



City and County of Swansea

Minutes of the **Scrutiny Performance Panel – Development & Regeneration**

Remotely via Microsoft Teams

Tuesday, 2 November 2021 at 10.00 am

Present: Councillor J W Jones (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

P M Black
S J Gallagher
C A Holley
M H Jones

Councillor(s)

P Downing
D W Helliwell
P R Hood-Williams
P K Jones

Councillor(s)

E W Fitzgerald
T J Hennegan
L James
T M White

Other Attendees

Mark Thomas	Cabinet Member - Environment Enhancement & Infrastructure Management
Emily-Jayne Davies	Scrutiny Officer
Stuart Davies	Head of Highways & Transportation
Phil Holmes	Head of Planning & City Regeneration
Huw Mowbray	Development and Physical Regeneration Strategic Manager
Gavin Newman	Parking Services Manager
Matthew Bowyer	Principal Telematics Engineer
Mark Thomas	Group Leader Traffic & Highway Network Management

Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s): R Francis-Davies, S M Jones and W G Thomas

25 Disclosure of Personal and Prejudicial Interests

No interests were disclosed

26 Prohibition of Whipped Votes and Declaration of Party Whips

No declarations were made

27 Minutes of Previous Meeting(s)

The Panel considered minutes from previous meetings and agreed the minutes of the meeting on 7 September 2021 as an accurate record of the meeting.

28 Public Questions

No questions were submitted by members of the public

29 City Centre Travel Plan update

The Panel received an update report, providing information regarding the status of the study, work done to date and plans to progress the study going forward. Discussions focused on the following points:

- Officers highlighted this forward-looking report, produced in conjunction with Atkins, having considered highway infrastructure, pedestrians, cyclists, and current / projected traffic levels.
- Pre-Covid levels within the City Centre are returning, but patterns have changed dramatically. The Panel heard that there have been overall changes in the traffic patterns and use of City Centre.
- Officers explained that there is now a situation of trying to anticipate post-pandemic traffic levels, taking account of major project developments.
- Considerations should be had to charging infrastructure points, as well as environmental considerations such as air quality.
- The study focuses predominantly on the City Centre, although looking at ideas on outskirts, such as traffic hubs, park & ride and public transport.
- Looking to accommodate all needs of future users to the City Centre.
- Members commented on many previous travel plans – querying a number of issues as have been present previously and not seemingly changed.
- Officers assert that there has been significant improvement and investment in networks, junction improvements and distributor routes; having made a big impact in some areas.
- Members questioned the Council's intention to create more cycle ways across the City Centre. Cllr Thomas explained that secure bike storage has been constructed at Fabian Way park & ride, taking account of people cycling into the city. Numerous bike shelters have been installed in the City Centre itself, so bikes can be undercover, and new developments in the City Centre should consider bike storage provisions to encourage employees and visitors.
- Officers highlighted that the needs of the City Centre are changing, and new technology is changing ways of travel, therefore there will be constant changes to this travel plan.
- Officers explained that there has been a strong change in focus, although a number of previous iterations, but this study looks at the significant development opportunities, creating a demand for access to those projects.
- Hierarchy different, now informed by the active travel modes such as cycle, public transport, private car. Strong focus on the different modes of accessing the City Centre.
- Swansea Council has tried to minimise reliance on private cars, with focus on improving connectivity in and around the City Centre.
- Strong Placemaking themes running throughout this planning, intended to make areas better and reduce the need to drive if desired, making the City Centre more accessible.
- Swansea has a dominant flow of people from the local area into/out of town.

