

APPENDIX 1 - CABINET MEMBER UPDATE (SEPTEMBER 2016)

1.0 REGENERATION & PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT

ST DAVID'S - An outline planning application is currently being prepared for submission in March 2017, with consultation on the proposals during November and January. The authority have appointed a specialist firm to advise on an Arena for the south site and they will shortly be seeking to procure an operator.

CIVIC CENTRE - A report is being prepared outlining a strategy for moving the Councils offices from the Civic Centre to enable this redevelopment.

THE KINGSWAY - A report is being prepared recommending the development of the Oceana site as a mixed use office development focussed on Tech Businesses. Oceana building demolition works are now scheduled to complete end March 2017. Several properties have been acquired in and around the former Oceana site to create the critical mass for future development. Grant funding has been secured to progress Highway works along the Kingsway.

VIBRANT & VIABLE PLACES - Good progress is being made within the Homes Above Shops and Property Development Grants projects with many projects coming to fruition by March 2017. Coastal Housing Phase 1 is progressing well on site, whilst phase 2 is under way in terms of planning and procurement of contractors.

2.0 DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT, DESIGN & CONSERVATION

The positive changes the staff structure, business processes, scheme of delegation and Committee structures introduced during 2014-15 have significantly improved the Authority's development management performance in both qualitative and quantitative terms. The average time taken to determine all planning applications at 61 days was significantly below the Welsh average of 77 days. The percentage of all applications determined within required timescales also showed a significant improvement increasing from 71% in 2014-15 to 84% well above the Welsh average of 77%. Significantly, for the delivery of the Council's regeneration agenda, the percentage of all major planning applications determined within required timescales has increased from 6% in 2014-15, which was the lowest performance in Wales, to 36% in 2015-16, which is above the Welsh average.

3.0 CITY CENTRE MANAGEMENT

EVENING AND NIGHT TIME ECONOMY STRATEGY AND PURPLE FLAG – City Centre Management (CCM) is now taking the lead on this initiative and a multi-agency working group has been established to oversee the development and implementation of an Evening and Night Time Economy Strategy.

WIND STREET PEDESTRIANISATION - A formal consultation exercise has recently been concluded by CCM the results of which are being evaluated.

SWANSEA MARKET- The Cabinet Advisory Committee have agreed to explore providing toilets in the context of a longer term development plan for the Market linked to the City Centre's wider regeneration strategy.

CITY CENTRE RANGERS - Following the relaunch of the rebranded Ranger Service in September 2015, the Service has gone from strength to strength with the team averaging dealing with over 2,000 separate incidents each month.

EVENTS - In addition to the Swansea Big Weekend, CCM have commissioned a 'Ghoul School' event in the City Centre as part of the wider Spooks in the City Halloween programme on Sat 29 Oct.

4.0 STRATEGIC PLANNING & NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

STRATEGIC PLANNING - Significant progress in Local Development Plan (LDP) preparation has been made over the past year. The Deposit LDP has been agreed by Council and has been subject to comprehensive public consultation. The responses received are being assessed and a report prepared setting out any changes that are necessary to the Plan, with the intention to submit the amended LDP for Examination in early 2017. Supplementary Planning Guidance is also being prepared to regulate the spread of Houses in Multiple Occupation and guide decision making for student accommodation developments, to be completed by March 2017.

LANDSCAPE - The work of the Landscape Team has been mainly focussed on the outside environment works associated with the refurbishment of Council housing to Welsh Housing Quality Standard. A review of historic Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) is ongoing and Members have been provided with details of all TPOs within their wards.

AONB - This year is the 60th Anniversary of the designation of Gower as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). A new AONB Management Plan is being finalised. The Gower Landscape Partnership managed by the AONB team has brought in over £1.3m worth of investment from the Heritage Lottery Fund, with another £640k of external funding.

COUNTRYSIDE ACCESS - Four new promoted walks on Gower have recently been launched by Leslie Griffiths the Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs. Work has commenced on a new Countryside Access Plan to replace the current plan which expires in 2017.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT - The Sustainable Development Unit (SDU) has been preparing and supporting Council services with the implementation of the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act. The SDU has successfully set up a community energy social enterprise and is in the process of installing photovoltaic panels on nine schools and a residential home for the elderly in areas of Swansea with high levels of poverty. The team has won two prestigious awards: UK Most Sustainable Public Sector Platinum award 2015 and the Sustainable Public Sector Sustain Wales Award 2015.

