



City and County of Swansea

Minutes of the **Economy & Infrastructure Corporate Delivery Committee**

Multi-Location Meeting - Gloucester Room, Guildhall / MS

Teams

Thursday, 26 January 2023 at 2.00 pm

Present: Councillor P Downing (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

C R Doyle
S J Rice

Councillor(s)

W G Lewis
W G Thomas

Councillor(s)

P Lloyd
T M White

Officer(s)

Scott Dummett
Clare James
Paul Relf
Mark Wade
Samantha Woon

Lead Lawyer
Economic Development Manager
Economic Development & External Funding Manager
Interim Director of Place
Democratic Services Officer

Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s): N L Matthews

25 Disclosures of Personal & Prejudicial Interests.

In accordance with the Code of Conduct adopted by the City & County of Swansea, the following interest was declared:

Councillor S J Rice – Personal Interest Minute no. 27- The Local Economic Development Plan.

26 Minutes:

Resolved that the Minutes of the People Policy Development Committee held on 22 December, 2022 be approved and signed as a correct record.

27 The Local Economic Delivery Plan.

The Economic Development and External Funding Manager assisted by the Economic Development Manager presented a report which detailed the process for producing a new Local Economic Delivery Plan for Swansea which would complement the existing Regional Economic Delivery Plan.

In January 2022, the South West Wales Regional Economic Delivery Plan (REDP) covering Carmarthenshire, Neath Port Talbot, Pembrokeshire and Swansea was adopted as the Council's overarching economic regeneration policy. To build on this work and guide the implementation of the REDP in a local context, a complementary Local Economic Delivery Plan was now required to set out the economic regeneration priorities and actions in Swansea.

The Regional Economic Delivery Plan (REDP) provided the strategic framework for the preparation of the Local Economic Delivery Plan. It was developed in the context of a range of plans and strategies at the local, Welsh and UK level, in particular the Well-being of Future Generations Act, the commitment to decarbonisation and achievement of net zero by 2050, the opportunities and challenges presented by technological and demographic change, and the UK's exit from the European Union.

The evidence base for developing the Local Economic Delivery Plan could be drawn from the extensive economic analysis undertaken for the preparation of the REDP and the 2022 Assessment of Local Wellbeing in Swansea (which informed the Local Wellbeing Plan).

These identify that the longer term economic challenges faced by Swansea are:

- The need for Post-Covid support and recovery.
- Growing the business base - the relative size of the business base (508 businesses per 10,000 population) is below Wales (539) and UK (718) averages. Swansea has a healthy level of business formations and one and five year survival rates for enterprises have improved in line with Wales and UK, but the increasing costs of goods and services, particularly energy costs, and rising interest rates are creating very challenging trading conditions for local businesses.
- 98.2% of businesses in Swansea are either micro or small scale. The scale-up potential of these businesses is vital to the economic growth of the County as a whole. These businesses are the driver of employment growth and higher value, higher paid jobs.
- Addressing the ongoing productivity gap with rest of UK - Swansea's productivity (GVA per hour worked) stood at 85.9% of the UK average in 2020.
- Increasing wage rates – Over the year to April 2021, annual median full time earnings in Swansea rose by 5.2%, greater than Wales (+1.2%) and UK (-0.6%). Annual median full time wage rates in Swansea stood at 91.6% of the UK average in April 2021.
- Ongoing issue of unemployment and inactivity and ensuring a supply of genuine pathways and opportunities. Economic activity and employment rates in Swansea are lower than Wales averages and further below equivalent UK rates.
- Skills Gaps - work needs to continue to upskill people to take advantage of opportunities in new and emerging industries, and to address the gaps in sectors such as care, hospitality and construction.
- The Household Income Gap - In 2019 Gross Disposable Household Income in Swansea was 75.9% of the UK average.

- Reducing deprivation across the county - In the 2019 Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD), Swansea had an above average proportion of its Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) featuring in the most deprived 10% in Wales, with 17 (11.5%) of its 148 LSOAs in the 191 (10%) most deprived. There is need to create sustainable well paid employment to help address this.
- Swansea's Local Development Plan identifies a lack of available, high quality office space to meet inward investment and economic growth needs, combined with an oversupply of sub-standard office space at central and out of town locations. There is a viability gap for commercial property development so public sector investment is needed before commercial developers are willing to invest.
- Responding to changing consumer and workers habits by developing new uses for city centre, district and local centres. Including adapting to new ways of working including transport methods and connectivity and positive impact on places.
- Climate change and nature emergencies, the need for rapid adaptation and the achievement of the Council's Net Zero ambitions
- Responding to the digital revolution and connected future with new models of working.

The LEDP would set out the strategic framework for economic regeneration locally and will outline the key actions that would deliver against the aims and objectives.

The indicative timescales for completing the work was detailed with the final LEDP expected by September 2023.

Committee discussions focussed on:

- Examining enablers for new businesses in regard to streamlining the Planning process and improving public transport.
- Achieving Net Zero by 2050 and the ongoing work in relation to the Carbon Reduction Grant.
- Examining the opportunities that may arise as the free port bid progresses.
- The role and methodology of the Office for National Statistics in quantifying figures regarding the economic analysis.
- The levels of support, incentives and grants available for the 7930 small businesses within the County.
- The role of the Business Support Officers.
- The three complimentary missions underpinning the ambitions.
- Frequency of meetings, membership and governance of the Regeneration Swansea Partnership Board.

The Chair thanked Officers for their informative report.

Resolved that:

1. The Committee noted the progress for producing a new Local Economic Delivery Plan.
2. A further report be submitted to the Committee in April 2023.

28 Work Plan

The Chair introduced the 'for information' Economy & Infrastructure CDC Work Plan 2022-2023.

The topics for discussion at the following meetings were noted:-

- 23 February 2023 – Tawe Riverside and Levelling up and Swansea Residents Reward App presentation.
- 23 March 2023 – Introduction to Swansea Bay Strategy.
- 27 April 2023 - Draft Economic Development Strategy Framework.

The meeting ended at 2.32 pm

Chair