- Finite road network – need to make best use of this going forward.
- Members queried existing conditions summary, referring to hotspots such as Dyfatty. Officers confirmed progress being made on this.
- Officers explained that Dyfatty is recognised as a pedestrian/cycle hostile environment, aspiring to enhance public transport flows through that junction, having regard to a holistic solution / links with air quality.
- Members also questioned whether the new Road in SA1 will be managed to protect residents living in that area.
- Officers explained that external funding has been applied for, to date unsuccessful. The Council is now preparing and revising applications to secure funding. It was explained that the initial stages of funding for land purchase have been successful; further funding from Welsh Government now required to construct the road.
- Members questioned whether designs will prevent rat running along that road.
- SA1 link road – Swansea Council sees a benefit here between linking SA1 and enhancing active travel modes linking from University. Will take pressures off junctions along the Fabian Way corridor.
- Park & Ride sites – Members asked if the Council has identified possible sites, particularly from the West, e.g. Mumbles? Officers explained that there is no specific site identified in Mumbles.
- Members raised the need for Park & Ride provision in Swansea West to accommodate rural traffic flows. Members quoted Kittle as an example; traffic surveys indicating over five thousand traffic movements through the village each day.
- 'Metro' description conjures up various different descriptions and modes of transport. Officers highlighted that the term metro included a range of transport, integrating high frequency buses and good interchanges between all modes.
- The Council is considering a number of different strands, looking at main line Swansea/West Wales, how to improve journey times, bus reviews, and possible hydrogen-fuelled bus corridor,
- The Panel queried the sometimes challenging nature of the topography and geography across Swansea as a basis for a cycle network.
- Members commented that cyclists do not always stay on the cycle paths.
- Park & Ride – needs to be made more attractive.
- Members commented that bus services should be transferred to the control of Local Authorities.
- Members questioned the timescales on parking near and around the Arena, and whether parking prices at the Arena will be prohibitive.
- Hospital visits – The Panel commented on the need for connecting both hospitals (Morrison/Singleton) with the travel plan.
- Noted that many aspects of transport issues are not within Council control, such as buses, road infrastructure, hydrogen fuel, train and cars. Officers highlighted significant change now through Transport for Wales taking on control themselves.
- Integrated ticket systems needed. Transport for Wales are making progress on this.
- Challenges with longer journeys out to rural areas when not many passengers. Network of feeder buses possible.

Public transport now within the remit of Welsh Government, driven by need and environmental considerations.

30 Project Update Report

Huw Mowbray, Development and Physical Regeneration Strategic Manager, updated the Panel on the regeneration projects in Swansea. Phil Holmes, Head of Planning and City Regeneration, also attended for this item. The Panel noted the change in format of reporting, comprising a condensed summary of some projects.

Main discussions focused on the following:

Copr Bay – Phase 1

- Considerable issues surrounding lack of labour and materials, impacting upon the final stages of the project.
- Officers confirmed there had been a Covid outbreak on site last week.
- Hotel – funding difficulties currently experienced. The appointed developer is due to submit a revised proposal soon.
- Ambassador Theatre Group (ATG) licence has now been approved by the Council's Licensing Committee.
- ATG Programming to start in March, majority of tickets on sale now sold out.
- Officers confirmed that ATG indicate the sales density in Swansea Arena is ahead of other similar venues, ATG reiterating their positive outlook.
- The Panel queried the Arena car park – Officers explained that the North side is designed to pick up traffic from the West, and the other side to pick up from East-coming traffic.
- Members raised concerns over LED lighting and effect on Marina residents.
- Officers confirmed that LEDs were included in initial planning consent, and that they significantly fade to rear of building. Officers also highlighted the control system allowing lights to be turned off if necessary.
- Screening has been designed by an artist in conjunction with residents.

71/72 The Kingsway

- Contract Documents have been agreed by both parties. This is being forwarded to the appointed contractor, Bouygues.
- Planning – pre-commencement conditions have been discharged.
- Build programme to commence end of November.
- Members queried change in specification of original tender – Officers confirmed that there were a number of original tenderers making suggestions. New sensible suggestions were built into the new tender process, now being progressed by the contractor within budget.

Wind Street

- Officers explained that there have been issues with installations of bollards at the top of Wind Street; some services have been identified during excavations which weren't on original plans.
- Rainbow crossing installations are progressing.

Shaping Swansea

- Contract issued to Urban Splash.
- Positive interest in Civic sites from leisure operators, relating to surrounding sites, encompassing 17 acres, including green areas and car parks.
- Meeting arranged with planning team/ Urban Splash to discuss potential CADW listed status.

