken more than 6 months to respond to a petition signed by over 900 residents requesting the Council adopt a marriage policy?

Reply: *County Councillor Woodman*

At the outset, I should just like to remind you that – as an elected Member – I have responsibility for an Executive portfolio, rather than for any Council service area.

As I indicated to you in response to your previous question back in March – and in subsequent correspondence on this issue, the most recent letter being dated 7 August – officers have been considering the implications of this policy proposal.

Their initial equality impact assessment has raised a number of concerns about the consequences of adopting such a policy. While the proposal does not have any adverse impact in respect of age, disability or language, it may have an adverse impact on grounds of gender, religious belief, sexual orientation and some aspects of fundamental human rights.

Officers have indicated to me that this policy may discriminate against a significant proportion of local people. Consequently, they are undertaking consultation with a range of stakeholders to elicit their views. Clearly, that takes time and I make no apology for that; the Council must consider carefully all aspects of the proposal and avoid making a hasty decision.

I give you my assurance that Senior Officers are continuing to examine this proposal and I will provide more information to you in due course.

Supplementary Question: *County Councillor Bridges*

Councillor Woodman do you agree that any such policy should respect absolutely the sexual orientation of anyone seeking a marriage or civil partnership in Cardiff and that Members and Officers should be proud to support that equality of provision?

Reply: *County Councillor Woodman*

Thank you Councillor Bridges. Yes I do agree entirely and I would point out that marriage cannot happen between same sex couples, it is a civil partnership.

Question: *County Councillor Smith*

With the setting up of the new loan shark squad, is it possible to assess how serious this problem is, and what multi agency co-operation has been undertaken?

Reply: *County Councillor Woodman*

I am pleased to have the opportunity to respond to this question because it is truly a good news story. The All-Wales Illegal Money Lending Unit, which you refer to, was set up towards the end of 2007. It is grant funded by the Department for Business Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR) and Cardiff Trading Standards operate the Unit on behalf of the other Welsh Councils. It represents an excellent example of joined up local government.

The key aims and objectives include:

- To increase awareness of the problem of illegal lending and reduce the instances of illegal money lending.
- To create a climate where victims can come forward, confident that a prosecution will be undertaken, and convictions obtained without fear of reprisals.
- To refer victims to local debt advisors, sources of illegal affordable credit or other sources of support, and to record these referrals.
- To develop an understanding of the victims needs in the medium to long term and the interventions required for a sustained move away from illegal lending.

To give you an indication of the size of the problem, the team currently has a case load of 25-30 investigations following referrals from partner organisations and via the dedicated hotline.

Nine individuals have been arrested. Four have been charged with offences of illegal money lending, unlicensed pawn broking, assault and blackmail. The remaining five are also likely to face similar charges.

Additionally, the team provides support and assistance to victims and other partner organisations that help the vulnerable. They have made contact with several hundred partner organisations around Wales to raise awareness of the Unit and to encourage people to come forward.

Direct support has been provided for a number of victims, such support is tailored to the situation. In one instance, the team has managed to assist an individual deal with over £40,000 worth of debt and to “write off” an additional £10,000 of illegal debt.

As regards multi agency working, the above facts are all attributable to multi agency working across Wales. However, in addition, I must also mention:

- The placement of a serving police officer with the Unit by South Wales Police, which illustrates their commitment to the Unit. They understand how loan sharks link to the wider criminal activity that takes place within local communities.
- Conwy Council has made offices available to the team for any operations in North Wales.
- The Steering Committee includes representatives from the Welsh Assembly Government, Central Government and a range of law enforcement and advice agencies, all of whom want to engage in this initiative that cuts across so many policy areas.

There is real buzz around this project. Cardiff is leading the way and, even at this early stage, the team is making a real difference within local communities. If Councillors want to learn more about the work of the Unit, I will ask the officers to make a presentation at a future meeting.

Question: *County Councillor Dianne Rees*

Liberal Democrats often campaign along side Conservatives to retain post offices, which are at the heart of our communities and vital for the most vulnerable. The Local Government Association says that “If Post Offices are being considered for closure, then local councils must look at alternative ways of keeping services available”.

What action did you take to try to keep services available in the recent spate of closures and will you follow the example of Conservative Essex County Council and 150 other local authorities keen to follow its lead ,in re-opening closed branches in Cardiff, such as Old St Mellons Post Office, as a “community service” providing a computer terminal, with free access to the Council’s website, provided from a community projects budget and do you agree that this is what effective local government should be about?

Reply: *County Councillor Woodman*

I refer you to the answer provided by the Leader in response to this same question.

86 : ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT QUESTIONS

Question: *County Councillor Islam*

What changes took place in April 2008 with regard to vacant industrial properties and business rates and what is the effect of this on businesses in Cardiff

Reply: *County Councillor McEvoy*

New legislation effective from 1 April 2008 has been introduced whereby owners of industrial properties that have been vacant for more than six months are now liable to an empty rate charge of 100%. Previously, these properties were exempt.

Similarly, owners of vacant commercial and retail properties are liable to a 100% charge after being empty for a period of three months. Prior to 1st April 2008, these classes of property were previously liable to a 50% charge. For long term empty properties, these void periods were retrospective and ran from 1st October 2007 and 1st January 2008 respectively.

There are some classes of property that are exempt from this empty rate charge – i.e. listed buildings; properties that have a rateable value of less than £2,200, and properties that are prohibited from occupation by law.

Supplementary Question: *County Councillor Islam*

Councillor McEvoy do you think that this result shows that the current London Government is attacking small businesses? As you are aware a lot of Council owned shops and public owned shops are currently empty throughout Cardiff.

Reply: *County Councillor McEvoy*

I do indeed agree. I think in Cardiff we are starting to see the results of such stealth taxes. They are a disincentive to invest and I fail to understand why central Government is punishing small businesses. I just don't understand because in Wales, in Cardiff, small and medium sized businesses are so important. But I will flag up as well that in the last budget the Government increased corporation tax on small and medium sized businesses whilst cutting corporation tax for the big corporations which, I think speaks volumes.

Supplementary Question: *County Councillor Patel*

Would you agree that the Labour/Plaid coalition at the Assembly has helped over 37,000 businesses across Wales under the Small Business Rate Relief Scheme – 50% of businesses with rateable value of £2,000 or less; 25% relief for businesses with rateable value between £2001 and £5,000; 100% relief for post offices with a rateable value of £9,000; and 50% relief for post offices with a rateable value of £9,001 up to £12,000.

If you have got a problem with this issue I think you need to go to the Assembly because you have got a coalition with us down there and it's those people who have passed these issues so I do think it's pointless you coming here and criticising them because it's your Government that needs to address it at the Assembly?

Reply: *County Councillor McEvoy*

I think Councillor Patel has missed the point really. I am talking about the Westminster Government because it does affect us here. I am really delighted at the measures you have outlined. I am really pleased to see a Welsh Government implementing Plaid Cymru policies.

Question: *County Councillor K Parry*

Can credit unions play a positive role in terms of economic development?

Reply: *County Councillor McEvoy*

Credit unions can assist in strengthening and developing the local economy by retaining wealth within local communities through the encouragement of regular savings and by providing access to low cost, more affordable loans. This source of funding can be used in a micro credit capacity for those interested in developing ideas for business start ups and self employment.

Credit unions are able to work in partnership with enterprise agencies, and in Wales with the Business Eye support network, to encourage such entrepreneurship. They are also able to encourage active involvement in the operation of a small business; developing essential employment skills from basic literacy through to more advanced IT skills and, as such, assisting in taking forward community economic development.

Supplementary Question: *County Councillor Keith Parry*

I thank Councillor McEvoy for the answer to the question. Would you agree with me that Plaid Cymru has been a very progressive party in this field? I have been a member of the Plaid Cymru Credit Union for at least the last 25 years and I think it would be a good thing if members of other Parties were also members of the Credit Union, whether it be the Council one or other Credit Unions therefore providing funds to help the poorer members of the community and help development in various parts of the city and the rest of the country. Could Councillor McEvoy say what the Council is doing to further the aims of Credit Unions with the City Council?

Reply: *County Councillor McEvoy*

Cardiff has done the big developments over the years very well. I think what Councillor Parry was explaining to the Council was that Plaid Cymru has had a Credit Union for decades. They really do work. If you are on the right of the political spectrum then it's all about self-reliance through Credit Unions. If, perhaps, you are on the left then it's all about collective action. Credit Unions really do work. We made sure we included in the Capital Vision document a commitment to Credit Unions because we think they influence economic development at a micro level. We have met with Cardiff Credit

Union and are working with Officers. We will allocate resources to Cardiff Credit Union to take it forward. I think there are currently 3,000 members of Cardiff Credit Union but in Leeds I believe there are 22,000 members. We need to try to achieve that size.

There was a presentation earlier by Cardiff Credit Union but only two Members turned up. What I would like is to encourage every member here to publicise credit unions, to promote them and market them. Let's make Cardiff Credit Union grow. Everyone sat in this Chamber can do that and I ask you all to endeavour to do so.

