



City and County of Swansea

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

Committee Room 3 - Civic Centre, Swansea

Wednesday, 17 July 2019 at 11.00 am

Present: Councillor J W Jones (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

P M Black
C A Holley
M H Jones
T M White

Councillor(s)

E W Fitzgerald
P R Hood-Williams
P K Jones

Councillor(s)

S J Gallagher
L James
S M Jones

Officer(s)

Bethan Hopkins
Paul Relf
Paul Jones

Scrutiny Officer
Economic Development & External Funding Manager
European Unit

Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s): R Francis-Davies and D W Helliwell

1 Disclosure of Personal and Prejudicial Interests.

- Councillor Paxton Hood-Williams is a member of the Swansea RDP Local Action Group

2 Prohibition of Whipped Votes and Declaration of Party Whips

3 Election of Panel Convener

- Councillor Jeff Jones was appointed as Panel Convener for 2019-20

4 Terms of Reference

- Panel want to add to ToR 'meetings to be added when required'

5 Minutes

- Add query Panel had at last session around the figures on Appendix E of the Business Plan

6 Wales Audit Office Report - Services to Rural Communities

- There are ideas about what could be delivered in terms of rural community provision but there are limits in terms of the amount of funding available restrictions on what that money can be used for
- Limits in terms of broadband provision to rural communities and large scale infrastructure
- Need to connect the Rural Development Partnership (RDP) with Swansea wide approaches and how the work links in with the work of the PSB
- 60% of Swansea is rural but the rural areas are sparsely populated and the urban areas are densely populated – balancing funding allocations can be difficult
- Very keen on how to make more of rural areas e.g. local food
- Need to link urban and rural areas
- WAO report sets high standards but the Council will strive to meet them
- The Brexit outcome will impact the rural grant programme
- There is scope and data available to establish best practice from other areas in Wales
- Transport in rural areas is still an ongoing concern
- The lack of broadband in rural areas is a hindrance to many people to access online deals, community activity and services – Welsh Government looking at this but little can be done at a local level
- The Rural Development Programme ends in 2020 and there is no request in place to develop a new one currently
- Contingencies need to be planned for whatever the Brexit outcome is – may request this is looked at after October to feed into the funding issues
- The team engages with people in the membership list and people not listed. They work with everyone who is relevant
- Need to engage with WG much more and be proactive in pursuing issues around broadband services
- Gower AONB group looking at this issue too
- Some difficulty given scale of issues and resources over allocation and
- Some issues over deprivation and poverty within rural areas – this can sometimes be masked in general data which hides pockets of deprivation in wealthy areas
- Fundamental to have the balance between effective tourism and the maintenance of the natural environment – green infrastructure is very important in policy decisions
- Geography, settlement and sparsity all have an impact on how an area is defined as rural – department to send formula/data to Panel
- The Boundary Commission Review may have an impact on how wards are classified
- Classifications could change in the future and have funding impacts
- Discussion around wards who do not have high levels of poverty or rural – funding streams not as readily available
- The team will assist with identifying funding opportunities where capacity allows

- Some of the issues identified fall to the obligation of the WG rather than local Councils
- Positive that communities get involved to run services but this can be problematic and cause pressure for people – debate which is ongoing
- Some points can be brought to the Local Action Group for discussion e.g. wood being transported from Gower to recycling centres as there is no kerbside collection
- Letter to be drafted to WG from Panel to press the issue of Broadband funding and installation in rural areas

7 End of Year Review

- The detail behind some projects is still opaque – will continue to explore more throughout the coming year
- Pleased at the range of projects looked at by the Panel
- Meetings to be held 'as and when' required throughout the year

8 Work Plan 2018/19

- Want some more focus over the City Centre health – in relation to empty shops and units and plans going forward

The meeting ended at 12.15 pm

Chair