



City and County of Swansea

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

Committee Room 5, Guildhall, Swansea

Monday, 27 January 2020 at 10.00 am

Present: Councillor J W Jones (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

P Downing
S J Gallagher
C A Holley
P K Jones
W G Thomas

Councillor(s)

E W Fitzgerald
D W Helliwell
L James
S M Jones
T M White

Councillor(s)

M H Jones
T J Hennegan

Other Attendees

Robert Francis-Davies
Rob Stewart

Cabinet Member - Investment, Regeneration & Tourism
Cabinet Member - Economy & Strategy (Leader)

Officer(s)

Phil Holmes
Gareth Hughes
Liz Jordan
Huw Mowbray

Head of Planning and City Regeneration
Principal Physical Regeneration Manager
Scrutiny Officer
Property Development Manager

Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s): P M Black and P R Hood-Williams

1 Disclosure of Personal and Prejudicial Interests.

No disclosures of interest were made.

2 Prohibition of Whipped Votes and Declaration of Party Whips

No declarations were made.

3 Minutes of Previous Meeting(s)

The Panel agreed the minutes of the meeting on 18 November 2019 as an accurate record of the meeting.

4 Public Question Time

No members of the public were present at the meeting.

5 Project Update Report

Huw Mowbray, Property Development Manager updated the Panel on the regeneration projects in Swansea.

Swansea Central Phase 1

- Main contract – 10% of ground works completed. Main contractor having trouble finding local suppliers. So much building work going on locally that local contractors do not have capacity. Only major packages have been tendered at present. Small packages will be tendered in next 6 to 7 months. Panel would like to see figures on how much local suppliers are used.
- Panel has requested copy of contract for arena. Agreed this will be provided but it is confidential as the Council has a Non-Disclosure Agreement with the contractor.
- Green wall - Application progressing for green infrastructure grant. £5m available for Wales. If successful, it will enable more mature plants to be used in green wall planting than otherwise planned.
- Digital – Procurement exercise has commenced for new broadband provider. Panel felt this exercise should have commenced earlier. Cabling being installed is Council's so will keep competition going and allow Council to choose partner.
- Hotel - Draft lease issued to preferred developer. Council confident funding is there for hotel but waiting for it to be finalised.

Swansea Central – Public Sector Hub

- Public Sector Hub – Panel concerned if people from other parts of Swansea will be moved into this hub. Informed there may be some which move but also expect some potential new occupiers.
- City Centre Transport – Panel queried when the masterplan will be completed. Informed this is not known. Under risks it says there may not be enough parking available. This is a key risk for the arena and the hub. Council's general policy is to reduce parking and have a robust transport plan. This will be a real test. A robust travel plan will be needed before planning consent is given to build. Panel would like Stuart Davies to come to the Panel to get an understanding of the direction of travel with transport.

Kingsway Infrastructure

- Green landscaping – As much as possible is being done to prevent people entering green areas again.
- People parking on new paving as no curbs. The introduction of public realm should help stop parking.
- Concerns about build-up of traffic with Kingsway having one lane in each direction.
- A number of spaces have been built in along Kingsway in case a vehicle breaks down etc
- Project total cost £12.7m. This may increase as Dawnus failed to correct defects before going into administration. It is hoped a bond of £500k will cover most of repairs to defects. Currently the project is within budget but the

contingencies are likely to be drawn down. The Panel would welcome sight of the final cost details.

Kingsway – Strategy and Digital Village

- Panel feels it is important to have links in place with Swansea University. Department does not see any competition with Tech hub as on different scale.
- Panel would like to see Welsh Development Bank have more involvement in the area. However it is not cheap in terms of the offers it provides.
- All these aspects need to be brought in as part of the overall survey of the hub.

City Deal

- Terms and conditions agreed.
- £18m has been released to Carmarthenshire Council as the lead. Swansea Council will receive its share of this in due course. Panel understands release of the monies will be drip fed over 15 years and not in lump sum advance payments. To date no monies have been released by Swansea.
- Ongoing regional discussions about how the £36m will be received over the next 10 years.

Castle Square

- Development Manager appointed.
- Having on-going discussions with CADW to ensure they do not object to how the Council moves forward.

Felindre

- Reviewing marketing strategy.

Swansea Bay Regeneration

- This project is about reinforcing the sea wall.
- Mumbles bus station will be considered as part of the proposed sea wall project, as probably will not get any funding for bus station without sea wall reinforcement being carried out.

External Funding

- RDF Priority 4 – Concern about future funding. Consultation will be coming out from WEFO – “Future Regional Investment in Wales”, probably sometime in March 2020. This will be used to allocate Council’s share of the fund. Suggested Panel looks at this.

Actions:

- Project Development Manager to provide figures (%) for local suppliers used as Swansea Phase 1 project progresses.
- Panel to be provided with final cost details for Kingsway Infrastructure.
- Property Development Manager to provide Panel with contract for arena.
- Add City Centre Transport Plan to Work Programme – 18 May 2020 meeting.
- Circulate WEFO consultation – “Future Regional Investment in Wales” to Panel Members for information, when available.

6 Presentation : Targeted Regeneration Investment Programme - Residential Units above Shops

The Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration and Tourism and the Head of Planning and City Regeneration attended to present an overview of the Sustainable Living Grant Scheme, which is funded through the Welsh Government Targeted Regeneration Investment Programme, and provide examples of completed projects.

Discussion Points:

- £1.175m is total grant pot in Swansea over 3 years, April 2018 – March 2021
- Grant award is the minimum amount needed for a project to proceed, up to a maximum of 40% of eligible project costs. This does not affect the rate of rent and properties will be rented at market rates. If the property is sold, the grant has to be paid back based on timescales.
- Council will try and help in any way it can. As well as a grant, it will consider a loan on the property.
- As well as the City Centre, there is a pilot scheme in Woodfield Street, Morriston.
- Council is in talks with the Minister about a Towns Fund for outlying areas for closed shops etc.
- Some of the upcoming 6 schemes are on a bigger scale.
- Council promotes the schemes. Swansea Regeneration Partnership agrees the schemes.
- Panel very pleased with this scheme. There are many housing association properties in the city centre and these private rentals will balance it up so get the right mix in the city centre.

7 Presentation: Digital Village - Designs and Plans

Cabinet Member for Economy and Strategy (Leader) and the Principal Physical Regeneration Manager attended to present an overview of 71 and 72 The Kingsway Redevelopment, which is a Swansea Regional City Deal project.

Discussion Points:

- Panel feels Picton Yard needs to be part of the travel plan and access for deliveries needs to be restricted to certain times for safety.
- Panel would like to see shop frontage on the Yard and on the walk through to Oxford Street.
- Internal building will have adaptable work spaces and meeting areas so is suitable for a mix of different size businesses.
- There will be showers and storage facilities in the building for cyclists.
- Panel has concerns as a great deal of quality office accommodation is being built in Swansea. It will cost money to run and unlikely in first few years to have enough rental to cover running costs. Cabinet Member has confidence there will be enough occupancy to proceed with the project.
- Current level of rent in city centre is not commercially viable. Trying to drive this up. Gap currently is being filled with City Deal money.
- Contract should be awarded by end of this year. £30m is estimated cost for this project.

8 Work Plan 2019-20

The Panel considered the work programme.

Actions:

- Briefing on Travel Plan to be added to 18 May 2020 meeting.

The meeting ended at 12.15 pm.