Supplementary Question: *County Councillor Gasson*

I would just like to let Councillor McEvoy and Councillor Parry know that I was Chair of the first Credit Union in Cardiff in Ely and I would like to thank the Labour Council at the time when they had Economic Development Committees because they actually gave us a start up grant.

Rely: *County Councillor McEvoy*

Well said Councillor Gasson.

87 : EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING QUESTIONS

Question: *County Councillor Dianne Rees*

What provision is made by this Council for the continuing education of children who spend long periods of their lives in hospital or at home because of long term illness and are you satisfied with the quality of provision?

Reply: *County Councillor Berman*

Tuition is provided on a daily basis each morning at the University Hospital Wales/Children's Hospital for Wales. The tutors are qualified teachers and have much experience and expertise in this area.

On discharge from hospital, children who are unable to return promptly to school are tutored in their own home or local community. For those children of secondary school age, with long term emotional/health problems, a group provision which meets for four mornings each week is available. Otherwise, children are taught individually.

The Council is currently arranging an increase in the level of individual support within the community and seeking to provide joint teaching to minimise any aspects of social isolation. Although, we do appreciate that access can be limited in certain instances by the pupil's ability to respond, given their particular health difficulties.

Supplementary Question: *County Councillor Dianne Rees*

Is continuing education provided for 16 to 19 year olds who are long term sick and are these young people provided with the opportunity to take their public examinations in hospital or at home?

Reply: *County Councillor Berman*

I would imagine that it is, but I don't know the precise answer to your question and I will ask Officers to relay that information to you as soon as possible.

Question: *County Councillor Derrick Morgan*

Can the Executive Member be satisfied that all necessary information has been contained in the Report of the Corporate Director with regard to Schools Organisation Planning following consultation on Schools Proposals in East Cardiff?

The second paragraph of Section 12 refers to a 8000 named petition but no reference is made to 2800 letters objecting to the proposal or 1100 of the Council's Consultation Document/Questionnaires that were returned, also objecting to the proposals. There is no mention either of Local Member objection. Does the Executive Member consider this satisfactory?

Reply: *County Councillor Berman*

In the first instance I would like to point out that the proposals in the report were drawn up with cross party support through the Schools Sub- Committee. Whilst the July Executive Business Meeting Report does not mention specifically the number of identical response forms and letters which were received, it does stress the main points which were raised at the meetings and in writing.

The report makes clear for Members that a significant number of residents have genuine concerns about the proposal in its original form.

The Executive was therefore able to give due regard to the views which have been made known in the consultation process and agreed that officers continue working on option appraisal and feasibility particularly in relation to community, educational and financial criteria around Llanrumney and Rumney High Schools.

It was also agreed that officers report back to the Executive in Autumn 2008 recommending the way forward.

Question: *County Councillor Robson*

Will the Executive Member comment on what is being done to promote the 2008 National Year of Reading?

Reply: *County Councillor Berman*

A number of events and activities have been undertaken and arranged to coincide with the National Year of Reading. Schools were encouraged in March to participate in World Book day which involves teachers in activities that bring the characters in books to life and involves interviews with teachers about their favourite books.

The service has been active in the “Read A Million Words Together” programme which follows on from the original “Read A Million Words” initiative funded by WAG. This successor initiative has provided £1,000 per secondary school to spend on books. The service has also submitted bids to the Basic Skills Agency to purchase book boxes which have been provided for primary schools in Community First areas.

The Council has worked with primary schools in the Fitzalan High school cluster with the aim of turning reluctant readers in year 6 into enthusiastic readers in year 7. This has involved the development and provision of “Curiosity Kits” that contain reading material particularly aimed at encouraging boys to read.

The Children’s Poet Laureate – Michael Rosen - is working with children in a Cardiff primary school – in this case Springwood Primary- over an eight-

week period to develop a love of reading. This work is intended to be filmed as part of a series on BBC4.

The Library Service is working to full capacity and has entered bids for some of the competitive funding that was available as part of the year. However, all events and activities have been badged under the National Year of Reading banner as requested by national coordinators and the service is also cooperating with regional and national events whenever possible.

Author events, delivered in partnership with Academy or publishers, so far include; Alastair Reynolds in Fairwater Library; Nia Wyn in Canton Library; Peter Read at Whitchurch Library; Tessa Hadley at Rhydypennau Library; Edward Marston at Whitchurch Library; Jo Verity at Grangetown Library; Barbara Erskine at Llanrumney Library; Katherine John (a.k.a. Catrin Collier) at Rumney Library and Owen Shears at Canton Library

The annual summer reading scheme was also promoted to schools under the National Year of Reading banner. This year approx. 2,803 children started the "Team Read" scheme and, perhaps more significantly, 1,774 finished it. This is a completion rate of over 50% and is a major improvement on the average completion rate of approx. 30% over the last 4 years. This improvement signifies more visits and issues from libraries, and an improvement in the development and maintenance of the reading habit amongst children during the summer holiday period, when this type of activity often declines. As well as promotional work in schools, joint working with local leisure centres resulted in improved uptake of the scheme in Grangetown and Fairwater, and particularly Ely with over 180 children completing the challenge there (compared to approx. 100 starters in previous years).

The Council's libraries are also experiencing an increase in attendances at reading/book groups. There are approx. 15 groups hosted by Libraries across the county, with many more using the services on offer (i.e. loan of multiple copies of the same title). The service is aiming to develop an information leaflet for such groups, indicating the level of support Libraries are able to provide and lists of suggested titles, for distribution in the autumn.

Supplementary Question: *County Councillor Robson*

Can I ask the Executive Member if he thinks that the bad publicity proposed by the sale of rare historic books by the Council will damage the popularity of reading schemes, such as this in Cardiff?

Reply: *County Councillor Berman*

On the contrary I think that the extra investment that we can provide for our Library Service can actually enhance reading in this City, and actually enhance opportunities for the children of this City.

Question: *County Councillor Robson*

What is the current situation in relation to the proposed closure of Cefn Onn Primary School?

Reply: *County Councillor Berman*

In October 2007 following recommendations by the Schools Sub Committee, the Council's Executive agreed to consult on a number of proposals, including the closure of Cefn Onn Primary School.

During November and December 2007 public consultation took place. Responses were invited through letters, newsletters, consultation response forms, public meetings, a website, exhibitions and drop in sessions.

At the Executive Meeting on 14 July a recommendation to proceed with the publication of the appropriate statutory notice to discontinue Cefn Onn Primary School was agreed.

This recommendation required consultation on the catchment arrangements for pupils living within the Cefn Onn Primary Schools catchment area to be completed.

The results of this consultation will be reported to the Executive on 2 October 2008.

The Executive will be recommended to approve the proposed catchment boundaries provisionally, subject to the statutory procedures resulting in the proposals being approved in due course.

88 : HEALTH, SOCIAL CARE AND WELLBEING STATEMENT

(County Councillor Dixon)

Scrutiny Matters

Since the last ordinary Council meeting on 18 July the following issues within the Health, Social Care and Wellbeing portfolio area have been before scrutiny:

- Single Children's Plan – Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee (2 September 2008)
- Performance Management Information 2007/08 - Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee (2 September 2008)
- Performance Management Information 2007/08 – Community and Adult Services Scrutiny Committee (11 September 2008)
- Supporting People Operational Plan – Community and Adult Services Scrutiny Committee (11 September 2008)

Executive Business Matters

The following Executive proposal relating to the portfolio was discussed at the Executive Business Meeting on 18 September 2008

- Cardiff Children & Young People's Plan 18 September 2008

Meetings and Visits

I have met with, visited or attended the following external events:

- Charles Willie and Paul Warren, Cardiff & Vale Coalition of Disabled People (23 July 2008)
- Neath-Port Talbot Council, with Martin Hamilton, to discuss the development of their scrutiny arrangements (5 August 2008)
- Local Safeguarding Children Board development event (8 August 2008)
- Parents of children attending Lilliput Nursery (21 August 2008)
- Wrexham County Council – Peer Assessor with the WLGA review team for their application for Charter status for member development (2-3 September 2008)

- WLGA Programme Board on Social Service Performance Monitoring (8 September 2008)
- Councillors Clarissa and Martin Holland about Moorland Road Day Centre (11 September 2008)
- Dr Dwarak Sastry about the Cardiff East Locality Team Project, at University Hospital of Wales (22 September 2008)
- And found time to appear with Cllr Gareth Aubrey and Gwilym Owen on the BBC4 quiz show “Only Connect” which will air on Monday 29 September 2008.

89 : HEALTH, SOCIAL CARE AND WELLBEING QUESTIONS

Question: *County Councillor Gasson*

Do you think it appropriate for a Member (such as the Leader of a very small group) to criticise the Council in the South Wales Echo, before hearing at Committee the reason for the poor PI's?

Further, without the knowledge and experience of a background in scrutiny, which gives them more realistic interpretation of the PI's results, do you think this public criticism will:

- a) Damage existing staff morale?
- b) Lead to even more recruitment difficulties?
- c) Lead to less openness and transparency?

