

CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL DEVELOPMENT CABINET ADVISORY COMMITTEE

HELD AT COMMITTEE ROOM 3B, GUILDHALL ON WEDNESDAY, 24
FEBRUARY 2016 AT 10.00 AM

PRESENT: Councillor P Downing (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

C Anderson
P M Matthews

Councillor(s)

D W Cole
T M White

Councillor(s)

P Lloyd

Officer(s)

Ian Beynon	Development & Outreach Manager
Allison Lowe	Democratic Services Officer
Andrew McTaggart	Mapping and Spatial Data Officer
Mark Russ	Park Services Manager
Jacki Rees Thomas	Play Development Worker

48 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J C Bayliss, P B Smith and C Thomas.

49 **DISCLOSURES OF PERSONAL AND PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS.**

In accordance with the Code of Conduct adopted by the City & County of Swansea, no interests were declared.

50 **OPEN SPACES STRATEGY.**

The Chair reported that the Planning Policy Team had undertaken an up to date assessment of open space provision across the City. This assessment will be utilised by Special meetings of the Development Cabinet Advisory Committee in order to develop an Open Space Strategy.

The Special Meetings will be held at 10.00 am on the 4th Wednesday of each month and will be in addition to the pre-arranged Development Cabinet Advisory Committee meetings.

The Open Space Strategy will set out a strategic vision and a series of aims and objectives for all types of open space in the ownership or management of City and County of Swansea Council. Based on these objectives and an assessment against the agreed standards a prioritised Action Plan will be produced. The Strategy will set out a vision up to 2025 (proposed), providing a strategic framework for the protection, development and improvement of existing open spaces and to increase the provision of, or access to such facilities, where it is shown there are deficiencies against the agreed standards. In addition it will:

- Identify which Open spaces will be included;
- Advise, as appropriate, on opportunities for rationalisation and change of use of current open space provision within the City and County.
- Outline good practice and case studies from across the County;
- Detail how the Council can encourage greater community involvement and ownership in the management, maintenance and development of open spaces;
- Recommend how to maximise the effective use of physical and financial resources in improving the quantity, quality and accessibility of open space;
- Advise on best practise in terms of delivery including stakeholder and partnership working, marketing and communication improvements. All positive work already undertaken needs to be showcased here e.g. implemented schemes across the County;
- Establish a robust monitoring framework to assess the effectiveness of the Strategy.

An open space is defined as land in public ownership that is regularly available for recreational or sporting use by the community and can also act as a visual amenity.

The following list illustrates the broad range of open spaces in Swansea that are of public value:

- parks and gardens – including urban parks, country parks, and formal gardens;
- outdoor sports facilities (with natural or artificial surfaces)– including tennis courts, bowling greens, sport pitches, golf courses, athletic tracks, school and other institutional playing fields;
- amenity green space (most commonly, but not exclusively in housing areas) – including informal recreation spaces, communal green spaces in and around housing, and village greens;
- provision for children and teenagers – including play areas, kickabout areas, skateboard parks and outdoor basketball hoops;
- green corridors – including river and canal banks, amenity footpaths and cycleways;
- natural and semi-natural urban green spaces – including woodlands, urban forestry, grasslands (eg. meadows);
- allotments and community gardens;
- cemeteries;
- Civic spaces, including civic squares and other hard surface areas designed for pedestrians;
- Beaches and foreshore.

Open Space Assessment standards

The following standards have been adopted to determine whether Swansea meets nationally recognised guidelines in terms of Open Space provision;

Fields in Trust (FIT), formerly the National Playing Fields Association, has prepared 'Benchmark Standards' for outdoor sport and play. The standard recommends that in terms of overall provision there should be 1.2ha of land for playing fields, 1.6 ha for all outdoor sports and 0.8 ha for Children's playing space per 1,000 population with variations between rural and urban areas.

Natural Resources Wales (NRW) has developed a toolkit to ensure everyone in Wales has access to Accessible, Natural Green Spaces (ANGS) It recommends that provision should be made for at least:

- 2ha of accessible natural greenspace per 1,000 population;
- That no-one should live more than 300m from their nearest natural green space
That there should be at least one 20ha site within 2km of all homes;
- That there should be one accessible 100ha site within 5km;
- That there should be one 500ha site within 10km.

It should be noted that both NRW and FiT are in the process of updating their standards, however, the officers were happy with the standards used and confident in the outputs from the open space assessment.

It is suggested that the key issues for Swansea's Open Space Strategy include:

Access – Increasing accessible open space and people's access to it

Developing greater intensity and diversity of use
Developing additional usage of open space
Developing safer routes to enable access
Promoting social inclusion

New developments - Based on LDP sites

Co-ordination of planning for open space
Creating Safer Open Space Environments
Improved Safety through design

Designation and protection of open space

Fields in Trust Designation
Green Flag

Community involvement/management

Community Asset Transfer
Extending community involvement
Friends of Parks groups

Other projects/initiatives

Enhancing the quantity and quality of existing provision
Developing the educational role of open space

Developing closer relationships with schools
Developing the role of open space for improved health
Developing the role of open space for cultural experiences
Promoting biodiversity and nature conservation

The Mapping and Spatial Data Officer had analysed the data, based on the traffic light system used in the Open Space Assessment (OSA) and added new fields to create a breakdown of the relevant information for each of the electoral wards in Swansea. In addition a map of each of the electoral wards would be produced highlighting the relevant areas for discussion with the ward Councillors.

The Chair suggested a set of prescribed questions be circulated to ward Councillors for discussion when assessing each of their electoral wards.

The Play Development Worker would also provide maps outlining play areas in each electoral ward. The maps would include a key of where play areas had been upgraded / renewed as well as where renewal was required.

The Committee discussed the following:

- Managing expectations based on the current / future budget situation;
- Grants available for Community / "Friends of" groups in order to apply for relevant funding;
- Grants available for Local Authorities in order to apply for relevant funding;
- Maintenance of provision of play equipment;
- The existence of a "rolling programme" for analysis of the condition of current play equipment;
- Liaising with Swansea University regarding joint working on the quality of open space in Swansea.

RESOLVED that:

- 1) The Development and Outreach Manager circulate a list of grants available to the Local Authority and Community / "Friends of" groups for the next meeting;
- 2) The draft list of questions for discussion with the ward Councillors is circulated in advance of the next meeting;
- 3) The ward Councillors for the Bonymaen Electoral Division are invited to attend the Special Development Cabinet Advisory Committee on 23 March 2016;
- 4) The Mapping and Spatial Data Officer make contact with the relevant officers in Swansea University regarding joint working.
- 5) The Mapping and Spatial Data Officer update the Committee when the new standards are published by NRW and FiT.

The meeting ended at 10.50 am.

CHAIR