NATURE CONSERVATION - The Team is currently implementing a commercial contract (worth £85,000) to plan and deliver a wetlands habitat creation and enhancement project at the RSPCA's Llys Nini Animal Centre in Penllergaer. The Team have also helped plan, co-ordinate and deliver a natural sand dune system to tackle the problem of windblown sand from Swansea Beach onto Oystermouth Rd.

5.0 EUROPEAN & EXTERNAL FUNDING

European Structural & Investment Funds 2014-2020 - The European and External Funding Team operates a range of large externally funded projects and programmes, and has helped secure a range of funding across a number of themes including European Social Fund, European Regional Development Fund & Rural Development Plan. Staffing in the team is paid for through projects secured, providing a single point of expertise for dealing quickly and efficiently with external grant processes. Implementation of the Workways+ project is underway helping economically inactive people into employment from non-Communities First areas. The team is also supporting the Poverty & Prevention team in implementing the Communities for Work programme. Support for young people at risk of becoming NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) has been secured through the Cynydd project. An application is in progress to Welsh European Funding Office to secure funding to support infrastructure improvements to facilitate the proposed employment hub at The Kingsway. The team has helped secure Stage 1 approval for £3.75m award from the Heritage Enterprise programme to restore the former Powerhouse building at the Hafod Copperworks site to potentially accommodate a new Penderyn Whisky distillery.

6.0 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

CITY DEAL - The Swansea Bay City Region Board City Deal proposal, which exploits the opportunity of access in the near future to world-leading digital telecommunications capacity in Swansea Bay in order to connect and integrate the city region's key economic assets and transform its economic activity and performance, was positively received by UK and Welsh Government for its imaginative and innovative approach. Further work has since been undertaken to develop business cases for the 1st phase programme of key City Deal projects, including significant digital and physical infrastructure development in Swansea City Centre in line with its ambition to be a "City of Innovation".

BEYOND BRICK AND MORTAR (BB&M) - In July of this year, Council resolved to update the BB&M initiative to form a Community Benefit policy covering all the Authority's activities where community benefits can add value, including planning applications, works, services and supply contracts, sale of land for development as well as construction and regeneration projects. Since 2009 the BBM Team has secured the following:-

- 109 supplier contracts where community benefit clauses have been included;
- 7,914 training weeks achieved for unemployed and disadvantaged; and
- 254 candidates placed into employment or training opportunities.

In this financial year to date, 5 additional contracts and 1142 training weeks have been secured. Additionally this year, the BB&M Team is leading the piloting of a new Swansea Apprenticeship Scheme. The Team has been in discussion with a number of internal teams within the Council about taking on apprentices within their work areas, and a small number of apprentices have already been taken on.

7.0 TREE PRESERVATION – PROGRESS UPDATE ON ACTIONS FOLLOWING SCRUTINY

The attached schedule sets out the progress achieved on the Tree Preservation recommendations made by Scrutiny Working Group on 9th May 2016 and as agreed in my response of 27th May 2016.

Overview:

Recommendations completed

- Councillors provided with details of TPOs in their wards
- Council website updated to provide information on Ash die-back disease
- Register of Enforcement Action created (but none taken to date)

Recommendations partially completed

- SPG relating to Trees on Development Sites - draft document prepared and currently being consulted upon. Adoption anticipated early 2017.
- Council Tree policy drafted - being considered by Development CAC (covers replanting of trees on Council land)

Recommendations not completed to date

- Additional resources to assist with the administrative review of TPOs (only resource available is tied up with LDP admin, but anticipated to be actioned by end of year)
- Training for officers on protected trees (awaiting adoption of Trees on Development Sites SPG)
- There are currently no suitable cases for prosecution.
- Placing of TPO on Council land prior to sale (ongoing discussions to include possibility as part of pre-disposal advice)
- Establish a tree/plant nursery – being considered by Parks as part of Commissioning Review but not considered to be commercially viable at this time

Tree Preservation Scrutiny Working Group Recommendations May 2016: Progress Update