Reply: *County Councillor Dixon*

The Council has robust processes in place that enable proper scrutiny of the Council's performance to take place. The scrutiny process in Cardiff has been acknowledged as amongst the best in the UK and the scrutiny of Children's Services' performance, in particular, is well-established. Airing concerns about performance in the media, without discussion and clarification of the issues, risks misunderstanding of the meaning and context of performance information, and bringing the Council, and its staff, into disrepute. That would be true no matter what size of group a leader may lead.

There is little doubt that the recent critical and misinformed reporting in the South Wales Echo has impacted on staff morale. The service has been engaged in a process of continuous improvement with a commitment to open

and honest reporting of difficulties, as well as of achievements that the tone of some recent media coverage failed to acknowledge.

Children's Services has recently recruited a number of new social workers who are committed to contributing to continuing improvement.

Misleading interpretations of performance, even if unintended are unlikely to inspire confidence or encourage future recruitment. It is likely that the finger will be firmly pointed at those who use social services as a way of generating a sensational headline for political gain if a question about difficulty in recruitment and retention in Cardiff is raised in future.

We are one of the few, possibly the only, Council in Wales to give such regular, in-year, updates on performance. We do so voluntarily so that everyone has access to the same information that I do – this then forms the basis for both my and Scrutiny's questions to managers about issues of concern, any explanations for the figures, and action that's proposed.

We provide the information so that there can be an honest and frank discussion before a conclusion, and Scrutiny's recommendations, are reached. It's essential that service areas don't feel that by being open about problems in provision, they leave themselves vulnerable to exaggerated and misinformed attack. I've worked hard to reverse the defensive, bunker mentality that was prevalent after the 2002 Joint Review. I've made it clear that this episode shouldn't change that, and that I value honesty from staff as that's the only basis on which the service can improve.

Those who know me well will know that this has dented my optimism, and my belief that if you treat individuals as responsible members, then they will respond in kind. I still hope that there aren't exceptions to that rule, but I'm less sure of that than I was at the beginning of September.

Supplementary Question: *County Councillor Cowan*

Do you think it's appropriate to castigate an outside organisation such as the South Wales Echo without giving them the courtesy of a right of reply?

Reply: *County Councillor Dixon*

I will show them the same courtesy that they showed me.

Question: *County Councillor Rogers*

When will electric changing beds for carers and disabled visitors use be available and when will hoists for lifting disabled children and adults be fully available within the International Pool?

Reply: *County Councillor Dixon*

The International Pool caters for disabled users at present. The provision includes four accessible changing rooms, with integral showers and toilets, for wheelchair users. There are three hoist points on the competition pool which facilitate access to each area of the pool even when the lifting booms are in the raised position.

It should be noted however that whilst there is provision for disabled visitors there is no special provision for severely disabled persons. This would require specialist equipment and specialist supervision. However, management at the pool are always keen to improve facilities and I understand that as part of the ongoing review of facilities, options in relation to specialist equipment in the pool area will be considered.

Although specialist equipment is not available in the changing areas at present, we have been advised that funding is available from the Welsh Assembly Government to install electric changing beds as part of the Changing Places initiative and this is being actively pursued as a possible option.

Finally, it should be noted that the Pool does receive requests from severely disabled users and in all cases they do their utmost to assist and we are not aware that any user has been turned away. Only this week, I understand that the Pool staff has received a letter of thanks from Ysgol Erw'r Delyn Special School in Penarth complementing them on their facilities and their helpful attitude.

Supplementary Question: *County Councillor Rogers*

The hoists in place are for the disabled with partial or full upper body strength. The hoists in fact I refer to are swing hoists for disabled users with complete or partial upper body limitation. Please confirm therefore that the severely disabled will stop being ignored and funding for changing beds and

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swing hoists under the Changing Places Plan will be pursued as a priority and will become a definite option and not, in fact, a possible one?

Reply: *County Councillor Dixon*

You've touched on an issue which actually falls across three portfolio areas. You will have to accept this as an answer from myself, from Councillor Howells and also Councillor Woodman, as it touches on equalities.

I don't have very specific knowledge of the pool itself. I do know that we are not ignoring this, that we are providing as much support as possible and, as I say in my answer, we have been complimented by the Ysgol Erw'r Delyn Special School in Penarth. I can assure you that the concerns you raised will be taken seriously.

Question: *County Councillor Cowan*

Will the Executive Member provide exit figures for Council staff and agency staff in all the Family Centres (including Global Link), the Intake and Assessment Team and the Children In Need Team for the last 3 years?

Reply: *County Councillor Dixon*

The information requested in respect of Council staff requires some time to collate. I will be able to provide the information, in writing, by the end of next week.

Information about exit figures for agency workers is not available. This is because the engagement of agency staff with the Council does not involve a contract of employment with the individual. The workers are employed by the agency that provides them. When an assignment ends this can be the choice of the agency worker but is often because Children's Services has decided the worker is no longer required.

The Agency Managed Service that has recently been introduced will collate information about use of agency workers in future.

Question: *County Councillor Cowan*

Will the Executive Member advise why Cardiff Council did not follow the route of several other Local Authorities in purchasing an integrated children's system as opposed to the computer system now in place?

Reply: *County Councillor Dixon*

The question reflects a misunderstanding.

The Care First electronic system provides the platform for Children's Services' implementation of the Integrated Children's System (ICS). The ICS is a case management system which pulls together the existing assessment framework and system for managing the cases of looked after children, and provides a single pathway for the management of all cases of children in need. Statutory guidance requires all authorities to implement the ICS.

The Care First system is currently used by two other Social Services authorities in Wales and several in England. Authorities that are not using Care First use other electronic systems to provide the platform for their implementation of the ICS.

Question: *County Councillor Cowan*

Will the Executive Member advise if any student social worker has been given the casework for a child on the child protection register?

Reply: *County Councillor Dixon*

Allocation of work to student social workers placed within Children's Services is carefully managed and agreed between the team manager, the student's social work supervisor and their college assessor.

It is sometimes considered appropriate to involve student social workers who are in their final placement before qualification in work with children whose names are on the child protection register (CPR) in order to gain first-hand knowledge of the work involved. In such circumstances accountability for management of the child's case will normally be held by the student's social work supervisor who will be a registered social worker working within Children's Services.

During part of May and June 2008 a student social worker who was employed by the council, and was about to graduate as a social worker, was allocated to a child included on the CPR in anticipation of them taking up a post as a social worker with the authority.

Supplementary Question: *County Councillor Cowan*

Councillor Dixon, in the last paragraph of your answer you say that during part of this year a student social worker was actually allocated to a child included on the Child Protection Register. In your opinion do you think this was fair on the student in placement? Do you think he/she could have given the best service to the child in light of not having any experience at that time. so do you think it was fair to put him/her in that position?

Reply: *County Councillor Dixon*

Yes, because the student social worker in this case would have been supervised and this would have been with the understanding, acknowledgement and agreement of the Team Manager, the student's social work supervisor and the College assessor, so they would have been fully supervised.

In fact, on discussing this with managers, the client may even have received a better service as student social workers have more protected time and are therefore able to spend more time on an individual case.

Supplementary Question: *County Councillor Dianne Rees*

Would the student social worker carry the can if something went wrong?

Reply *County Councillor Dixon*

Absolutely not, as I have just said and as is quite clearly indicated in my answer, the accountability of the management of the child's case would be held by the student's social work supervisor who will be a registered social worker working within Children's Services.

90 : ENVIRONMENT QUESTIONS

Question: *County Councillor Gasson*

I have many blocks of flats and maisonettes in my Ward, both Council housing and private. They do not have individual gardens, but do have communal gardens which are tended either by the Parks Department in the case of Council flats, or private contractors in the case of those privately owned. They therefore do not have green bins. How do these residents dispose of their food waste without access to green bins?

Reply: *County Councillor Margaret Jones*

The Council intends to provide every household in the city with an opportunity to recycle their leftover food waste. The most appropriate facilities to do so will be provided for each type of location, and to that end the waste management facilities of all Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) will be reviewed during the period of the food waste roll-out programme.

Where it is identified that a premise does not have the appropriate storage facility to accommodate food waste, an additional bulk container will be provided. It is preferable in practical terms that these communal food waste containers for HMOs are eventually of the wheeled-bin type.

Additionally, residents in areas where the Tri-Bag system is operated will be requested to place their full, sealed kitchen caddy liners into the white biodegradable bags which are currently used for compostable materials, in readiness for collection.

Supplementary Question: *County Councillor Gasson*

The answer refers to HMO's which are usually houses in inner city areas and I am talking about blocks of flats. I have nine blocks of 4-storey, 3 bedroom maisonettes with communal gardens and nowhere to put wheelie bins. In fact, when the residents tried to get hold of wheelie bins the other people complained. I've got six blocks of 18, 3-storey again sharing communal bins. There is nowhere for these people to put wheelie bins so can the Officers look at this again?

Reply: *County Councillor Margaret Jones*

Thank you for bringing this to my attention Councillor Gasson. I will certainly speak to Officers about this particular case.

Question: *County Councillor Richard Cook*

When did the Council first consult with staff on the proposed two shift collection system for food waste?

