

**To/
Councillor Rob Stewart
Cabinet Member for Economy and
Strategy**

*Please ask for:
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Overview & Scrutiny

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13th November 2018

BY EMAIL

Summary: This is a letter from the Development and Regeneration Scrutiny Performance Panel to the Cabinet Member for Economy and Strategy following the meeting of the Panel on 7th November 2018 with the Head of Planning and City Regeneration, the Development and Physical Regeneration Strategic Manager and the Economic Development and External Funding Manager.

Dear Councillor Stewart,

The Development and Regeneration Scrutiny Performance Panel has been meeting regularly to monitor regeneration projects within Swansea. Our meetings now consist of two parts;

1. 'Dashboard' project update from the service on regeneration projects in Swansea.
2. An in depth update on a specific scheme.

We are grateful to all of the officers who attended to provide updates and answer questions.

We heard that the Swansea Central Phase 1 is progressing well, that some technical details regarding the arena are being looked at for scheme designs and that the 'right to light' issue for Marina residents is being resolved. We also heard that the proposal for the hotel is progressing with Visit Wales and the new bridge which is being built will be accessible and an iconic design feature.

The Panel was informed that there are some budget issues but these are being resolved and this will be an ongoing process going forward.

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Regarding Phase 2 we heard that the Kingsway is moving forward and that the area is being kept as tidy as possible. The Panel was pleased to hear that we are future proofing the Kingsway for a fibre network by adding further ducting along the North side of the Kingsway. The £12m for the Kingsway is on budget with WEFO funding contributing to this.

The Panel was pleased to hear that green infrastructure will form part of the developments ensuring green spaces and interconnectivity of biodiversity. We heard that creating the environmental diversity is crucial to the design and that NRW are leading on the green infrastructure policy.

We heard how the Digital Village had received an architecture report which states that the project had the potential to be a real success and the focus is now on the design phase. Officers explained the intent for a new link to Oxford Street and that the Digital Village letting policy should be looked at as a 'whole approach' for letting, rather than a percentage of lets for a measure of success.

The Panel was informed that there needs to be a life cycle strategy for businesses in Swansea so that when they expand and grow out of their start up venues, there is a suitable space for these businesses to expand into and a thriving environment to support leisure and lifestyle. We heard that the timescales for the projects are completion by 2021 with the arena due for completion slightly earlier at 2020.

We heard how the Skyline project is progressing and that there are plans for a range of activities including mountain bike trails and a restaurant. It was explained that we as a Council will be providing services only to the boundary of the area. It was pleasing to hear that Skyline have a good environmental reputation and representatives.

The Panel heard that the Castle Square developer appointment is anticipated for Q1 next year. The Panel will continue to ask for updates on this. It is encouraging that the Felindre lease is being drafted for the distribution facility. We heard that this should act as a catalyst for further development on the site which the Panel was happy to hear.

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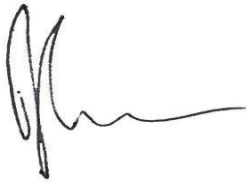
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The Panel has some observations which we wish to share with you;

1. The Panel are concerned that there seems to be a substantial delay in signing off the business case. It was expected earlier in the year and it has still not been received. Can you comment on this?
2. The Panel have concerns regarding how funding will be impacted for the overall regeneration projects with no City Deal money currently released. As the accompanying work to support the large scale projects is being funded by us, there are risks associated if the funding (for any reason) is not released or not released quickly enough. Can you comment on this?

We would welcome a response to this letter by Tuesday 4th December 2018.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Jeff Jones', written in a cursive style.

Councillor Jeff Jones
Convener, Development and Regeneration Performance Panel
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