Mariner Street

- All residential floors are now complete and handed over for occupation.
- Outstanding works including ground floor shopfronts, vinyl window treatment, s278 works and completion of tower cladding ongoing.
- Practical Completion scheduled for November 9th.
- Fit out of retail units scheduled for December.

Castle Square

- FPR7 Cabinet Report being drafted to seek funding to deliver the project.
- Further meetings to be held with Highways, Lighting, Parks and Cleansing, City Center manager and Events.
- Initial information being sought regarding costs on the basis of current design specification.
- Members sought clarification on the project manager post and potential grant funding, having understood this to have been secured already. Officers explained that Swansea Council is the developer, having appointed a professional team.
- Officers also explained that funds have been allocated for work-up costs; capital costs not approved as yet (FPR7 will seek capital funding to deliver scheme).
- Members queried the funding – clarifying that the private sector would make no contributions.

Community Hub

- Issues surrounding location of archives to be addressed with archive teams.
- Members queried alternative provisions for archives – officers explained they currently sit within basement of civic centre, and there are proposals to move into new community hub building.
- The Panel raised some concerns over the suitability of this proposed location, and are aware that the Scrutiny Programme Committee will address this issue in further detail.
- Some enabling works on site, such as asbestos stripping, to prepare site for contractors.

Pontoons

- The legal documents are currently being drafted and reviewed.
- Terms have been suggested regarding rights and access for the Copper Jack and Rowing Club as prime intended users of the facility.
- Along with access rights, agreement is required in principle to allow vehicular access and parking on short-term approval terms.

Members asked about the *Skyline* project – Officers explained that a revised business case has been submitted to Welsh Government for funding discussions. Skyline have engaged architects on the design, having now changed the restaurant design to be replaced with an area for local food hubs. Officers clarified that Swansea is the only Skyline project currently progressing in Europe.

Members queried the funding position regarding *Penderyn Distillery*. Officers explained that this project is moving forward and discussions with the Heritage Lottery fund are ongoing.

31 Work Programme

The Panel noted the Work Plan.

32 Letters

The meeting ended at 11.50 am



To:
Cllr Mark Thomas
Cabinet Member for Environment
Enhancement & Infrastructure
Management

Please ask for:
Gofynnwch am:

Direct Line:
Llinell Uniongyrochol:

e-Mail
e-Bost:

Date
Dyddiad:

Overview & Scrutiny

01792 637314

scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk

1st December 2021

BY EMAIL

Summary: This is a letter from the Development and Regeneration Scrutiny Performance Panel to the Cabinet Member for Environment Enhancement and Infrastructure Management following the meeting of the Panel on 2nd November 2021. It covers the City Centre Travel Plan Update Report.

Dear Councillor Thomas,

On the 2nd November, the Panel met to discuss the City Centre Travel Plan Update Report. The Panel were grateful to all who attended to provide information and answer questions. We are writing to you to reflect on what we learnt from the discussion and to share the observations of the Panel.

Discussions focused on the following:

The Panel heard that this report was produced in conjunction with Atkins, having considered highway infrastructure and various modes of transport. It was explained to us that the study has focused predominantly on the City Centre, although taking account of some aspects of more sub-urban and rural outskirts, such as traffic hubs, park & ride sites and public transport amenities.

Members raised concerns over similarities with previous travel plans, querying a number of issues as having been present previously or displaying minimal changes. Officers explained that there has been a strong change in focus, concentrating on the different modes of accessing the City Centre. Officers assured us that there have been

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significant improvements and investments in networks, junctions and distributor routes; having made a big impact in some areas across Swansea.

We understood that there is now a strong Placemaking theme running throughout the planning, making the City Centre more accessible and minimising reliance on private cars, intending to improve connectivity in and around the City Centre.

It was explained to us that, since the Pandemic, traffic and footfall levels within the City Centre are returning, although traffic patterns have changed dramatically as has the use of the City Centre.

Officers explained to us that that Swansea Council is now trying to understand and anticipate post-pandemic traffic patterns, taking account of major project developments, such as the Arena. It was highlighted to us that considerations will be had to electric charging infrastructure points, as well as environmental considerations such as air quality.