Reply: *County Councillor Margaret Jones*

The consultation process for all new collection shifts commenced on 22 November 2007 with a presentation to workforce representatives and trade union representatives at the Lamby Way depot. The presentation included details of a number of alternative shift patterns, one of which was the initial double shift option of 6am – 2pm and 2pm – 10pm.

An evaluation of operational costings demonstrated that a double shift pattern would deliver optimum efficiency of the current vehicle fleet whilst leaving the workforce with the same length of working day as they currently enjoy, albeit that some operatives would be required to move to the PM shift.

Supplementary Question: *County Councillor Richard Cook*

How confident are you that the roll-out of collection of food waste on 13 October will go out, with the current dispute that's on with the Council workforce?

Reply: *County Councillor Margaret Jones*

As you can imagine Councillor Cook there are very sensitive negotiations going on at the moment and I really can't comment on this. I'm very confident that it will go ahead but I cannot be 100% positive at the moment because this is a very sensitive time.

Supplementary Question: *County Councillor Carter*

Thank you Councillor Jones for the answer you gave Councillor Cook. I was very interested in hearing the information. I fully support the way the shift pattern is being designed to use the current vehicle fleet, but regarding the

vehicle fleet itself, obviously vehicles do break down and ships do fall apart and parts are delayed and we would then have to go to private contractors. I was wondering whether we are employing any additional engineers, at least in the short-term, to make sure that the vehicles can cope with the extra length of time they would be working?

Reply: *County Councillor Margaret Jones*

I am not aware that we are employing extra engineers Councillor Carter but I am sure this Service Area will cope.

Question: *County Councillor Smith*

During the previous year of administration I asked a question as a supplement; What if any is the possibility of using people on Community Service assisting with the cleansing of our verges? The Executive Member at the time replied that it was being looked into, is there any progress?

Reply: *County Councillor Margaret Jones*

I should clarify that Community Service refers to the time which is voluntarily given by citizens to activities that benefit the community. This should not be confused with Community Punishment, which is clearly the subject of interest here.

In November 2007 a supplementary question was asked that perhaps those on Community Punishment orders could assist with the removal of leaves from grass verges. This current question relates not to leaves but to the cleansing of verges and I can advise that as part of the Tidy Towns initiative, which will be launched later this year, Waste & Cleansing Officers will be engaging with the probation service to seek assistance to "clean up" projects across Cardiff.

These projects will be developed in partnership with Keep Wales Tidy, Communities First and Community Safety Officers.

Supplementary Question: *County Councillor Smith*

Where have you ever heard of somebody being sentenced to a Community Punishment Order? It is a Community Service Order and it is through rehabilitation?

Reply: *County Councillor Margaret Jones*

Thank you for putting me straight.

Supplementary Question: *County Councillor Gasson*

Are you aware that I asked my colleague to write to you recently because we have four teams of ten people doing Community Punishment Orders in my ward clearing up all the rubbish and saving the Council lots of money and they tried to use Lamby Way but they want to charge them so they have been using the Vale. These people are doing a stirring job. Could you give serious consideration to the issue of charging for dumping our rubbish?

Reply: *County Councillor Margaret Jones*

Councillor Gasson I have already given a comprehensive reply to your colleague about this. Unfortunately we are not able to make an exception for the Probation Service. We just will not be doing that. Everybody will be charged the same.

Question: *County Councillor Robson*

Is the Executive Member concerned that late refuse collections up until 10pm at night will cause considerable disturbance to local residents?

Reply: *County Councillor Margaret Jones*

Afternoon and Evening household waste collection services have been provided since April 2007 in seven areas of the city, namely Heath, Penylan, Fairwater, Llanrumney, Pontprennau, Lisvane and Ely.

In that time there have been only two recorded complaints regarding disturbance.

The majority of enquiries on the subject have involved householders who have traditionally had their waste removed before lunchtime, calling to enquire as to why their collection has not yet taken place. When the situation is explained they have invariably appreciated the practicalities involved.

All collection rounds are completed by 8pm, unless unforeseen operational issues arise, such as vehicle breakdowns.

Supplementary Question: *County Councillor Robson*

In relation to the initial double shift option of 6 am to 2 pm and 2 pm to 10 pm, are you concerned that if the 2 pm to 10 pm shift comes in refuse collection late at night will cause disturbance to local residents?

Reply: *County Councillor Margaret Jones*

I think my answer has been quite comprehensive on that issue. We are already doing evening services in seven areas and have only had two complaints since April 2007 so I really cannot see what the problem is. I am not concerned about it at this particular time but I can assure you that I will be monitoring it carefully.

Supplementary Question: *County Councillor Bridges*

Thank you Councillor Jones, I just wondered off hand how much extra it would cost the Council taxpayers of Cardiff if we were to do the actual collections which are being proposed within the existing shift patterns that we operate under?

Reply: *County Councillor Margaret Jones*

£1.6 million.

Question: *County Councillor Cowan*

Will the Executive Member confirm when discussions started with the refuse collectors regarding the change of shift pattern and what the initial consultation response was?

Reply: *County Councillor Margaret Jones*

May I refer Councillor Cowan to the response given to County Councillor Richard Cook on the detail of the consultation process.

The initial response from the workforce and Trades Union representatives was that they were very open-minded, willing to consider any proposal, and both positive and pro-active.

Supplementary Question: *County Councillor Cowan*

If our staff refuse to undertake the two shift pattern will you use agency staff as an interim measure to ensure that food waste collection starts on time?

Reply: *County Councillor Margaret Jones*

As I just said Councillor Cowan we are at a very sensitive stage in negotiations at the moment and I will be able to answer your questions more fully within the next week I should think.

Question: *County Councillor Brian Jones*

What consideration has been given to the Health and Safety implications, for both Council staff and the public, of Council refuse vehicles collecting in narrow streets until 10p.m. in the evenings?

Reply: *County Councillor Margaret Jones*

Waste Management undertake regular and detailed health and safety risk assessments to cover refuse collection operations. Additionally, a specific risk assessment exercise has been undertaken for evening collections. This covered the risks to operatives, residents, pedestrians and other road users. Any identified risk controls or improvements have been implemented.

This particular assessment was last undertaken in February and officers are now preparing to carry out a scheduled review.

Question: *County Councillor Cowan*

Will the Executive Member advise if the roll out of the food waste containers is being delivered on schedule?

Reply: *County Councillor Margaret Jones*

I am able to confirm that the delivery schedule is currently running ahead of the planned time table, with the first collections taking place in the week commencing October 13 2008 as planned.

Supplementary Question: *County Councillor Cowan*

Councillor Jones I spoke with an Officer from Waste Management this week who advised me that we have run out of the containers. I know that the Rhiwbina and Heath wards were the first two to have the roll-out and I know that in both the wards some of the containers still haven't been received. Can you investigate this and come back to me to advise please?

Reply: *County Councillor Margaret Jones*

I have been advised by the Senior Officer that we have not run out.

91 : FINANCE AND SERVICE DELIVERY QUESTIONS

Question: *County Councillor Richard Cook*

How much money did the Council spend on purchasing bottled water in the last financial year?

Reply: *County Councillor Stephens*

I do not know the precise figure so I will write to you in due course with this information.

Supplementary Question: *County Councillor Robson*

Lord Mayor I am astounded that with the interest that this Group has in bottle water and buffets the accountants do not know the answer to this off the top of their heads. Do you agree?

Reply: *County Councillor Stephens*

Obviously they are all experts on what we drink here but it's the rest of the Council that is the problem.

Question: *County Councillor Brian Jones*

Would the Executive Member comment on how the current international financial crisis is likely to affect the current holdings of the Pension fund, and

are there any known implications for any schemes in the Council's capital programme?

Reply: *County Councillor Stephens*

Although the equity markets have recorded both large falls and rises in recent weeks, the Pension Fund's strategy is focused on the long term market returns which will fund pensions over the next 20 to 30 years.

As equity markets have consistently demonstrated higher long term returns, pension funds will continue holding more in shares than other investments. To ensure a degree of stability, 25% of the Fund is held in less volatile assets such as government bonds and cash which have been largely unaffected by recent events.

In terms of the capital programme, officers in Finance, Property & ICT, supported by our specialist consultants, are constantly monitoring interest rate moves and forecasts in order to minimise the impact of recent events.

Question: *County Councillor Ralph Cook*

The report on Section 106 which is before Council today states on page 5 of 14 (EBM version) that "very often it is the Council's own match funding that is used to support monies received from Section 106 contributions in order to complete a scheme". Exactly how much of "the Council's own match-funding" has been required to complete specific Section 106 projects during the last five years?

By "Section 106 projects" I confine my definition only to those specifically detailed in S106 agreements with developers. I specifically exclude projects paid for with S106 money that was not specifically ear-marked in an S106 agreement because it can be equally argued that unear-marked S106 money is being used to support Council activity, there are examples of this in my own Ward.

Please can you provide a breakdown of the match-funded expenditure requested detailing the name and location of the scheme, the amount of S106 money and the Council's contribution required to complete the scheme?

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Can you specifically identify a few recent examples of S106 projects in the Trowbridge Ward whose completion required a contribution from the Council's own resources?

