



City and County of Swansea

Minutes of the **Scrutiny Programme Committee**

Remotely via Microsoft Teams

Tuesday, 19 January 2021 at 4.00 pm

Present: Councillor P M Black (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

C Anderson
E W Fitzgerald
T J Hennegan
G J Tanner

Councillor(s)

J E Burtonshaw
J A Hale
P K Jones
W G Thomas

Councillor(s)

M C Child
D W Helliwell
W G Lewis
T M White

Statutory Co-opted Member(s)

D Anderson-Thomas A Roberts

Councillor Co-opted Member(s)

C A Holley S M Jones J W Jones
P R Hood-Williams L R Jones

Also Present:

Councillor Rob Stewart Leader / Cabinet Member for Economy, Finance & Strategy
Councillor David Hopkins Joint Deputy Leader / Cabinet Member for Delivery & Operations
Councillor Robert Francis-Davies Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration & Tourism
Councillor Linda Tyler-Lloyd Mayals Ward

Officer(s)

Geoff Bacon Head of Property Services
Adam Hill Deputy Chief Executive / Director of Resources
Lewis Hinds Client Services Manager, Property Services
Kate Jones Democratic Services Officer
Brij Madahar Scrutiny Team Leader
Martin Nicholls Director of Place
Jamie Rewbridge Strategic Manager Leisure Partnerships, Health & Well Being
Phil Roberts Chief Executive
Debbie Smith Deputy Chief Legal Officer

24 Disclosures of Personal & Prejudicial Interest.

The Deputy Chief Legal Officer provided advice to Committee Members on disclosing personal and prejudicial interests.

In accordance with the Code of Conduct adopted by the City and County of Swansea, the following interests were declared:

Councillor Cyril Anderson – Personal – Minute No. 29 – Member of the Planning Committee

Councillor Jeff Jones – Personal – Minute No. 29 – Wife is a member of the Planning Committee

Councillor Will Thomas – Prejudicial – Minute No. 29 – Member of Mumbles Community Council

Councillor Mike White – Personal – Minute No. 29 - Member of the Planning Committee

25 Prohibition of Whipped Votes and Declaration of Party Whips.

In accordance with the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011, no declarations of Whipped Votes or Party Whips were declared.

26 Minutes.

Resolved that the Minutes of the Scrutiny Programme Committee held on the 15 December 2020 be approved and signed as a correct record.

27 Public Question Time.

A member of the public presented the following questions: -

- 1) We understand the remit of the Committee is to decide on the lease of the Llwynderw site to Mumbles Community Council, as planning for the proposed redevelopment has already been through full process and approved. Could the Committee confirm this is the correct?
- 2) We're mindful of the strong support for the re-development of the Llwynderw site from the skateboard, BMX and scooter communities, amongst others, and the concerns voiced regarding the time the process has taken to date. We're also aware that, coming out of lockdown, the community will be keen to take advantage of facilities and past times they have not been able to enjoy for some time. Assuming the proposal is approved, what would be the anticipated timescale for the lease to be signed over, to enable the redevelopment to begin in earnest, and would it be feasible to hope that the development could be completed before summer 2021?

The Chair confirmed that the remit of Scrutiny Programme Committee was not to make a decision on the lease, but to question and discuss the matter with the relevant Cabinet Members and then present the views of the Committee to Cabinet it could consider this as part of their decision-making.

It was also confirmed by Cabinet Members that should the decision be approved at Cabinet, then the council would be looking to progress the matter as soon as possible, whilst also ensuring the due process is followed correctly and taking into account current pressures of dealing with the Covid-19 pandemic.

28 Cabinet Member Question Session: Leader and Cabinet Member for Economy, Finance & Strategy (Councillor Rob Stewart).

The Leader presented a report on the key headlines of the Economy, Finance and Strategy Portfolio. He also highlighted the unprecedented nature of the last 9 months and thanked all staff including all school staff as well as senior officers and Cabinet colleagues who have all worked hard in delivering the Covid-19 response.

Questions and discussions focussed on the following:-

Covid-19

- Progress on the vaccination programme – initial issues – noted that currently close to 21,000 vaccinations had been administered
- Programme to supply second vaccination dose
- Set up of three Mass Vaccination Centres – Bay hospital, Margam and Canolfan
- Good progress on vaccinating health and social care staff as well as care home residents
- Vaccinations had started for over 75's and 70's
- All 49 GP surgeries were now participating in the vaccination programme
- On track to complete the first 4 priority groups from Welsh Government by approx. 15 February 2021 – depending on vaccine supply and resources
- It was aimed to move to Priority Groups 5-9 by the spring
- Possibility and practicality of drive-through vaccination centres
- Local Emergency Planning – preparedness for the pandemic and lessons learnt, including around regional resilience structures in place
- Response to delivering and re-designing services during the pandemic and setting up remote working
- Preparations for a no-deal Brexit had provided some assistance in responding to Covid-19 and preparedness
- Rate of pay of front line / key workers – national issue