You explained to us that secure bike storage has been constructed at Fabian Way Park & Ride, taking account of people cycling into the city. We also heard that numerous bike shelters have been installed in the City Centre itself, and new developments in the City Centre will consider bike storage provisions to encourage cycling amongst employees and visitors. Officers highlighted that the needs of the City Centre are changing, and new technology is changing ways of travel.

The Panel queried the sometimes-challenging nature of the topography and geography across Swansea as a basis for a cycle network. Members commented that cyclists do not always stay on the cycle paths.

We queried the existing conditions summary, referring to hotspots such as Dyfatty. Officers explained that the Dyfatty junction is recognised as a problem for cyclists/pedestrians. It was highlighted that plans aspire to enhance public transport flows through that junction, having regard to a holistic solution / links with air quality.

Members questioned the development of a new Road in SA1, and how this will be managed to protect residents living in that area. Officers explained that external funding has been applied for, although to date these applications have been unsuccessful. Swansea Council is now preparing and revising applications to secure funding. It was explained that the initial stages of funding for land purchase have been successful and that further funding from Welsh Government is now required for the construction phase.

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Members raised their concerns over possible rat-running along this new road. Officers explained that Swansea Council sees a benefit between connecting SA1 and enhancing active travel modes linking from the Swansea University Bay Campus.

It was explained to us that Swansea Council is considering a number of different 'metro' travel schemes, aimed at improving journey times, bus reviews, and a possible hydrogen-fuelled bus corridor. Officers highlighted that the term 'metro' included a range of transport, integrating high frequency buses and good interchanges between all modes.

The Panel discussed previous Park & Ride schemes, highlighting that sites need to be made more attractive to users, as well as more accessible.

The Panel commented on the need for public transport provisions connecting both hospitals (Morrison and Singleton), noting this was not currently addressed.

It was explained to us that many aspects of transport issues are not always within Swansea Council's control. Officers explained that significant change will likely be visible through Transport For Wales taking on control themselves, such as initiatives to implement integrated ticket systems.

We discussed the challenges faced by bus routes with longer journeys out to rural areas and the possibility of a network of feeder buses through main arterial routes, such as Gower Road, which experience daily traffic congestion. Members raised the need for Park & Ride provision in Swansea West to accommodate rural traffic flows.

Your Response

We are interested in any thoughts you may have on the contents of this letter. We would be grateful if you could please provide a written response to the following points by 22nd December 2021:

- 1) We note the increase in the number of cyclists across Swansea – please would you clarify the quantitative data behind these statistics, particularly relating to the number of people cycling for leisure and/or work.
- 2) Please provide any relevant information or travel plans in relation to rural areas beyond the City Centre.
- 3) In relation to the Dyfatty and Fforestfach junctions, we would like to know if there has been an appraisal of traffic flow.

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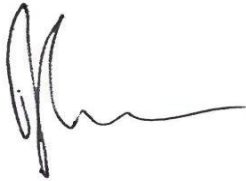
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- 4) We would like to know if any proposals are to be expected for a congestion charge scheme in Swansea City Centre.
- 5) In relation to Singleton Hospital and Morriston Hospital, what are the plans for car parking provision and transport links between the two sites?

Yours sincerely,



Councillor Jeff Jones
Convener, Development and Regeneration Performance Panel
✉ cllr.jeff.jones@swansea.gov.uk

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To:
Councillor Robert Francis-Davies
Cabinet Member for Investment,
Regeneration and Tourism

Please ask for:
Gofynnwch am:

Direct Line:
Llinell Uniongyrochol:

e-Mail
e-Bost:

Date
Dyddiad:

Overview & Scrutiny

01792 637314

scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk

1st December 2021

BY EMAIL

Summary: This is a letter from the Development and Regeneration Scrutiny Performance Panel to the Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration & Tourism following the meeting of the Panel on 2nd November 2021. It covers the Project Update Report.

