



Co-operative Councils

Innovation Network

CONFERENCE PART 2

16 November 2016

13.45 – 14.45 Room D City Hall, Cardiff

Welcome

The session was chaired by Councillor Chris Herries, Norwich City Council.

Policy Prototype - Culture School (Welcoming and Helping Refugees & Asylum Seekers)

An update was provided on the Policy Prototype taking place in Cardiff.

Ourania Vamvaka, City of Cardiff Council

Rania established the Culture School as she had been inspired by the humanitarian crisis in Syria which has led to such large numbers of refugees and asylum seekers. When establishing the School she found that people were more than willing to help, such as Flying Start, Taff Housing Association, etc. Each were working together to make Cardiff a more fair and open place to come and live.

All of the Syrian refugees in Cardiff and the Vale agreed to join up with the Culture School. It has been designed to help with their integration into a new society through art, songs and stories. Welsh history is also an important part of integration and it has been useful to take members of the Culture School to the Cardiff Story Museum to see the history of immigration to Cardiff for themselves. Welsh craft sessions at Severn Road Community Centre also took place where they made flags, used cameras to take pictures and also made Welsh dragons. A visit was also arranged to Barry Island which, for a large number of people, was the first time they had seen the sea.

The Culture School itself has also learned from those it has served in terms of culture, ideas and customs, and is therefore an example of a reciprocal learning arrangement that has benefits for all.

Cardiff Co-operative Projects

1. CAER Heritage

Dave Wyatt, Cardiff University

Ely and Caerau have a population of around 25,000 people. The two areas are primarily made up of 2 large housing estates with a history of deprivation, but an amazing heritage including a Roman villa and deserted medieval village as well as an Iron Age hill fort that dates back around 2,500 years and is the largest and oldest site in Cardiff.

The Caerau and Ely Rediscovery Heritage (CAER Heritage) project is about exploring these sites with all their different aspects and linking that heritage to the area and its local people. CAER Heritage spoke to local people and schools. There was an understanding that there needed to be an educational opportunity for all as this was a new story for local people that was a positive against some of the historical negatives that were associated with the area.

With an open-access policy for the community, public excavations were held so that the community could be actively involved in any archaeological discoveries that make this part of the city one of the original and founding parts of Cardiff. A lot of local men volunteered to help on the site as they are proud of the area and wanted to be a part of the project. They were involved in the site, pre- and post-excavation and took part in establishing a catalogue of finds at the site.

Work has taken place with a large number of external partners. CAER Heritage is working in partnership with ACE (Action in Caerau & Ely), local schools, heritage agencies and the local public. Funding has come for research posts for academics to work on the site as well as some professional artists. Heritage Lottery Funding of just under £1m has also been received in order to turn this site into a monument.

CAER Heritage have made community films about the site, as well as held art sessions, which can be seen as short films on the project website www.caerheritageproject.com

The project is working with the Cardiff Story Museum to establish heritage trails. There is also a plan to go into local care homes to speak about the project to those who are interested but unable to visit for themselves.

The history of the site will also be embedded into the curriculum of the new school opening in the area in autumn 2017. CAER heritage projects will take place there regularly and a Heritage Centre is also planned.

2. Reach 2XL

Saeed Ebrahim, Reach 2XL

The project takes place within Communities First areas where the mixture of people is exceptionally diverse. It was found that a large number of young people who started university and further education courses subsequently dropped out. This was for a number

of reasons; perceived lack of supported, financial reasons, language barriers, wrong choice of course, etc.

The Reach 2XL project is tailored to those people in order to support and assist them to get the best out of their education. The support is tailored to each individual. The project works with a number of partners such as Cardiff University.

The project encourages young people to take part in a volunteering day. These days are a huge help to the participants and can be included on personal statement letters when applying to university or further education.

Referrals often identify a need for support and help identify all those who may need a little extra help. One participant had chosen her course on the basis that her cousin had done it. Following a meeting with Reach 2XL it became clear that she actually wanted to follow a different course. Reach 2XL gave this girl the confidence and the knowledge to change her course.

We are creating a heat-spot map for the communities we are working in, and asking questions; what's it like, is it safe, if not, why not? We want to get young people to think about their communities from a young age. If they have concerns, we have to teach them how to go about campaigning to make changes, etc., with AMs, MPs and Councillors.

3. Community Gateway

Ali Abdi, Cardiff University

The plan is to develop world-class teaching to benefit the community of Grangetown. A video was shown to illustrate the work that has taken place to date.

The Grange Bowls Pavilion was the subject of a Community Asset Transfer application to the Big Lottery. It now hosts a pop-up cricket club, bowls green and Grangetown All-Stars football.

The project is working actively to engage with more girls in the area as they are the group that historically have not engaged with previous projects.

4. Pollen8

A video about the Pollen8 Project was shown.

Discussion

Di Robinson, Director of Policy & Strategy (Bristol), said that the key contact in all the projects mentioned today seems to be the University, and asked if the University should be approached separately about each project or if there was a single point of contact.

Councillor Peter Bradbury, Cabinet Member Community Development, Co-operatives and Social Enterprise for City of Cardiff Council, said that the University is a key partner to the Council. The relationship has grown over time with long-standing and established links both at Cabinet and local Ward Member levels. The Council also works with the University of South Wales as another example of integral local partnerships.

To achieve something as large as the City Deal, for example, there needs to be good links with external partners and creative industries. Partners are invaluable in ensuring that projects work.

Dave Wyatt added that Cardiff University is a large organisation covering many different aspects. However the engagement team at the University are brilliant and he would encourage any contact to go through them.

Di Robinson asked if the University was buying into the co-operative philosophy. Dave Wyatt used the example of the Metro to show that they do; the University works as a partner for that project, as well as many other large and small projects.