Brexit

- Impact of Brexit on Swansea in light of the deal which had been agreed – early days, demonstrations from the fishing industry, some issues on frictionless trade
- Difficulty of seeing full impact alongside the pandemic
- Previous assessment showed that Wales would lose a minimum of £1.5 billion even with a good deal
- Importance of making best of current position
- Continued monitoring of implications of Brexit
- Progress and clarity around a Shared Prosperity Fund
- Importance of the ERASMUS scheme and possibility of continuing the scheme
- Maintaining and enhancing links with Mannheim – Swansea's twin City in Germany

- Protecting workers rights – high skilled and well paid workforce

Budget

- Ability to deliver a balanced budget in light of Brexit and Covid-19 – it was anticipated that a balanced budget would be delivered and hoped for a positive budget
- Remarkable work of the finance team in administering aid / grants / support during the pandemic

Partnership and Regional Working

- Looking at partnership working and whether there would be merit in bringing together Swansea Public Services Board, Neath Port Talbot Public Service Board and West Glamorgan Regional Partnership Board – looking at footprint of regional working and streamlining structures

City Centre

- Make-up of the projected 467 (full times equivalent) additional jobs generated from the Arena development
- Current position of Debenhams - national store and decisions, but council would look to support where possible

Resolved that the Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee write to the Leader, reflecting the discussion and sharing the views of the Committee.

29 Pre-Decision Scrutiny: Proposed Lease to Mumbles Community Council under the Community Asset Transfer Policy.

The Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration & Tourism, the Cabinet Member for Delivery & Operations, and relevant officers were present for the Committee's consideration of cabinet report on 'Proposed Lease to Mumbles Community Council under the Community Asset Transfer Policy'

The cabinet report concerned the disposal of land to Mumbles Community Council for the purpose of constructing and managing a new Skatepark on the site referred to as Llwynderw.

The Cabinet Member for Delivery & Operations highlighted the comprehensive report and noted that planning permission had been granted. It was an exciting opportunity for the City.

The Chair highlighted that the Committee was not making a decision on the lease, but was to provide its views and any recommendations to Cabinet.

Councillor Will Thomas remained in the meeting to only give views, highlighting that improvements were needed to the process of community asset transfers, then left the meeting, playing no part in discussion of this item.

Councillor Linda-Tyler Lloyd, whose request to address the Committee had been granted, expressed views as a local member about the location of the proposed skate park development by Mumbles Community Council and the benefits of using the Blackpill Lido site for the development instead.

Questions and discussions focussed on the following:-

- Safety issues being next to main road and access to the development
- Impact on surrounding area, being a Site of Special Scientific Interest
- Planning Permission – highways and ecological reports impact assessments, as well as planning recommendations / requirements
- Independent report carried out by Mumbles Community Council on possible sites
- Response to consultation – largely positive responses with a large response from young people as well

The Chair thanked the Cabinet Members and Officers.

In conclusion, the Committee agreed that all questions raised had been addressed and were happy to support the proposed decision in view of the positive response to the consultation regarding the disposal, and likelihood of the development being delivered successfully by the Community Council and a positive outcome for the city and users, particularly young people.

Resolved that the Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee writes to the Cabinet Members outlining the views of the Committee, with feedback to be presented to Cabinet on 21 January 2021 ahead of decision on the cabinet report.

30 Membership of Scrutiny Panels and Working Groups.

The Chair presented a report on 'Membership of Scrutiny Panels and Working Groups', following the agreement of a scrutiny work programme

Resolved that Councillor June Burtonshaw be added to the Bus Services Scrutiny Working Group.

31 Scrutiny Work Programme 2020/22.

The Chair presented a report on the Scrutiny Work Programme 2020/22.

The Chair noted that the next Scrutiny Programme Committee was on 16 February 2021 where the Children and Young Peoples' Rights Scheme Annual Report was scheduled. He also informed the Committee that planned pre-decision scrutiny on upcoming cabinet report 'Business Case for the Relocation of the Civic Centre' would be put back to March Committee as this report was now listed for March Cabinet.

The Chair alerted Committee Members to recent public contact around the Council's Active Travel Schemes and specific concerns that have been brought to the attention of scrutiny. He invited Committee Members to consider whether to call in the Cabinet Member for Environment Enhancement & Infrastructure Management to the Committee for discussion that could focus on the consultation process followed, and reflections on recent experience and public concerns.

Resolved that the Cabinet Member for Environment Enhancement & Infrastructure Management be invited to attend the February Committee meeting for discussion on the Active Travel consultation process.

32 Scrutiny Letters.

The Chair presented a report on 'Scrutiny Letters' for information.

Resolved that the scrutiny letters log be noted.

33 Date and Time of Upcoming Panel / Working Group Meetings.

The dates and times of the upcoming Panel / Working Group meetings were **noted**.

Letter to Cabinet Member - Pre-decision Scrutiny

Letter to Cabinet Member - Q & A Session

The meeting ended at 5.30 pm

Chair