Dear Councillor Francis-Davies,

On the 2nd November, the Panel met to discuss the Project Update Report. The Panel thanked Huw Mowbray, Development and Physical Regeneration Strategic Manager, and Phil Holmes, Head of Planning & City Regeneration, for their attendance and contributions. Discussions focused on the following:

Copr Bay – Phase 1

Officers explained to us that there are currently considerable issues surrounding lack of labour and materials, having significant impact upon the final stages of the project. We also understand that there has been a Covid-19 outbreak on site recently, further affecting project completion.

We heard that funding difficulties are currently being experienced in relation to the Hotel development, and that revised submissions are due to be completed soon.

It was explained to us that Swansea Council's Licensing Committee have now approved the licence for the Ambassador Theatre Group (ATG). It was pleasing to hear that ATG programming is to commence in March, and that the majority of tickets

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on sale have now sold out. Officers explained that early indications show the sales density in Swansea Arena is ahead of other comparable ATG venues across the UK.

We raised concerns over the Arena car park and accessibility off the main road. Officers explained that the two main car parks are designed to pick up traffic flows coming from both directions, minimising the need to cross the road.

Members raised concerns over LED lighting and any impact on Marina residents. Officers confirmed to us that the LED fascia was included in the initial planning consent, and that they significantly fade to the rear of building. Officers explained about the control system allowing lights to be turned off if necessary. We also understand that a screen has been designed by an artist in conjunction with residents.

71/71 The Kingsway

It was explained to us that good progress is being made, contract documents having been agreed by both parties. We also understand that pre-commencement planning conditions have been discharged and that the build programme is to commence at the end of November.

Members queried any change in the specification of the original tender. Officers confirmed that a number of original tenderers' suggestions have been built into the new tender process, now being progressed within budget by the contractor.

Wind Street

We heard that there have been issues with installations of traffic bollards at the top of Wind Street; some services having been identified during excavations, which officers explained were not on original plans.

Shaping Swansea

The Panel were told that this contract has been issued to Urban Splash and that there is already positive interest from leisure operators regarding the Civic sites, encompassing 17 acres of green areas and car parks. Officers highlighted to us that a meeting is scheduled with the Council's planning team and Urban Splash to discuss potential CADW listed status of the Civic Centre.

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Mariner Street

We heard that all residential floors are now complete and handed over for occupation, although outstanding works including ground floor shopfronts, vinyl window treatment, and completion of tower cladding remains ongoing. Officers explained that the practical completion is scheduled for November and that fit-out of retail units is scheduled for December.

Castle Square

We heard that the FPR7 Cabinet Report is being drafted to seek funding to deliver the project and that further meetings are to be held with Highways, Lighting, Parks and Cleansing, City Centre Manager and Events teams.

We sought clarification on the project manager post and potential grant funding, having understood this to have been secured. Officers explained that Swansea Council is the developer, having appointed a professional team. Officers also explained to us that funds have been allocated for work-up costs, although capital costs have not yet been approved.

Community Hub

We understand that there are ongoing issues surrounding the re-location of archives, which are to be addressed with the archive department. Members queried alternative provisions for the archives, and officers explained they currently sit within the basement of the Civic Centre.

We understand current proposals are to move the archives into a new community hub building within the City Centre. The Panel raised some concerns over the suitability of this proposed location, and are aware that the Scrutiny Programme Committee will address this issue in further detail.

Officers explained to us that some enabling works have commenced on site, such as asbestos stripping, to prepare the site for contractors.

Pontoons

It was explained to us that the legal documents are currently being drafted and reviewed, including suggested terms regarding rights and access for the Copper Jack and Rowing Club as prime intended users of the facility.

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Members asked about the Skyline project, which was not included on the project update report. Officers explained that a revised business case has been submitted to Welsh Government for funding discussions. We understand that Skyline have engaged architects on the design, having now changed the restaurant design to be replaced with an area for local food hubs. Officers clarified that Swansea is the only Skyline project currently progressing in Europe.

Members also queried the funding position regarding Penderyn Distillery. Officers explained that this project is moving forward and discussions with the Heritage Lottery fund are ongoing.

