Dear Mr House,

The Cardiff Partnership Board (CPB) Scrutiny Panel held its second official scrutiny meeting on Monday the 26th of November at 15.30 pm. At this meeting, the Panel received an update on the overall Business Intelligence Project for the CPB and how business intelligence was being used in action by the Healthy Living Programme.

Firstly, I would like to thank the witnesses who attended the meeting and provided briefing papers to inform the Panel. The witnesses were succinct and candid in their responses and the Panel sincerely appreciate them giving up their time to attend the meeting.

The Panel members also wanted to extend a particular acknowledgement to the representatives from the Healthy Living Programme. The Panel felt that these representatives presented very effectively, clearly demonstrating how they were using business intelligence to influence the work of their programme, workstream and workstream activities.

The Panel also wanted to show their support for the work of the Healthy Living Programme when creating solutions to issues that their data posed. This approach was:

- to explore which demographics / communities the data identified as being affected by a particular issue,
- to engage with the different communities who were affected by the issues and show them the data for evidence of the issues,
- to involve the community in creating solutions which were applicable to them and not simply provide a blanket solution to problems.
The Panel would like to see this approach adopted across as many of the partnership programmes and workstreams as possible.

The Panel also felt that the joint appointment of the Head of Substance Misuse Strategy and Development between two local authorities and the University Health Board was a good demonstration of partnership working in action, and a positive step in bringing organisations together.

In relation to the overall Business Intelligence Project the Panel’s feedback was more mixed. The Panel acknowledge that much of the work that has been undertaken for the business intelligence has been valuable. The overall business intelligence contribution to the joint Strategic Needs Assessment was undoubtedly beneficial in helping to provide the strategic priorities for the What Matters strategy. The considerable increase in the number of respondents to the Ask Cardiff survey is also a very positive sign and adds to the statistical significance of the findings as a result.

The Panel also strongly advocate the expansion of the Schools Super Survey and see the immense value of the survey in gathering the opinion of children and young people across Cardiff.

Despite these positive aspects, there were a number of issues in relation to the overall business intelligence within the Partnership over which the Panel had concerns. The first of these was that by own acknowledgement, Cardiff is only operating a “one star” business intelligence service which signposts users to existing datasets. There was a desire for the CPB to operate a “five star” model but what this would look like and the Board’s overall commitment to achieving it was not so clear.

The Panel were also shown that the current business intelligence model operates on a reactive process whereby partners are expected to ask questions to which the data team can then find answers. Whilst this can be beneficial, the Panel felt that business intelligence could be adding greater value to the Partnership.

Panel members felt that the additional value would come from analysis of the data, and that analysis being distributed to the relevant partner organisations, programmes and workstreams, to help influence their priorities without having to make requests. The data would therefore help drive the priorities of the programmes and the partners rather than the team simply reacting to questions when they are posed.

The Panel do recognise that this could have cost implications but were also told that partner organisations such as the police and health service have technology that is capable of considerable data analysis (e.g. IBM COGNOS). The Panel therefore reflected whether it could be possible for this technology to be used to process all partners’ data, rather than each partner having to invest considerable resources in technology to which other partners already have access?
The Panel do fully support the Schools Super Survey and feel that the numbers of young people questioned across Cardiff helps to add to the robustness of its findings. However, there was also a recognition that by only targeting schools, the SSS was not gathering the perceptions of a large number of young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET). NEETS make up 12% of young people in Cardiff, and the Panel feels that this needs to be reflected in the statistics from the Schools Super Survey. This is particularly important as NEETS are likely to come from the most deprived backgrounds and have the most significant issues.

The final observation by the Panel concerned the gathering of statistics relating to healthy living. The issue of collating accurate data in relation to Cardiff citizens’ physical activity was highlighted as a problem. This was felt to be due to the number of private fitness clubs and health centres in Cardiff who would not provide statistics on their membership due to fears of commercial sensitivity. The Panel feel that such statistics would give a much clearer picture of people’s activity in Cardiff and that the Board should explore the potential for liaising with private companies in order to gather such information. The Panel felt that if a partner who was not in direct competition with these companies (e.g. the police or health board) approached them with a promise to not share any commercially sensitive data, they may be more successful than the Council in gathering this data.

The Panel have therefore drawn the following recommendations from their scrutiny of business intelligence:

Recommendation one
That the role and vision for the future use of business intelligence needs to be clarified by the CPB.
Do the CPB want a five star business intelligence service? What would this achieve? How would it be accomplished? What would the costs be for it to be realised? How would these costs be met?

Recommendation 2
That there should be mechanisms in place to ensure that data that is gathered is being passed to the correct workstreams, partners and senior officers to ensure it can influence their priorities and planning.

Recommendation 3
The Panel understands that a promotional drive is planned for the launch of the revamped Ask Cardiff website. The Panel recommend that the purpose and benefits of Business Intelligence and the Ask Cardiff website be clearly articulated by the Board. Once this is achieved, the Board should then champion the use and promotion of the site through their respective organisations.

Recommendation 4
That the possibility of sharing technology (e.g. IBM COGNOS) for the overall analysis of data be explored amongst the different partnership organisations.
Recommendation 5
That the Schools Super Survey represent the views of young people who are not in employment, education or training (NEET) by engaging with organisations who are working with these young people. The Panel feel that at least 4% of the SCHOOLS SUPER SURVEY respondents should be from the NEET cohort in order to give a better reflection of the needs of all of Cardiff’s young people.

Recommendation 6
The Panel were concerned that a significant portion of data regarding the healthy lifestyles workstream was currently unavailable to the partners due to its commercial sensitivity (i.e. gym membership and users of private health clubs). The Panel recommend that the Board explore the potential for liaising with private business in order to provide more accurate statistics without compromising commercial sensitivities.

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS
The Panel feel that it would be useful for a member of the Cardiff Partnership Board to attend each of their meetings so that they are able to both answer questions of a strategic nature, and hear the evidence they receive and the discussions and questions that frame the Panel’s views for their recommendations.

Recommendation 7
The Panel recommend that a nominee from the CPB be present at each of the CPB Scrutiny Panel meetings. The next meeting will take place on 29th January 2013, which will explore how programmes are addressing geographical inequality.

RESPONSE TO THE CPB LETTER DATED 19TH NOVEMBER 2012
The Panel were pleased with the positive responses in relation to the majority of the recommendations from my letter dated October 2nd and look forward to seeing the result of the positive actions that the Board is taking. The Panel were however disappointed with the response to Recommendation 1, and do not agree that the views of minority and equalities organisations can be represented without the specialist knowledge that an equalities representative can bring. Whilst the Panel recognise that all board members will have knowledge of equalities issues and consider them in their discussions, its members still feel that there may be a number of issues and areas that the Board could miss without the specialist knowledge that a specific representative can bring.

The Panel would appreciate your response to these observations and recommendations.
Yours sincerely

PAUL WARREN - Panel Chair