



Wales Co-operative Centre
Canolfan Cydweithredol Cymru

One Planet Cardiff Strategy Consultation 1st December 2020

About Wales Co-operative Centre

We are a not-for-profit co-operative organisation that supports people in Wales to improve their lives and livelihoods. Since we were founded in 1982, we have been right at the heart of Wales's vibrant social economy, bringing people together to make our communities more confident, more co-operative, more capable and more ambitious.

We work for a fairer economy. We help to create and retain wealth within our communities through the growth of co-operatives and social businesses. We provide people with the skills to take more control of their own lives and strengthen their communities. Everything we do is shaped by our own commitment to co-operative values and our close collaboration with funders and delivery partners to achieve shared goals.

Introduction

We welcome the One Planet Cardiff Strategy and Cardiff Council's plans to respond to the climate emergency. The Wales Co-operative Centre is keen to support the council to achieve its aims and objectives. Cardiff Council is a co-operative council and, as such, adopts the international co-operative values and principles. These values and principles are relevant to the delivery of the strategy. It is only by working in partnership with citizens, other public bodies, the charity sector and local businesses, including social enterprises, that we will be able to achieve the goals of the strategy.

Our response will focus on the areas in which we work, notably social enterprise and digital.

The role of business and social enterprises

The themes set out in the document are important ones. We believe that the strategy could have a greater emphasis on the role of businesses in delivering the objectives. As the document acknowledges, we will only succeed in tackling the climate emergency with everyone's involvement. Cardiff will not be able to meet its targets without the commitment of the business community.

We would encourage the council to put more emphasis on engagement with businesses and social enterprises in the delivery of the strategy. In particular, social enterprises could be a key part of that business engagement. Social enterprises have a unique business model that includes a triple bottom line, taking account of their environmental and social results not just their financial ones. As such they are businesses that align most closely to the goals of the Well-being of Future Generations Act. We would propose that you include a social enterprise or co-operative representative on any governance or advisory structures that oversee the delivery of the action plan.

Another way that Cardiff Council can encourage action by businesses is via its purchasing power. We propose that your public sector procurement processes put greater emphasis on achieving social value so that bidders score well for delivering environmental and social benefits. Cardiff Council has already achieved a great deal in this area but there is more that could be done.

Furthermore, the economic development activities of the council should put more emphasis on supporting and creating businesses that are designed, through their legal structures, to consider the impact on their environment. If a greater proportion of businesses in Cardiff were social enterprises then that would help in delivering the strategy. The social enterprise model is ideally suited to helping you achieve certain priorities within the strategy, for example around food supply, housing retrofitting and clean energy. When delivered by social enterprises, any surpluses from delivering these activities are reinvested locally and not paid to distant shareholders. This will require economic development work to grow supply chains in preparation for future opportunities.

We fully support the council's ambitions to decarbonise the housing stock in Wales. Such a programme could make a significant impact on reducing both carbon emissions as well as energy bills. In addition, the investment could also be a major boost for local economies if delivered effectively. In order to achieve this economic boost, we ask that Cardiff Council sets itself an ambitious target to spend a certain percentage of the investment with local businesses and social enterprises.

The role of digital

The role of digital technology in helping to combat climate change should also be given proper consideration. Developments in digital technology have transformed the lives of people in Wales over recent years. The Covid-19 crisis has accelerated adoption of digital technology for different parts of our lives, from managing our health to our children's education.

The best digital approaches can help the council to design services that are more cost effective as well as being more aligned to what residents want. It can reduce the need to travel, enabling people to access work and services from home or in their local community. It can make public transport a more attractive option. The possibilities are limitless and therefore we believe the role of digital should be given proper consideration when taking forward this work. Of course, when implementing new digital technologies, it will be important to not leave behind those who are digitally excluded.

For further information, please contact:

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