



Council – 5 March 2020

Councillors' Questions

Part A – Supplementaries

1	<p>Councillors Myles Langstone & Will Thomas</p> <p>The proposed development of what is currently a number of tennis courts and toilet block at Langland has the POTENTIAL to improve the bay for both tourists and locals. However a large development with no facilities would be detrimental to one of the areas greatest assets. That is why it is a great shame that no facilities have been requested by the council to potential developers with only toilets being added to the list of requested facilities. Changing rooms, warm private showers, social areas, board hire, chair hire and sports facilities such as basketball and padel tennis would benefit locals and add to the areas tourism appeal.</p> <p>Could the Cabinet Member or Leader give assurances that improved facilities (such as the ones above) other than toilets is also a target with this development and this site is not just a cash cow.</p> <p>Response of the Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration & Tourism</p> <p>The site will be marketed on the basis that the Council would like to see a mix of commercial and leisure facilities included. Weight will be given to proposals that include accessible leisure facilities when selecting an applicant. However, offers on any basis are welcome for consideration as the development needs to be financially sustainable without public subsidy and so we want to give developers the freedom to create what they believe can be maintained in the long term. This could of course include the elements referred to in the question.</p>
2	<p>Councillors Myles Langstone & Will Thomas</p> <p>Could the Cabinet Member please inform us of any covenant(s) that exist on any of the land to be advertised at Langland Bay.</p> <p>Response of the Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration & Tourism</p> <p>Please contact Lewis Hinds (lewis.hinds@swansea.gov.uk) who can provide you with the title information that is available.</p>
3	<p>Councillors Chris Holley, Jeff Jones & Susan Jones</p> <p>Will the Cabinet Member confirm what reduction there has been in available spaces at the day centres run by Social Services, given that the eligibility criteria has changed over the last 4 years.</p>

Response of the Cabinet Member for Care Health & Ageing Well

Over the past 4 years, day services for older people have been remodelled in line with the Council's optimum model for adult services.

The services are now better placed to deliver support for individuals with complex needs, provide respite and take a more enabling approach.

As part of this remodelling the number of available spaces has reduced from a maximum daily average of 143 to a maximum daily average of 94.

Whilst the average percentage usage rates have increased to 66%, there remains sufficient capacity to meet current levels of demand.

All those who had been using the day services were supported to find better alternatives.

Now those more able individuals who are looking for greater activity in their community and whose carers would benefit from a period of respite are directed or enabled to attend any one of a multitude of activities in the community, be they clubs, social gatherings, 3rd sector events or just informal meetings with friends.

4 Councillors Irene Mann & Peter May

A Section 7 notice has been long awaited by residents of Uplands Ward. This would legally enforce a prescriptive size and location of TO LET signs. This would as a consequence improve the aesthetic profile of the area. Would the Cabinet Member responsible comment as to when this initiative maybe sought.

Response of the Cabinet Member for Delivery & Performance

Regulation 7 of The Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 1992 makes provision for a Local Planning Authority to submit a proposal to the Welsh Ministers for a Direction that the display of certain advertisements within a particular area should not be undertaken without the express consent of the Local Planning Authority.

Technical Advice Note (TAN) 7 – Outdoor Advertisement Control – November 1996, provides guidance on how applications for advertisements consent are to be assessed and details how requests for special powers are to be made:

Para 22. Before a direction is made, the local planning authority will have to show that it would improve visual amenity and that there is no other effective way of controlling the display of that particular Class of advertisement. As part of this process, local planning authorities will be asked to submit a fully reasoned statement showing that the particular deemed consent provisions are environmentally unsatisfactory in the area or place for which the direction is proposed: dealing with the adverse effects on visual amenity; describing the remedial steps already taken to minimise these effects; giving details of prosecutions for any illegal displays; and assessing the likely consequences of making the direction. The comments of organisations and individuals, whose interests would be affected by the making of a direction, should be sought as part of the process of deciding whether a direction is appropriate.

