



**CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA**  
**DINAS A SIR ABERTAWE**

**To/  
Councillor Nick Bradley,  
Cabinet Member for Regeneration**

**BY EMAIL**

*Please ask for:  
Gofynnwch am:*

**Scrutiny**

*Direct Line:  
Linell Uniongyrchol:*

**01792 637257**

*e-Mail  
e-Bost:*

**scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk**

*Our Ref  
Ein Cyf:*

**SPC/2013-14/13**

*Your Ref  
Eich Cyf:*

*Date  
Dyddiad:*

**8 April 2014**

Dear Councillor Bradley,

**Cabinet Member Question Session – 17 March**

Thank you for your attendance at the Scrutiny Programme Committee on 17 March 2014 and answering questions on your work as Cabinet Member for Regeneration.

We thought it would be useful to write to you in order to reflect on what we learnt from the discussion, and share the views of the committee. A number of specific issues were discussed, which are summarised below:

**Cultural Projects (incl. Dylan Thomas Centenary)**

Despite missing out on the UK City of Culture title we noted that there is going to be a re-launch of cultural projects. We asked about progress with regard to the Dylan Thomas Centenary and possible impact. You were confident that it would give the city a much needed profile boost.

**Economic Development**

You informed the committee that there will be a new, more proactive approach to economic development and we look forward to seeing the difference that will make over the coming year.

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**OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY / TROSOLWG A CHRAFFU**

**CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA / DINAS A SIR ABERTAWE**  
**CIVIC CENTRE, SWANSEA, SA1 3SN / CANOLFAN DDINESIG, ABERTAWE, SA1 3SN**  
[www.swansea.gov.uk](http://www.swansea.gov.uk)

## **High Street**

We asked about progress in the regeneration of High Street. You were confident that the High Street was moving in the right direction, with a decline in anti-social behaviour and signs of self-regeneration. We also noted that the Glynn Vivian Art Gallery was to reopen next year. We welcomed the fact that you are planning a conference on the city centre. You will recall the previous scrutiny review of the city centre which, amongst its recommendations, emphasised the importance of holding an annual event to engage stakeholders in the development and delivery of the City Centre action plan.

## **Greening the City**

We were interested in what you were doing in terms of greening the city. We noted that there was a policy commitment to engage in a public debate, inviting submissions, and ideas for providing green space / recreational areas in the City Centre, culminating in all ideas being brought together in an exhibition to be held in the City Centre, in parallel with a high level conference debating the issues. We look forward to seeing progress on this. You felt that this was an issue which placed more responsibility on the public to help generate improvement, rather than just being up to the council to determine, but that regeneration money will be invested where possible.

We asked about the loss of trees due to work in the city centre and noted your assurance that the numbers will at a minimum be maintained at current levels. We also noted that replacement trees will be a variety more suitable for an urban environment.

## **Boulevard Scheme**

We asked about progress and whether the project was going to be delivered on time and within budget. You confirmed that whilst within budget there have been delays to the project. We understood that funding for the project has come from external sources and for a specific use however the impact on those living, working, and travelling to/from Swansea has been significant and we all look forward to the completion of works, and hopefully the last time that the council digs up the City Centre roads for a long time. We will look with interest at the delivery of improvements and views of the public.

## **Swansea Market**

We noted that green credentials were being improved within Swansea Market, for example investing in solar panels to improve energy efficiency and the promotion of recycling with the market.

## **Future Management of Parks**

Within the recent budget debate there has been much said about the role of and possible future reliance on community volunteers in taking over the management of certain public services, like parks. We have already stressed the need for due diligence ahead of any possible transfer of service to evaluate the capacity, skills / capability of community management and financial arrangements. We have already seen positive examples of 'friends of' organisations developing and discharging certain responsibilities and we can see this as a way forward.

The committee felt that it would be helpful if you and/or the Cabinet Member for Place engaged with community councils about their possible future involvement in this by raising this at a meeting of the Community Councils Forum. There was a view amongst the committee that there may be some confusion within communities about the council's position and your clarification about the expected extent of community council and public involvement (e.g. through 'friends of' organisations) would be welcome.

There was some concern raised about possible lack of community capacity in the east of city if services are to depend more on community involvement. We did consider whether this could be a potential topic for future scrutiny e.g. 'transferring assets and responsibilities to the community' focusing on governance, accountability and community capacity.

We asked for clarification about the political responsibility for parks. You confirmed that the Cabinet Member for Place was responsible for the environmental aspects but you, as the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, were responsible for park activities.

## **360 Beach & Watersports Facility / Tidal Lagoon Project (Public question)**

We had received correspondence from a member of the public who wanted the committee to ask about the:

- Council's involvement (financial / resources) in the establishment of 360 Beach & Watersports facility and value for money / impact
- Council's position with regard to the Swansea Bay Tidal Lagoon project and involvement in this major development

In response you stated that the 360 facility provided value for money for the council as its financial investment was relatively small. In terms of a view on overall value for money it was perhaps too early to judge but early indications were that it was working well as a coffee shop / eatery but may not be fulfilling the primary water sports purpose as it should. It was noted that there will be summer re-launch of activities e.g. beach rugby / football.

You agreed to respond directly to the member of the public in relation to both the question about the 360 and the tidal lagoon project. We would be grateful if you can confirm that you have done so.

### **Suggestions for Scrutiny**

We noted that a review of libraries is underway and is likely to report in August. We noted your invitation for scrutiny to get involved in the discussion about the quality of the service / provision. We will consider this as part of the annual scrutiny work planning conference in May.

We would be a grateful for your response to this letter. It would be helpful to receive your reply to this letter by 8 May so that it can be included in the agenda of a future committee meeting at the earliest opportunity.

We also look forward to our next meeting with you to follow up on portfolio developments and achievements.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in purple ink, appearing to read 'Mike Day'.

**COUNCILLOR MIKE DAY**

Chair, Scrutiny Programme Committee

✉ [mike.day@swansea.gov.uk](mailto:mike.day@swansea.gov.uk)