Reply: *County Councillor Stephens*

This will take time to complete and a written response will be forwarded to you in due course.

Examples in the current capital programme of the Council's own match funding being used together with contributions to develop a scheme include Radyr Library, the Cowbridge Road East and Leckwith Road regeneration, as well as the City Centre public realm improvements.

92 : SPORT, LEISURE AND CULTURE QUESTIONS

Question: *County Councillor Bowden*

Will the Executive Member comment on the suggested proposal that the operation of the Model Railway in Heath Park be transferred to the Council; and the likely associated costs of doing so?

Reply: *County Councillor Howells*

It would not be in the best interests of the Council to operate the Model Railway at Heath Park. Operating a facility of this nature is labour intensive and requires specifically trained staff. Whilst a voluntary society is able to resource such a facility through the goodwill and voluntary effort of its members, all of whom are enthusiasts, the Council could not.

It is reckoned that on an Open Day, up to 50 volunteers are needed to supply and operate the engines; act as guards and drivers; supervise visitors; issue tickets; and provide refreshments. This reliance on a large number of volunteers is the primary reason why Open Days are restricted to around 12 occasions per year. The Society contends that it is unrealistic to expect volunteers to turn out in such large numbers on an increased number of occasions. It would certainly be unsustainable for the Council to meet the costs of doing so.

The financial cost to the Council of taking over the facility would depend largely on the management model employed and the level of involvement the

Engineering Society would wish to maintain in the facility. If the expectation was that the Council would underwrite the resources required to open up the facility on a continuous or more frequent basis than that which currently occurs, then the cost could run into many tens, if not hundreds, of thousands of pounds per annum. This would be very difficult to justify and achieve in the current economic climate.

Supplementary Question: *County Councillor Bowden*

Can you just clarify for me, if we were to proceed with such a suggestion, what the impact would be on the parks budget?

Reply: *County Councillor Howells*

As I outlined in the final paragraph of my answer this is not likely to be something which is going to be cheap to operate. In order then, to take over that operation, we would either have to take the money from the existing parks budget or make a bid in the next budget round, which I assume will be as difficult as it has been in previous years. So I really don't think that it is at all feasible.

Supplementary Question: *County Councillor Page*

The question refers to a suggested proposal could I ask when that proposal was put to the Council for consideration please?

Reply: *County Councillor Howells*

I have taken this as a suggestion which has been brought up in correspondence but no formal offer has been made to us. However, I know there has been lots of speculation within the pages of the South Wales Echo and I think that is probably where the suggested proposal arose - from someone who was opposed to the extension of the Model Railway at Heath Park. What I seek to outline here is something that I was going to outline in a letter to the South Wales Echo anyway. But I think having it here in the public record lets everyone know what the cost implications would be to the Council taxpayer and leaves no doubt that it would be a significant cost to.

Question: *County Councillor Page*

In a reply to the question I asked about Heath Park at the council meeting on 18 July, it was stated that the park was protected by section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972. Would you please explain how this Act protected the park when part of it was leased to a private model railway club, another part used as a commercial car park and the Council itself built offices there?

Reply: *County Councillor Howells*

The Local Government Act 1972 protects the park through ensuring that any proposed disposal of land through sale or lease must be advertised in the press, with all responses to advertisements given due consideration by the Council in reaching its decision.

At the time you refer to, such a process would have been undertaken and completed in respect of the area currently leased to the model railway society. Because this decision was, of course, enacted by a previous Administration, I cannot say how much opposition or support this proposal elicited at the time. However, given the decision to proceed, it can be inferred that the general consensus was favourable.

With regard to the commercial car park and the Council offices, these facilities have their origins in the Second World War. The car parking makes use of the former army parade ground, and the Council offices replaced a far more extensive array of former wartime buildings, which had subsequently been used as a teacher training college before being taken over by the former Parks Department.

The difference between the present use of the parade ground for car parking, and the unsupervised and informal parking that used to occur, is that with today's system, Parks Services receives an income that can be re-invested into service improvements.

It might also be noted that the consolidation of the pitch changing rooms and Parks Services offices has ensured that these facilities occupy a considerably smaller area, and has resulted in a net increase of the area available for open air recreation.

Supplementary Question: *County Councillor Page*

The answer given certainly does not appear to show that the 1972 Act does protect a park because Council Offices were built on Heath Park and so the 1972 Act seems to give no protection other than to say it should be advertised. So let me ask this, there was a clear undertaking in 1952 that once the Teachers Training College, which is referred to in the question, left Heath Park the Council would return the area to the public for recreational purposes. Now why has the Council refused to honour this undertaking which was in the Deed of Trust dated 1952 by building Council offices on the park?

Reply: *County Councillor Howells*

The time of the building of the offices was obviously, as I mentioned in my response, undertaken during a previous Administration so I cannot say exactly what process was undertaken. The advice I have been given is that the due process was undertaken and that the decision to proceed was made in the proper manner.

Question: *County Councillor Richard Cook*

The report to the Executive Business Meeting titled “Disposal of surplus library stock” says “If these items are not disposed of considerable investment will need to be made by the Council for their conservation.”

What consideration was given to depositing the books in other institutions within the city where appropriate storage and professional conservation services are available?

Reply: *County Councillor Howells*

As part of regular collaborative meetings with Cardiff University, some discussions took place in early 2006 regarding the temporary housing of certain library collections. At that time there appeared to be a real possibility that the Library Service might have nowhere to house the Stacks collections (estimated to be in excess of 400,000 items, including books, periodicals and newspapers). This was because the Library Service needed to vacate the then Central Library premises in September 2006. However, the timely securing of premises on Dominions Way ensured that this course of action was not required.

It was apparent at the time of these discussions that the University had an interest in some of the Library Services' collections but, despite requests from Council officers for further details regarding these items, no specific information has been forthcoming from the University until the last 2-3 weeks. A visit by a Council officer to the proposed storage location in 2006 found that location to be virtually full; and this was not, therefore, pursued as a serious option by either party. It should also be noted that this accommodation would not have been appropriate as it was no more suitable than the accommodation which would have been provided by Library Services itself.

Information regarding the books being put forward for sale has also been shared with the Glamorgan Records Office but they have responded advising that they have no interest in any of the items.

The initial sales list, consisting of 141 items has been reviewed by the University and it has been agreed that 32 items be withdrawn from the sale in order to allow the University to inspect the items and consider their purchase.

The Council is under no obligation to give these valuable items away to another institution simply because that institution has expressed an interest in holding them. The Council is obliged to achieve value for money for the people of Cardiff through the disposal of any of its assets, and to invest the receipts appropriately. This is what the Council intends to do.

Supplementary Question: *County Councillor Richard Cook*

The Executive report on this item back in January 2007 said that considerable investment would be needed to conserve these books. Why was not consideration given to how those books could be best conserved and why was the first thing that was done was to consider how we can sell those books to supplement the budget? We spend millions of pounds with the Glamorgan Records Office and in fact they are building a very large new building in my ward in Canton next to the Cardiff City Stadium. I am sure that they have an environment there where these books could be conserved. I would have thought that we could have been conserving them there. I would have thought that we could be asking them to conserve them there since we provide them with the greatest majority of their budget and why wasn't that considered?

Reply: *County Councillor Howells*

I think I have answered this in the public questions. The items which could go to the Glamorgan Record Office would be related to items of Welsh or local interest. I stated twice during the public questions that no items in the Welsh Language are to be sold and no items whose content is of Welsh or local interest are to be disposed of and no manuscripts are to be disposed of.

The initial list which the auctioneers have compiled for going to auction has been shared with the Glamorgan Record Office and they have confirmed in writing that they are not interested in any of the items going to the first auction. I had a meeting this afternoon, as I mentioned in my public questions, with one of the Deputy Leaders and with the Heritage Minister and the agreed way forward is to co-ordinate a meeting between ourselves, the National Library, Cardiff University and Glamorgan Record Office so that for future sales everyone can have an input into what is being disposed of.

I do take issue with the point you made about us using this to supplement the budget. This is to provide massive investment into the library service. We have invested quite considerably over the last four years in new libraries in Splott and Grangetown; a new Central Library to be opened next March; refurbished library in Llandaff North; refurbished libraries in Rhydyppennau and Fairwater. We have plans also for Penylan library to be re-opened next year as a brand new intricate part of the Community Centre, a budget for a new Cathays library and we are developing plans for a library at Thornhill.

Notwithstanding all of that we do realise that in order for us to meet the new standards that our libraries are expected to achieve we have to put investment in and we don't have the funds within existing budgets to do that. This is a re-investment of assets which aren't used at the moment by anyone. They are not accessed by people at the moment. What we are proposing to do is put the money into a massive re-investment which will allow us to be more flexible in our opening hours and get more people into the libraries. I don't want libraries to be stuffy old places full of books which nobody accesses. I want people to get in there and start joining reading classes. Let's have a virtual library provision in Butetown, one of the most deprived areas of Cardiff, who do not have library provision at the moment. Let's get people in there and let's have reading classes, language classes, let's provide books in their community languages. So I really take issue with you on that. This is a

massive re-investment which for the vast majority of Cardiff residents will provide much needed benefit to them.