	<p>Two surveys, one in 2018 and one in 2019, have been undertaken to establish the extent of 'To-Let' signs displayed in areas of Uplands and Castle wards where the issue is perceived to be greatest. I have asked relevant officers to review the existing evidence, consider any additional evidence required and resource requirements for an application to be submitted to Welsh Ministers for such a direction.</p>
5	<p>Councillors Lesley Walton, Mike White, Gloria Tanner, Paul Lloyd, Robert Smith & Mo Sykes</p> <p>Swansea Council has prioritised support and funding for the education of our children and young people. Congratulations are due for the excellent categorisation results. The vast majority of Swansea schools achieved the Green category. Does the Cabinet Member agree this puts the PISA figures into context and whilst not being complacent we should acknowledge the hard work put in by all Swansea schools, the staff and pupils, governors and families to achieve this result.</p> <p>Response of the Cabinet Member for Education Improvement, Learning & Skills</p> <p>You are correct that we continue to prioritise support and funding for education. PISA results are just one measure of an education system and you are right to comment on the excellent categorisation results of all Swansea schools. Members might also want to note that in Estyn inspections published since September 2017, all Swansea schools have had either good or excellent for standards (32 school inspections).</p>
6	<p>Councillors Mike Day, Cheryl Philpott & Jeff Jones</p> <p>Can the relevant Cabinet Member tell Council where the current depot and staff at Home Farm will be moved to.</p> <p>Response of the Cabinet Member for Environment & Infrastructure Management</p> <p>Potential alternative uses of the Home Farm Operational Depot is currently being considered by a cross party working group, so no decision has been made to move staff. Sites on Ferryboat Close could be an option should the decision be made to relocate operations out of the Home Farm Depot.</p>
7	<p>Councillors Myles Langstone & Will Thomas</p> <p>The council is set to advertise what is currently the toilet block and 3 tennis courts at Langland Bay. Yet the Lawn Tennis Association advised that a minimum of four tennis courts was needed to meet local demand. Would the Cabinet Member therefore remove the single tennis court from any proposal. This could still be used as a storage site during construction but remain a tennis court or multi use games area in the longer term. Please remove this area (single court) from the development as it is excessive.</p> <p>Response of the Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration & Tourism</p> <p>As I have said before, the 4th "single" court will be included during advertising to allow the development / improvement of public service opportunities at the site</p>

	<p>to be thoroughly explored. However, it may become available to the Community Council to form part of their refurbishment project if it is not considered essential for any proposed development project.</p>
8	<p>Councillors Wendy Fitzgerald ,Chris Holley & Mary Jones</p> <p>Could the Cabinet Member inform Council of the total number of net new jobs gained in Swansea since 2012.</p> <p>Response of the Leader</p> <p>The Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES) data shows that total employment rose from 102,600 in 2012 to 112,100 in 2019 – an increase of 9,500 (9.3%).</p>
9	<p>Councillors Peter Black, Graham Thomas & Chris Holley</p> <p>Can the Cabinet Member explain why a request for debit or credit card details is made when registering for a residents parking permit.</p> <p>Response of the Cabinet Member for Environment & Infrastructure Management</p> <p>There is no need to provide credit/debit cards for the residents parking permit.</p> <p>Once all the details have been inputted and the account created and all the required evidence has been provided, as there is no payment, when the submit button has been clicked the application is submitted.</p> <p>As the system is the same as the pay to park app, MiPermit, then a card needs to be registered to use it for that purpose.</p>
10	<p>Councillors Wendy Fitzgerald, Susan Jones & Mary Jones</p> <p>Could the Cabinet Member update Councillors on what improvements have been made to the automatic phone system so that it can recognise Welsh Christian names in particular.</p> <p>Response of the Leader</p> <p>The automatic telephone system's performance is reviewed weekly, and reported failures and difficulties are resolved on an individual basis by amending the relevant phonetics. This creates the best possible match to the correct pronunciation. No disproportionate levels of problems have been identified with Welsh names specifically. The Council's diverse workforce means that the directory includes names from a wide variety of dialects and cultures and we are confident the system has the ability to accommodate this.</p>
11	<p>Councillors Cheryl Philpott, Mary Jones & Lynda James</p> <p>It is noted, with concern, that there appears to be an increase in dog fouling on public footpaths. Does the Council still employ an enforcement officer with the specific remit of investigating and subsequently fining the culprits who allow their animals to foul.</p>