	Recommendation	Cabinet Member	Decision	Actions include	Progress (Oct 2016)
1	Consider providing additional temporary resources to ensure that the review of existing Tree Preservation Orders is completed within a shorter timescale	Enterprise, Development & Regeneration	Agreed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete scanning of paper files • Identify inaccuracies in paper work – check each TPO • Identify and allocate ad hoc officer time to complete above actions 	None to date due to staff tied up on LDP.
2	Identify a suitable case for prosecution where a Tree Preservation Order has been breached and, if successful, ensure it is widely publicised	Enterprise, Development & Regeneration	Agreed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landscape team will identify a suitable case for prosecution when it occurs • Any successful prosecution to be reported in the local press 	None found to date
3	When Tree Preservation Orders have been breached, if prosecution is not possible, ensure that the service rigorously pursues replacement planting or remedial work at the owner's expense	Enterprise, Development & Regeneration; Leader (Finance & Strategy)	Agreed *may require a budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decision whether to take enforcement action to be assessed in each case – following persuasion, discussion and advice with tree owner • If Council decides not to take formal enforcement action a record will be kept and made available to public on request • If replanting not carried out by tree owner tree replacement notice to be served (within 4 years of alleged non-compliance) A budget will be required if the Council is to carry out replanting 	<p>2 cases identified mitigation agreed in 1 case and in discussion with the other</p> <p>Register has been created – none to date</p> <p>Tree replacement notices to be sent out shortly to relevant cases for replanting in this planting season.</p> <p>No cases identified to date</p>

				in the event of non-compliance by tree owner	
4	Ensure that Tree Preservation Orders are placed on Council land prior to sale	Enterprise, Development & Regeneration; Leader (Finance & Strategy)	Agreed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When considered for disposal land owned by the Council will be assessed using the Tree Evaluation Method for Preservation Orders 	<p>Any additional responsibility on the Authority with regards to placing TPOs on Council land before sale will add a requirement which will have an impact on disposal values and the ability to take properties to the market in good time.</p> <p>Discussions are ongoing as to whether this could be incorporated into any pre-disposal advice that is normally sought from Planning Officers, however, a rigid application of this approach will have implications.</p>
5	Provide Councillors (including community councillors) with a list of Tree Preservation Orders in their wards	All CCS Councillors	Partially agreed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each CCS Councillor will be supplied with electronic “copies” of each TPO present in their Ward Members will be informed of new TPOs (as at present) and any variation or revocation within their wards Community councils are consulted on and are provided with copies of schedules and 	<p>Schedules and plans provided for Members for all TPO’s in their wards.</p> <p>Members advised of any provisional, confirmed or revoked orders in their wards as a matter of course.</p> <p>Community Councils advised of any provisional, confirmed or</p>

				plans of provisional TPOs and are notified of confirmations, variations and revocations and are consulted on relevant tree works applications	revoked orders in their wards as a matter of course.
6	Look for ways to promote the value and importance of trees amongst key staff members and the public	Enterprise, Development & Regeneration	Agreed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training will be provided to Planning Officers by the Landscape Team relating to trees in the planning context in validating planning and tree works applications and the emerging LDP policies. • Guidance notes “The Protection of Trees on Development Sites” to be up-dated to ensure public is provided with current best advice. This may be included as supplementary planning guidance when the new LDP is adopted • Further information to be provided on website to increase the information available to the public on matters of relevance to protected trees within Conservation Areas and trees in general e.g. our approach to Ash die back disease. 	<p>Not carried out to date.</p> <p>Consultation undertaken on revised SPG Trees on Development Sites (2016). Consultation ends 19th October 2016.</p> <p>Web pages created on Ash die back disease</p>

7	Direct the Parks Service to develop a proposal to establish a tree/plant nursery to mitigate costs of purchasing new trees and investigate whether this would be a feasible commercial opportunity	Wellbeing & Healthy City	Partially agreed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parks department to look at space and resources to carry this out on a limited scale for their own use. 	Being considered as part of the Parks and Cleansing Commissioning Review – but not considered viable to carry out on a commercial basis
8	Ensure that other Council departments replant trees that are removed during the course of their work	All Cabinet Members	Partially agreed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look to reduce the imbalance between felling and planting – unlikely to be able to ensure 1 for 1 replanting. But ensure justifying why not replanting trees in certain circumstances • This to be a key element of a Tree Policy 	To be included within a Council Tree Policy for ongoing discussion and agreement.
9	Develop a tree policy for the whole Council	All Cabinet Members		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A whole Council Tree Policy requires co-operation and approval of all Cabinet and affected Council Services • Landscape team to produce an interim policy covering protected trees to facilitate and make more transparent the decision making process 	A draft Council Tree Policy has been produced in so far as it affects protected trees and trees on land managed by and in conjunction with the Tree Services Unit. This requires wider consultation with relevant members and departments. Note: the management of trees on Council land is currently under consideration by the Development CAC