Supplementary Question: *County Councillor Bridges*

Thank you Councillor Howells, you touched on some of the issues I was going to raise but as a self-professed library geek who spends a lot of his time in public libraries on a professional basis I am frequently struck by the importance of community events when developing a library service so it can be a genuinely community resource, particularly in small branches and I just wondered if you could outline your plans for improving our community events in Cardiff and explain how the money potentially raised for sales might help us?

Reply: *County Councillor Howells*

It is at an early stage in terms of what we can provide in terms of community events but I think one of the most important aspects that we are trying to do with the new technology introduced with the RFID, is freeing up librarians to get them more involved with their customers, the citizens of Cardiff. I would like to see Librarians hosting mother/parent toddler groups, where parents are encouraged to learn to read with their children because it is not just the children who need to learn to read. In some cases it's the parents who have difficulty reading. So we can have that interaction with the library staff to encourage such classes like that but obviously if you have any suggestions, and I know you have expertise in the Library Service, I would be more than happy to consider those going forward.

Question: *County Councillor Brian Jones*

Can the Executive Member elaborate on the current state of discussions between the Council, the Welsh Assembly Government, and academia regarding the disposal of the 'so-called' surplus library stocks?

Reply: *County Councillor Howells*

I met with the First Minister and the Heritage Minister in June of this year. The outcome of that meeting was to share the information on items proposed for sale with the University, Glamorgan Records Office and the National Library. This has been accomplished.

Various discussions with Cardiff University have taken place over the last month or so between officers.

Together with the Leader I met with the Vice-Chancellor and some of his colleagues as recently as yesterday. The main outcome of our meeting was to confirm arrangements which had already been agreed between the Council and the University to withdraw certain items from the auction. This would allow the University the opportunity to purchase these books outside of the auction process. Further discussions will take place to establish the process.

Earlier this afternoon Councillor McEvoy and I met with the current Heritage Minister to review the situation. It was agreed that a process should be established for future sales which involves the National Library, the Glamorgan Records Office and the University. Welsh Assembly Government Officials are organising a meeting to discuss this.

Supplementary Question: *County Councillor Brian Jones*

I thank the Executive Member for the answer to my earlier question and I'm particularly grateful for the last paragraph which refers to meetings with the Assembly, the Records Office and National Library and also a statement that was made earlier this evening that the Executive is going to consider the whole issue of the so-called surplus library books. My only question would be, would the Executive Member agree that the party whips and, perhaps, the party spokespersons for Sport, Leisure & Culture be kept in the loop from the earliest possible moment of any developments?

Reply: *County Councillor Howells*

Absolutely and the fact is they have always been kept in the loop. Certainly those who attend my portfolio meetings would have discussed this issue and those who would have attended the Executive Business meeting at the time would have discussed this as well. But I am more than happy to keep the spokespeople in the loop because it is an important issue we have here. We are striving to make our Library Service one of the best in the UK and the only way we can do that is by investment. We have difficult decisions to make in terms of investment and to my mind this is an excellent way of utilising assets which aren't being utilised at the moment.

Supplementary Question: *County Councillor Piper*

Councillor Howells you stated several times this evening that you wish to make Cardiff's Library Service the best in the UK, can I make a plea on behalf of Llanishen Library which according to the sign above it is run by South Glamorgan County Council?

Reply: *County Councillor Howells*

I sympathise with you because Roath Library, which resides in my ward of Adamsdown, has a similar sign above it saying that it is a South Glamorgan Library but I am hoping to have these changed.

(The Lord Mayor advised Council that there was no more time for supplementary questions under this portfolio).

Question: *County Councillor Bridges*

The Council's Bereavement Strategy, published in 2005, highlighted the need to upgrade and improve the facilities available to the public at Thornhill Crematorium. Could the Executive Member outline what work has been carried out since then?

Reply: *County Councillor Howells*

Since the implementation of the strategy, the service has undertaken the following areas of work at Thornhill Crematorium:

- Refurbished and Redecorated the larger Wenallt Chapel
- Rewired and replaced outdated electrical cables
- Installed a generator capable of running the chapels and cremators in the event of power failure for up to 24 hours.
- Designed and constructed a new purpose built Book of Remembrance Room set within the Gardens of Remembrance and offering a new Touch Screen facility to enable entries to be viewed on any day of the year.
- Upgraded the Security Camera system and introduced a new Hard Disk recording system
- Converted a disused toilet block to provide a quality waiting room to serve the Briwnant Chapel.

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- Implemented changes and improvements to the digital music system
- Appointed a full time Chapel Attendant to oversee funerals and deal directly with clergy, funeral directors and the public during services
- Made improvements to the external Briwnant courtyard, introducing raised planters
- Made improvements to the Wenallt courtyard, including installation of a water feature, new planting and a formal lawn area
- Redecorated the Briwnant chapel, both internally and externally
- Installed an updated cremator control system to allow for better emission reports, and to allow offsite servicing of the cremator control system by the current supplier
- Installed updated signage to direct the public to chapels, parking and toilet facilities

Although much has been done over the last 3 years, there are still a number of schemes outstanding relating directly to the crematorium. These are as follows:

- Phase 3 internal refurbishments to the Wenallt Chapel side of the building to include new waiting room and improved toilet facilities and a funeral directors' waiting area. Works have started on 22nd September 08 and will be complete by November 2008
- Replacement of cremators and installation of abatement equipment – Works scheduled for 2009/10
- Refurbishment and covering of the external floral tribute area – Works scheduled for 2013/14
- Ongoing replacement of signage throughout the site

With the exception of the replacement of cremators and abatement equipment, the above schemes will be delivered through utilisation of the Bereavement reserves budget. The replacement of the cremators and filtration plant is to be funded from the Council's Capital budget.

Question: *County Councillor Page*

Why is this council giving serious consideration to the proposal to lease more of Heath Park to the model railway club which:

(a.) is against the wishes of local residents;

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- (b.) is in contravention of the commitment in Cardiff Vision to enhance open spaces;
- (c.) is an insult to the memory of Her Majesty the Queen's grandfather King George V by breaking faith with the obligation to preserve the area for public open air recreational purposes when dedicated in 1952 under King George V Trust; and,
- (d.) will bring it on a collision course with Fields in Trust which is prepared to challenge a decision in favour of the model railway in court which could require the Council to spend thousands of pounds to defend its action?

Reply: *County Councillor Howells*

As you are aware, the Council has recently advertised in the local press the proposed disposal of an area of land at Heath Park to accommodate an extension to the model railway. This is in line with statutory procedure, and allows local residents to express their views on the proposals. Such views will be taken into consideration by the Council over the course of its decision making process. In addition, this exercise provides added value in terms of inviting response from users and other interested parties who may not necessarily live in the Heath area itself, but whose views in relation to the possible disposal of an area of public open space are equally valid. All responses will be given due consideration by the Council.

Enhancement of open space can take many forms and it could be stated that using a relatively small area of land (approximately 1.3% of the total available) to accommodate an improved facility that gives great pleasure to the public, albeit on a necessarily limited number of days, is an enhancement. Increasing the amount of public benefit is an issue we are exploring with the Society, particularly with regard to the potential for educational visits from schools and other organisations.

There is, of course, no intention to insult the memory of King George V. Heath Park is as much available now for public open air recreational purposes as it was in 1952. Over the course of these 56 years, the site has changed and adapted in response to a variety of factors, and is likely to do so in the future. What has not changed, however, is the essence of the park and its use for open air recreation.

We are working with Fields in Trust (FIT) to try and resolve current differences in opinion without having to resort to the courts. By the same

token, however, we cannot ignore legal advice, or give up the Council's prerogative to manage land as it deems appropriate because of the threat of legal action from an unelected body.

Question: *County Councillor Jackie Parry*

How important is Cardiff Bay in general and the Inner Harbour in particular to the City Tourism Officer and Cardiff City Council?

Reply: *County Councillor Howells*

Cardiff Bay is extremely important to the City of Cardiff, particularly in relation to tourism. Research shows that Cardiff Bay currently attracts over 3 million visitors each year. It also shows that Cardiff Bay is high on the list of attractions which visitors intend to visit during a stay in Cardiff.

In economic terms, tourism in the Bay is hugely significant. Visitor numbers to Cardiff Bay increased by 39% between 2002 and 2007, with spending levels up to approximately £133 million in 2007.

Cardiff Bay is marketed as a high-quality tourism destination and plays an important role in the promotion of Cardiff as a leisure and business destination. Marketing is the remit of Cardiff & Co and the Bay features prominently on the visitcardiff website. Cardiff Bay is also presented in trade newsletters and other Cardiff & Co publications, including the venue directory, the essential guide and the 'where to stay' guide.

Some of Cardiff's most popular venues and tourist attractions are located in Cardiff Bay, including the Wales Millennium Centre, the Doctor Who Up Close exhibition and Techniquet. The Barrage itself attracted approximately 200,000 visits in 2007, a figure that is increasing this year with the opening of the link from the Norwegian Church.