Response of the Cabinet Member for Environment & Infrastructure Management

Contrary to the stated perception of an increase in dog fouling on public footpaths, the reports of dog fouling are reasonably constant. The remit of all of the Council's Environmental Enforcement Officers includes investigating and issuing of fixed penalty notices for dog fouling. If we were to focus an Officer only on dog fouling, then those resources would have to be withdrawn from other areas such as waste issues or fly tipping. The Council has also recently trained 30 frontline staff from Parks and Cleansing to issue Fixed Penalty Notices environmental offences including dog fouling. Going forward dog owners will be made aware that any trained member of staff within Parks and Cleansing department can issue FPNs during the course of their daily duties.

12 **Councillors Wendy Fitzgerald, Gareth Sullivan & Kevin Griffiths**

Could the Leader confirm that the Council will be requesting information on radiation exclusion zones from the operators in regard to masts sited on Council land or buildings before the network is upgraded to carry 5G signals.

Response of the Leader

From a planning perspective, Swansea Council cannot request this information to be submitted with an application, or rather it is not a validation requirement and the applicant does not have to provide them. What the Council can request is dictated by legislation. In terms of a planning application, Article 9 requires the applicant to submit an ICNIRP certificate and this also has to be submitted for a prior notification application as well. This is specified in legislation and the practice manual (excerpts below).

In terms of policy, Paragraph 5.2.15 of Planning Policy Wales states that "Provided that the development meets the International Commission on Non-Ionising Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) guidelines, planning authorities should not consider the health aspects of mobile telecommunication equipment. All new base stations are expected to meet the ICNIRP guidelines." Paragraph 5.2.16 goes on to state that "Planning authorities should not implement their own precautionary policies, such as imposing a ban or moratorium on new telecommunications development or insisting on minimum distances between new telecommunications development and existing development."

The Council may ask the applicant to map the exclusion zone but they are under no obligation to do so from a planning perspective.

The current health advice from Public Health Wales states:

- 5G Technology is at an early stage and current technical standards utilise ICNIRP (International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection) guidelines in application to products. UK network operators are already committed to complying with ICNIRP principles
- Frequencies being discussed for future use by 5G are around ten times higher than those currently in use, up to a few tens of GHz (Giga Hertz). ICNIRP guidelines apply up to 300GHz
- Recent research has focused on exposure to existing frequencies in use with fewer studies being carried out at the higher frequencies; the biophysical mechanisms that govern the interaction between radio waves

	<p>and body tissue are well understood and the basis of the ICNIRP restrictions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher frequencies (5G) would mean less penetration of radio waves and absorption in body tissues and any consequent body heating more confined to the body surface • It is possible that there may be a small increase in overall exposure to radio waves when 5G is added to an existing network or in a new area. However, the overall exposure is expected to remain low relative to guidelines and as such there should be no consequences for public health. • Will continue to monitor public health advice.
13	<p>Councillors Wendy Fitzgerald, Jeff Jones & Peter Black</p> <p>Will the Cabinet Member comment on the success or otherwise of the new 'card only' payment arrangements in car parks.</p> <p>Response of the Cabinet Member for Environment & Infrastructure Management</p> <p>There have been some significant technical issues affecting the majority of the Pay and Display machines in the car parks following a spate of thefts, attempted thefts and vandalism which damaged the hoppers and safes within the machines; therefore a large proportion of machines could not accept coins.</p> <p>It has never been our intention nor have we considered removing cash from any of the car parks; the loss of cash payments was due to the significant technical issues.</p> <p>We have introduced a new parking app, which has been very successful. However, we are aware that a large proportion of the local population do not have a mobile phone, let alone a smart phone, which is why we are retaining paying by coins within all car parks.</p> <p>The damage and thefts coincided with the machines coming to the end of their operational life therefore a decision was made to purchase new machinery. The tender for the new Pay and Display machines has now closed with the tender report submitted for approval. We are looking to award the contract to the winning bidder very soon with the install expected to start after that. These new machines will be coin, card and contactless and the MiPermit app will also be available.</p> <p>The new machinery in The Quadrant and High Street Multi Storeys and both Park & Rides, allows for cash, card and contactless.</p>
	<p>Part B – No Supplementaries</p>
14	<p>Councillors Peter May & Irene Mann</p> <p>It has been confirmed that the total cost for the new lighting outside The Guildhall was £69,000 was financed from the Building Capital Maintenance budget 19/20 on the 21st March 2019.</p> <p>a. Could a list of all Cabinet Members present be published please (this may well be on the internet somewhere but not all people can access it)</p>

