



Council – 28 March 2019

Councillors' Questions

Part A – Supplementaries

1	<p>Cllrs E W Fitzgerald, J W Jones & C A Holley</p> <p>The Council has stated that it wishes to develop a world class tourist destination around the Hafod Morfa Copper works and Heritage Lottery Funding of £3.75million has been awarded. Could the Cabinet Member inform Members how much money the Council has also had to invest as 'match funding'. What does he see as the financial benefits to the Council.</p> <p>Response of the Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration & Tourism</p> <p>The Council is investing £1.75m as match funding for the Powerhouse/Penderyn visitor centre scheme for a total shell and core scheme cost of £5m. Restoration of the Grade II listed Powerhouse is a significant cost, but an essential and iconic component of the scheme. It should be noted that large grant awards of this kind are increasingly difficult to secure due to decreasing resources in the lottery funds, Achieving £3.75m grant award at UK Trustee level is challenging, but has been made because of NLHF's confidence in the scheme.</p> <p>This project has given Welsh Government the confidence to approve in principle further support for the site with a further £2.7m of Targeted Regeneration & Investment funding support. This is matched with £850k of funding in the current capital programme already allocated for the restoration of the Scheduled Ancient Monument Morfa Bascule lifting bridge, existing Council and Cadw investment in the Scheduled Ancient Monument Musgrave Engine House nearing completion on site. This additional programme also comprises works to restore the Grade II Vivian Engine House, Gatehouse and Weighbridge buildings, at least one if not both of the Swansea Canal bridges that will now link the site to the Morfa bypass, access improvements on both sides of the river, consolidation and improvements at the White Rock site including Smith's canal, pontoon access, and flooding and drainage infrastructure. These improvements and developments ultimately expand Swansea's offer of tourism and to work, live and stay in the area, linking with the City Centre.</p> <p>Works are essential at this time to prevent further decay and risk of loss of the remaining listed structures around the site. Any further delay would result in complete loss of this valuable heritage that forms a critical part of Swansea's story.</p>
2	<p>Cllrs A M Day, L James & C L Philpott</p>

It was pleasing to see that the QED 2020 strategy launched by the Swansea Administration in 2005 was continued when Labour took control in 2012. What will replace QED 2020.

Response of the Cabinet Member for Education, Improvement Learning & Skills

Quality in Education is something that we all aspire to for all our children and as 2020 approaches this will not change. With the Welsh Government's 21st Century Schools programme complementing our evolving strategy we will continue to invest as much as possible in our school stock.

The QEd 2020 strategy was developed with wide ranging stakeholder input and support as a long term over-arching strategy, initially looking to 2020. Specific capital investment priorities have inevitably been reviewed and refined over time to reflect changing local needs as well as Welsh Government 21st Century Schools Programme priorities.

The Council's QEd / 21st Century Schools Band A Programme of £51.3m has already delivered significant capital investment across schools focused on:

- Learning environments for children and young people aged from 3 to 19 that will enable the successful implementation of strategies for school improvement and better educational outcomes;
- Greater economy through better use of resources to improve the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of the education estate and public service provision; and
- A sustainable education system with all schools meeting a 21st century schools standard, and reducing the recurrent costs and carbon footprint.

The Council's Band B programme, amounting to a further £149.7m, has been approved in principle by the Welsh Government and work is progressing well to access this funding at the earliest opportunity. This will take us well beyond the original 2020 focus which was always going to be the case as the QEd strategy is by its very nature a continuing long term strategy.

3 Cllrs E W Fitzgerald, K M Griffiths & D G Sullivan

Does the Cabinet Member consider the setting of the Grade 2 Listed Historic Landscape, Park and Garden at Penllergaer has been improved and enhanced by the residential development currently underway. If he believes this is the case, can he explain why.

Response of the Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration & Tourism

The relationship of the development to the designated Grade II Penllergaer Historic Park and Garden was fully assessed in the Planning Report. The development replaced a modern civic office complex and extensive surface parking areas. The new homes create a meadow focal point around the observatory which is a scheduled ancient monument as well as retained 'heritage trees'. The new homes also relate positively to the parkland and those on the site of the former mansion take inspiration from the design of the original building.