Some of the city's busiest events take place in and around the waterfront, attracting increasing numbers of local people as well as visitors. The International Food and Drink festival regularly attracts over 30,000 visitors and the Harbour Festival over the August Bank holiday weekend can bring over 60,000 people to Cardiff Bay.

The developments within the former port area and on the International Sports Village site are increasing the facilities and will lead to a further increase in

the number of visitors to the Bay area. The new pool and ice rink will be supplemented by the Olympic standard canoe slalom centre that is due to open in 2010.

The Council has been working with Associated British Ports to develop Cardiff as a cruise destination. This is a long-term project and Cardiff has welcomed two Cruise liners this year. Cardiff has also received confirmation that the prestigious Holland America Line's ship *Prinsendam* will visit in July 2009. Furthermore, *The World* – a 'seagoing community' where passengers own the on-board suites – will visit in August 2010, prior to the start of the Ryder Cup.

Question: *County Councillor Robson*

Does the Executive Member share my concern that nearly all Cardiff libraries are expected to be closed for several days for the ICT upgrades?

Reply: *County Councillor Howells*

It is, of course, always a concern when a service has to be temporarily withdrawn for any reason. However, in this instance, on the grounds of the Health and Safety of the public and staff, my concern would be greater if the service remained open while the work took place.

If the process was simply installation of equipment, then the library could probably remain open, as the area experiencing most disruption could be safely cordoned off. However, each book within each library is being individually tagged, a process which takes between 30 seconds to one minute per item. With up to four teams working at a time, this will require a great deal of stock movement which, in small branch libraries in particular, would present a real hazard to young and elderly customers.

Allied to this is the need to complete this process across all libraries before the new Central Library is ready to open early next year. This will ensure that the branch libraries and their customers enjoy the same standard of ICT provision and potential as those in the Central Library. If this task were not completed on time, the library service would be forced to run a two-tier service until stock tagging in the branch libraries had been completed. This process would probably run into several more months, if not years.

All customers have been made aware of times when their library is scheduled for closure. They will be able to borrow additional books to 'tide them over' during the closure period, and books will not be marked as due for return during that time (accordingly, no fines will be incurred).

If the process is completed within the scheduled closure period then the service point will re-open ahead of schedule. The overall outcome will be a service improvement for all library users that will free staff from the mundane tasks of issuing, stamping and returning books, and allow them to spend time on quality interaction with their customers and improved service delivery.

Naturally all closures, no matter how temporary, are regrettable, but in this instance the outcomes will make the process worthwhile.

Question: *County Councillor Greening*

With events held in Cardiff Bay becoming more and more popular, parking problems in the Butetown ward have increased. In particular, the level of illegal parking in the residential areas (parking on double yellow lines, unauthorised parking in resident bays, etc) is causing major problems for local residents. Could you ensure that on such event days, that appropriate signage is in place to direct traffic to the nearby car parks?

Reply: *County Councillor Howells*

The events in Cardiff Bay are increasingly popular and car parking problems can be an issue during some of the larger events. This year's event programme is currently being reviewed and any feasible measures to reduce illegal parking and improve car park signage will be considered as part of that review.

Better enforcement and improvements to signage directing visitors to alternative car parking facilities are likely to be introduced next year following this review. It is hoped that these measures will reduce the negative impact that this can have on local residents.

At the present time, enforcement of the parking regulations falls to the Police and their Traffic Wardens, until the Council takes over this responsibility.

Question: *County Councillor Ralph Cook*

The report entitled “Disposal of Surplus Library Stock” considered at the Executive Business Meeting on the 11th January 2007 had two main themes:

- 1) That Cardiff Council held “potentially lucrative” collections of rare and antiquarian books and other manuscripts requiring special storage conditions if they are to be preserved and that the cost to the Council of preserving these works would be considerable and potentially equivalent to the commercial value of the books themselves – an estimated £2-3 million.
- 2) That the disposal of these works by auction would yield funds that could be invested in the library service.

Since the report was published it has emerged that these works are considered by Cardiff University to be “of enormous historical and cultural importance to Cardiff and to Wales”. Further “The University also confirms its longstanding offer to house these collections on deposit in the University Library. To this end, it is prepared to commit resources and to seek external funding for cataloguing, conservation and public access and display. The University is happy to continue its discussions with Cardiff Council to find the best way of retaining in Cardiff these nationally and internationally significant cultural resources.”

Given the importance of these collections can you explain why Cardiff Council has not initiated a serious formal discussion with Cardiff University about the future of these works and more specifically about the University’s longstanding and oft-repeated offer?

Why did the report of 11th January 2007 omit to mention Cardiff University’s offer, surely a significant material issue by anyone’s standards and one which may well have caused the Executive to reach a different decision?

Do you agree that a report specifically on the issues and options surrounding the retention and preservation of these books should have been considered by the Executive Business Meeting prior to any consideration of their disposal by auction?

Reply: *County Councillor Howells*

Firstly, it should be noted that there was no 'longstanding and oft repeated offer' from Cardiff University

Cardiff Council officers have held informal meetings with the University since 2006. At the centre of initial discussions was a temporary solution to housing of the stacks collections before the permanent facility at Dominions Way was secured (this was in the context of the closure and re-building of the Central Library and the need for secure storage during that period.)

Underlying these discussions was a suggestion of an unidentified longer-term transition of unspecified and limited Council holdings. However, no clarification was made and no formal suggestions or offers tabled. The proposals for temporary accommodation did not come to fruition and were not pursued any further, although the matter was left open with the University being asked to identify items of interest. The University confirmed the items they were interested in on Friday evening of last week.

As a result of those 2006 discussions Library officers met with University staff and visited the proposed temporary storage accommodation in June 2006. The accommodation was found to be virtually full and the matter was not pursued further in 2006 by either party. It must also be noted that the accommodation proposed would have been inappropriate for housing the stock as it was not superior to that which can be provided by Library Services (and, in fact, offered more restricted access than our current premises.)

As a result of the Executive decision in January 2007, meetings which would discuss the Executive decision and alternative options were proposed in writing and a meeting took place between the Corporate Director, Chief Officer and a Senior University Official on 27 March 2007. No offer to have collections was made at this meeting although the matter was discussed. An examination of the minutes of the university Quartet meetings since late 2005 to date has not identified any such offer.

A meeting with two Pro Vice-Chancellors of the University was held as recently as August this year. Discussions took place about the auction but no mention was made of an offer to house the collections. It should also be noted that no mention of these books has been made in recent meetings of the

University Quartet, which brings the Council together with Cardiff University, UWIC and the University of Glamorgan to discuss issues.

In short, no formal offer was made, and this could not, therefore, be a material matter for inclusion in the report.

Despite several requests from officers in Culture, Leisure & Parks, the University has not provided any information about which items might be of interest to them until September 2008.

I do not agree that a separate report was required. Cardiff Council is a Local Authority required to provide a public library service for our council tax payers. We have a duty to achieve best value from the disposal of any assets and in this instance those assets are books.

The Welsh Assembly Government's 'Libraries for Life' programme aims to ensure funding to re-furbish and modernise libraries; improve provision of ICT in libraries; invest in improving the skills of the Welsh workforce; and provide access to Welsh language material. This reflects the aspirations outlined in the *One Wales* Accord for a rich and diverse culture with genuine lifelong learning opportunities within a fair, just and prosperous society.

Cardiff will help to bring about this rich and diverse culture through the provision of excellent library facilities across the city. Our aim is to deliver a vibrant, relevant and well resourced library service to Cardiff citizens, and we want to reap the benefit of the capital tied up in these little-used resources to help achieve that objective.

Question: *County Councillor Cowan*

Do you have any plans to increase the 8 members of the tree gang section?

Reply: *County Councillor Howells*

The Culture, Leisure and Parks service area has submitted bids through the financial pressures plan to increase the level of resource for tree management across the city. If those bids are supported and growth is obtained it would enable the service area to increase its operational capacity through the employment of additional arborists, or through the use of contractors.

Question: *County Councillor Gasson*

The Council has a policy of social inclusion. What measures/processes are used by Leisure Services to ensure their services comply with this policy?

Reply: *County Councillor Howells*

The Council has many policy directions aimed at impacting on social inclusion.

The service area follows several processes and procedures: for example monitoring and reviews, building surveys and specific group consultations. It takes these issues into account in the delivery and planning of services. This is a constant process in the light of experience, policy change, new legislation, customer views and individual issues raised, as well as officers' own regular monitoring and review.

For example, officers are currently reviewing pricing structures to improve access to facilities for those whose access is limited by price and low income. The Executive will receive reports on those issues in future.

The Service has been widely recognised and won awards for its approach to engaging and supporting women from black and minority ethnic communities to access services and employment. This year, new funding was made available to confirm permanent funding for a Disability Sports Officer. New funding was also made available to tackle anti-social behaviour in parks and open spaces and around Council leisure and culture buildings.

In addition to this, skatepark installations have been welcomed broadly across the city and now engage young people in healthy and worthwhile activity.

In response to the recent raft of Equalities legislation, all new policy initiatives and all proposals in the budget round are being formally assessed for their impact upon equalities.