Your Response

We are interested in any thoughts you may have on the contents of this letter. We would be grateful if you would please provide a written response to the following points by 22nd December 2021:

- 1) In relation to Castle Square, please clarify whether any private funding source will be allocated to this project.
- 2) Please confirm whether the Arena will host an opening event prior to the first ticketed events in March.
- 3) Please outline car-parking provision at the Arena site, including access points off Oystermouth Road.
- 4) Please confirm if potential parking problems at Swansea Marina have been considered and what plans are in place to mitigate such potential problems.
- 5) We would like to formally note our long-standing concerns regarding the affordability and long-term financial viability of the Arena development as a whole.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Jeff Jones', written in a cursive style.

Councillor Jeff Jones
Convener, Development and Regeneration Performance Panel
✉ cllr.jeff.jones@swansea.gov.uk

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Councillor Jeff Jones
Convener
Development and Regeneration
Performance Panel

(By email)

Please ask for: Cllr Robert Francis-Davies
Direct Line: 01792 63 7440
E-Mail: cllr.robert.davies@swansea.gov.uk
Our Ref: RFD/WLN
Your Ref:
Date: 6 December 2021

Dear Councillor Jones

Thank you for your letter of 1st December 2021. Further to the five points raised in your letter, I respond as follows:

1. In relation to Castle Square, please clarify whether any private funding source will be allocated to this project.

It is anticipated that the only private sector funding will be a contribution towards occupier fit costs of the units.

2. Please confirm whether the Arena will host an opening event prior to the first ticketed events in March.

The Council are currently working with the Ambassador Theatre Group ATG and the Safety Advisory Group on a commissioning event for the arena prior to opening. Details are currently being discussed but it is hoped that this event in late February can accommodate a formal opening of the Copr Bay phase 1 development. Further information will be shared in the new year.

3. Please outline car-parking provision at the Arena site, including access points off Oystermouth Road.

Car parking provision for the arena includes approximated 984 space at the new North and South car parks. In additional parking is available at Paxton Street, and the Quadrant car park together with the NCP at Wind Street. Additional car Parking is provided at East Burrows Car Park. In total there are in the order of 2500 spaces available within close proximity to the arena. In addition to car parking six double bay coach drop off and pick up areas have been constructed. Two at the service area to the Arena, two at Wellington Street and two incorporated in the central island off the bus lane adjacent to Paxton street car park. These spaces will be available to all coaches entering Swansea operating a drop off and pick up service.

4. Please confirm if potential parking problems at Swansea Marina have been considered and what plans are in place to mitigate such potential problems.


The Council has met on a number of occasions with marina residents to discuss various aspects related to the scheme including the possibility of parking along Victoria Quay just behind the revetment wall. To address this concern the council has looked to introduce a TRO in this vicinity to prevent illegal car parking but taking account of local business requirements for servicing. As such the council is looking to introduce a 6m service bay at the top of Victoria Quay to accommodate business together with no loading or waiting elsewhere along Victoria Quay which residents are supportive.

5. We would like to formally note our long-standing concerns regarding the affordability and long-term financial viability of the Arena development as a whole.

The panel's ongoing and often repeated concerns are noted. I would remind however that in terms of capital affordability the S151 officer has advised Council recently that all external borrowing has been completed and advised Cabinet that the capital financing budget continues to underspend. I therefore see no affordability concerns with the financing.

As regards its ongoing use and delivery there will be revenue spend and income related to the Arena, as there is on many of our functions, which as a public body we are not always expected to necessarily make a direct commercial/financial return which is why we are funded from council tax and block grants. There are well documented spill over benefits for both the Council and the wider economy however through increased car parking income, retail, hospitality and tourism footfall etc. as well as being the catalyst for future private sector investment and regeneration.

Yours sincerely



**Y CYNGHORYDD/COUNCILLOR ROBERT FRANCIS-DAVIES
AELOD Y CABINET DROS FUDDSODDI, ADFYWIO A THWRISTIAETH
CABINET MEMBER FOR INVESTMENT, REGENERATION & TOURISM**