	<p>The Planning Committee considered the officer assessment of the proposals including the relationship to the wider landscape and parkland and voted to approve the scheme. The Welsh Government had the opportunity to call in the application if it considered that the proposals harmed the designated the character of the designated historic park and garden, which they did not do.</p>
<p>4</p>	<p>Cllrs A M Day, P M Black & M H Jones</p> <p>The successful Abertawe Festival for Young Musicians (AFYM) has been held in the iconic Brangwyn Hall for many years, with Council support through a reduced hire charge. Can the Cabinet Member confirm that no concession on hire charge will be given to AFYM in future. Can he tell Council what effect this will have on the AFYM in future years. Can he also provide a list of events and/or organisations that will be eligible for reduced hire charges from the 2019/20 financial year.</p> <p>Response of the Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration & Tourism</p> <p>The Brangwyn Hall is managed by Cultural Services and has significant income targets and a policy of no free use, nor discount or concession rates for any organisation or event, unless it is a catered banquet, in which case the income is derived through the catering contract. These are commercial events, organised with our catering partner, JR Events.</p> <p>Abertawe Festival for Young Musicians (AFYM) is provided the Brangwyn Hall at the standard hire rate and a series of Guildhall committee rooms (managed by the Council's Facilities team), also at the standard hire rate. In previous years, Cultural Services have assessed the total costs of use of the Brangwyn Hall and Committee Rooms and made every effort to mitigate these, by transferring budgets from elsewhere in the service. The Service will also provide free or reduced charges for use of a tuned piano or staging where practicable, depending on the previous/forthcoming event at the venue. AFYM have been advised since 2015 that this support is not guaranteed as budgets reduce annually and the Service ceased to give grants to third parties as part of its efficiencies, moving to a 'commissioning' and partnership model for delivering service priorities.</p> <p>For the past two years AFYM's committee has expanded their programme and are now requiring more sound proof spaces and additional rooms, thus the cost of the Festival increases accordingly. Cultural services staff have suggested to the Committee that the event is relocated to the Glynn Vivian Art Gallery where, if the event was reconfigured, it could be staged more cheaply. The Committee are not currently open to this suggestion.</p> <p>With a limited capacity for fundraising and an expanding programme linked to formal education, it is possible that the future of the Festival is under threat if the Committee are unable to adapt the scale, location and reach of their event. There are no organisations eligible for reduced hire charges in 19/20, as there is no discounted rate for non-dining events.</p>
<p>5</p>	<p>Cllrs A M Day, P M Black & L G Thomas</p> <p>How much has the Council spent in the last two years on Non Disclosure Agreements.</p>

	<p>Response of the Cabinet Member for Business Transformation & Performance</p> <p>The only Non Disclosure Agreements in the last two years have related to settlement agreements. In 2017 and 2018 the Council spent £98,535 on settlement agreements.</p>																								
	<p>Part B – No Supplementaries</p>																								
6	<p>Cllrs E W Fitzgerald, S M Jones & J W Jones</p> <p>Could the Cabinet Member confirm the number of trees that have been felled in the City Centre over the last three years and from where and how many are being planted as replacements.</p> <p>Response of the Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration & Tourism</p> <p>Over the last three years a total of 220 trees have been felled in the City Centre as an enabling part of regeneration projects including the £12m upgrade of the Kingsway area, the development of the £129m Swansea Central phase one scheme and digital arena, and the £50m Mariner St development. A further 9 trees have been felled for maintenance reasons (dead or dangerous) along Walter Rd and High St.</p> <p>At least 269 trees will be planted as replacements within these same locations. Furthermore, as part of the Council’s commitment to maintaining and enhancing Swansea’s natural resources and biodiversity, a City Centre Green Infrastructure Strategy is currently being prepared which will increase the quality and multifunctionality of green infrastructure in future City Centre regeneration schemes.</p>																								
7	<p>Cllrs A M Day, C A Holley & J W Jones</p> <p>How much has the council spent on awards events and ceremonies during the last two years.</p> <p>Response of the Cabinet Member for Delivery</p> <p>Net spending on all awards events and ceremonies was as follows.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th><u>2016/17</u></th> <th><u>2017/18</u></th> <th><u>2018/19</u> (to date)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Annual Sports Awards</td> <td>1,338</td> <td>1,429</td> <td>1,314</td> </tr> <tr> <td>High 5*</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Honorary Freedom</td> <td>3,022</td> <td>7,520</td> <td>2,741</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Lord Mayors Inauguration</td> <td>4,282</td> <td>3,628</td> <td>1,275</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ceremonial Council - Honorary Aldermen</td> <td></td> <td>1,462</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		<u>2016/17</u>	<u>2017/18</u>	<u>2018/19</u> (to date)	Annual Sports Awards	1,338	1,429	1,314	High 5*	0	0	0	Honorary Freedom	3,022	7,520	2,741	Lord Mayors Inauguration	4,282	3,628	1,275	Ceremonial Council - Honorary Aldermen		1,462	
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Centenary of the RAF				6,320
Cost to Swansea Council of the above		8,642	14,039	11,650
This excludes existing costs of officer time working on events.				
Annual Sports event cost for 2018/19 estimate - event is on 13/3/2019				
*High 5 : cost fully covered by sponsorship so net nil cost to Council.				
Honorary Freedom :				
2016/17 : Mel Nurse and Chris Coleman				
2017/18 : HMS Cambria				
2018/19 : Sir Karl Jenkins				
The total costs are higher than the recently released Taxpayers Alliance Report covering 2015-2018 (£5,770 for Swansea) because this answer includes our civic ceremonies. This total amount remains entirely modest when compared to reports of other Councils spending. I am sure Councillors will of course recognise the importance of such events and note they have been delivered at very modest net cost.				