Question: *County Councillor Brian Jones*

Given the bad publicity the Council is receiving over the disposal of the so-called surplus library stock, could the Executive Member confirm whether Cardiff is bidding for future consideration as European City of Culture?

Reply: *County Councillor Howells*

A capital of culture is a city which takes an inclusive approach to culture, and which aims to improve access to culture for all of its residents. With this in mind, I feel there is sufficient cultural depth on offer within our city, in terms of libraries and other cultural services, that could sustain any bid.

It should, perhaps, be remembered that Cardiff's previous bid to be European Capital of Culture was unsuccessful despite the presence of the library stock referred to. It is not immediately clear why the disposals would have any impact upon the success or failure of future bids.

In the meantime, we will continue to invest in the public library service and its further improvement. This inclusive policy resonates with the image of a truly cultural city.

Question: *County Councillor Cowan*

Will the Executive Member confirm that the information in the Executive Report regarding the rare books was adequate to make an informed decision?

Reply: *County Councillor Howells*

Yes, the report contained all of the relevant information available at the time to allow a proper decision to be made.

Question: *County Councillor Brian Jones*

Will the Executive Member comment on the devastating effect that the proposed new access road into Bute Park will have on the aesthetics of the area?

Reply: *County Councillor Howells*

I am not aware of any 'devastation' which might be caused by the proposed access road into Bute Park.

The proposed new vehicular access into the park will for the first time provide a safe and controlled vehicular access for the park which will enable the existing (and largely unmanaged) vehicular access points to be used solely by

pedestrians and cyclists. This will, in turn, enable the North Gate of Castle Green to be opened up with access into the park. This is a key requirement of the substantial investment already made by the Heritage Lottery Fund in the Castle and is a major element of the approved Bute Park Regeneration.

Considerable time and effort has gone into the bridge proposals to make sure that the bridge does not impact significantly on the aesthetics of the park. One holly tree will be removed as a result of the bridge construction; this will be propagated and replaced. Substantial new planting and woodland management will also be undertaken.

The benefits of the new access into the park include improved safety and the facilitation of greater public use. This will help ensure the protection of the unique heritage of Bute Park.

Question: *County Councillor Cowan*

Will the Executive Member advise what discussions she has had with the Parks Department regarding proposals to improve the penstock flood control system in Forest Farm which could have the potential to reduce the incidence of flooding?

Reply: *County Councillor Howells*

Officers from the Culture, Leisure & Parks and Strategic Planning & Environment service areas have been in discussion with the Flood Defence Team at the Environment Agency with regard to the problem of flooding experienced at Forest Farm Allotments.

Options to alleviate the problem and reduce incidences of flooding are currently being explored. Dialogue with the Site Secretary and representatives from Forest Farm Allotment Site are ongoing.

Question: *County Councillor Brian Jones*

How much income has been received since 2004 for the scheme to 'sponsor roundabouts', and how has this income been spent?

Reply: *County Councillor Howells*

Income totalling £187,000 has been received from 2004 to date. Sums totalling £22,850 have been payable through National Non Domestic Rates. The remaining income has been used to help fund the Council's Parks & Gardens Apprenticeship Scheme, and to undertake soft landscaping improvements including tree, shrub and bulb planting.

93 : QUESTION TO THE CHAIR OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE

Question: *County Councillor Page*

Good quality houses are being demolished all over Cardiff to make way for flats. What provision is this Council making to ensure that these houses are being replaced so that families will in the years to come not be forced to bring up children in cramped homes with no gardens?

Reply: *County Councillor Burfoot*

Whilst it is true that there have been a number of instances of houses, particularly with large gardens, being demolished to make way for apartments, by and large these have affected only a small part of Cardiff's current dwelling stock of around 144,000 units. For instance, between April 2001 and March 2008, there were around 65 residential demolitions on average per annum (from Council Tax records) for various reasons, but during the same period 4,823 houses and 8,629 flats/apartments were constructed. Hence, family houses that have been demolished are by far outnumbered by new houses that have been built.

Another point worth mentioning is that average household sizes have been decreasing for many years, hence there is a need for smaller units of accommodation and many households that 'downsize' to apartments actually free up larger units of accommodation that families can occupy. In planning terms, the Council cannot stop applications to demolish houses to build flats. Any such planning applications that may be submitted have to be determined in accordance with the development plan, taking into account any material considerations.

The development of new affordable housing in Cardiff is informed by the level of housing need identified across the city. The provision of affordable family accommodation is a priority for the Council and it takes every opportunity to increase the supply of all types of affordable accommodation, in particular, family houses. This is achieved both through the planning

system using S106 obligations, as well as through joint working with local Registered Social Landlords (RSLs).

Supplementary Question: *County Councillor Page*

Why does the Council seem to be content with the situation when between 2001 and 2008 the number of flats built out-numbered the houses by almost 2 to 1 so that many families in the future will be forced to bring children up in flats?

Reply: *County Councillor Burfoot*

I would refer you to my answer and suggest that if you have any further questions that you write to me.

94 : QUESTIONS TO THE NOMINATED MEMBER OF THE SOUTH WALES POLICE AUTHORITY

Question: *County Councillor Kelloway*

Can you clarify the policy of the South Wales Police with regard to 'Access Only' orders?

In response to a similar question which I asked at the Council Meeting on 26th June, 2008, you advised, inter alia: *"It is not the policy of the South Wales Police to either support/not support 'Access Only' Road Traffic Orders"* and *"Police Support is based on evidential fact and historical data around the individual location road safety (e.g. the amount of road traffic collisions in that area; the amount of potential disruption to the local community and the potential for harm being caused to the public)."*

On 16th September, 2008 I received a communication from the Council's Traffic Management Service which enclosed a letter from Police Headquarters stating that: *"Our longstanding policy of not supporting this type of order is still our formal response to any proposals to implement 'Except For Access' or 'Access Only' traffic regulation orders and I would ask that you treat this as a formal response from the South Wales Police on this issue."*

In view of the fact that the most recent letter from the Police apparently contradicts the advice given in your answer on 26th June, can you please

make a definitive statement with regard to the official policy of the South Wales Police in respect of applications for 'Access Only' orders?

Reply: *County Councillor Gasson*

I refer you to the letter dated 6 August 2008, which was sent by Chief Inspector Davies from South Wales Police's Road Policing Unit to the Council's Highways and Waste Management Service. You have made reference to this letter in your question – this confirms the Force's policy on this matter.

Supplementary Question: *County Councillor Kelloway*

You may detect a theme to some of my questions Lord Mayor but I have to say to the representative I was rather more pleased with the answers she gave on the 26 June than I am with the answers she has given today.

Based on her answer today, am I to infer that the South Wales Police do not base their judgement when deciding not to support access only roads on evidential fact or historical data around the individual location road safety? They do not take into account the amount of road traffic collisions in the area, they do not take into account the amount of potential disruption to the local community and they do not take into account the potential for harm being caused to the public. If I am to infer that, can I ask whether you are in support of this policy and, if not, whether you will go back to the South Wales Police Authority and ask that they change it?

Reply: *County Councillor Gasson*

Many issues raised by Members can be raised with the BCU Commander. Unfortunately this response has come from the Roads Policing Unit and, as I understand it, they work closely with Highways and in fact Highways actually prioritise their Road Safety Schemes based on Police figures in relation to accidents. So I would guess that this is evidential work. However, I note the concerns that have been raised this afternoon and the problems of having conflicting information. I am going to the Police Authority on Monday so if you can fax me through the relevant information I will try and raise it with the ACC responsible for operations and see if we can perhaps get a definitive answer higher up the command chair.

Question: *County Councillor Greening*

With events held in Cardiff Bay becoming more and more popular, parking problems in the Butetown ward have increased. In particular, the level of illegal parking in the residential areas (parking on double yellow lines, unauthorised parking in resident bays, etc) is causing major problems for local residents. Could you ensure that on such event days, traffic wardens increase the frequency of their enforcement?

Reply: *County Councillor Gasson*

You will be aware that Cardiff has to plan for major events on a regular basis and that South Wales Police and its partner agencies have an excellent reputation in managing such events, which is recognised at a national level.

The traffic management plan is part of the process and South Wales Police encourages visitors to park in park and ride locations or car parks. The Police have also worked hard with the private sector and other partners to encourage car park providers to adopt the 'safer by design' scheme to make car parking safer.

South Wales Police deploys autocrime teams around such events to prevent and detect car crime. They are also aware that inconsiderate parking is an issue and can give the reassurance that the deployment of traffic wardens is, and will remain, part of their planning.

Supplementary Question: *County Councillor Greening*

Thank you for your response. I would like to acknowledge that the deployment of traffic wardens is and will remain part of police planning. Could you please pass on the concerns of local residents that more wardens need to be deployed in Butetown on event days?

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Reply: *County Councillor Gasson*

I suggest that residents of Canton would be asking the same question because they want more traffic wardens on event days. Members have previously raised questions in this Council Chamber about the reducing number of traffic wardens that we have and I will pass on your concerns to BCU Commander when I next meet with him.

(The meeting concluded at 10.10pm)