In mid-December 2019 two lighting columns were chopped down in Oakwood Road, plunging the street into darkness. At the time of writing (9th February 2020), they have yet to be replaced and there was no budget to replace them. Throughout these couple of dark months, the main façade of The Guildhall, a public building where important budget decisions are made has been well lit.

b. In hindsight, does the Cabinet Member think that the £69,000 should have been prioritised to replace lamps that are chopped down in residential streets (particularly in December) rather than illuminating public buildings.

Response of the Cabinet Member for Environment & Infrastructure Management

The question asked by Cllr Peter May and Cllr Irene Mann is inaccurate and misleading. As an ex cabinet member of the Liberal Democrat Independent Plaid Cymru Conservative collation that ran Swansea from 2004-2012, he would have a better understanding of the budgets we hold and the processes for lighting removal and replacement

Incase Cllr May needs reminding, the administration he was a cabinet member in, removed thousands of lighting columns without a plan or a budget to replace them leaving many communities in darkness. In addition Cllr May voted to turn off many hundreds of perfectly good street lights across Swansea again plunging areas into darkness. The Labour opposition like many communities were so infuriated at this action that we moved an amendment at the budget council meeting to force the Lib Dem/ Independent cabinet to allocate significant funds to restore street lighting

In 2012 when Labour were elected as the administration for Swansea, we continued to invest heavily in upgrading street lighting to new energy efficient lighting and have replaced over 21,000 lighting columns and lamps across Swansea.

Around 3000 remain to be replaced and we have a capital fund and capital contingency fund both of which can be used for this purpose. In this years budget we are proposing to invest £8.4m to improve roads, pavements and lighting.

I can only deduce from your actions and the structure of your question that you are seeking to try and make political capital out of a temporary removal of unsafe lighting Columns. I do not think this is an appropriate way to resolve issues in your community.

In terms of the Guildhall lighting, this has been part of the capital programme for a number of years and forms part of the overall capital maintenance backlog your administration left behind. We have greatly reduced that maintenance backlog since 2012. This administration will continue to invest in our city and our communities.

15 Councillors Chris Holley, Mary Jones & Jeff Jones

The Council pays a subsidy to Freedom Leisure and there is also a loan on the money which we borrowed to update the Leisure Centre could the Cabinet Member tell us what the combination of these figures is.

	<p>Response of the Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration & Tourism</p> <p><u>Budgeted Management Fee to Freedom Leisure</u> 19/20 - £1,917,950 20/21 - £1,172,319</p> <p><u>Prudential Borrowing (annual figure)</u> Interest- £160,000 Capital Repayment- £260,000</p>
16	<p>Councillors Mike Day, Mary Jones & Susan Jones</p> <p>We have noticed recently that there has been an increase in the number of homes where parking spaces are being created in the front gardens of those properties. In order to allow access to this parking provision, vehicle cross overs are being installed which result in the reduction of on-street parking. Can the Cabinet Member tell Council</p> <p>a. how many applications for cross-overs/dropped kerbs have been approved in the last two years, and how many rejected</p> <p>b. how many on-street parking spaces have therefore been lost in the last two years (by ward)</p> <p>c. what criteria the council applies when considering such applications,</p> <p>d. whether there is a limit to the number of crossovers/dropped kerbs allowed in one particular street or area, and,</p> <p>e. what costs are involved, and who covers those costs.</p> <p>Response of the Cabinet Member for Environment & Infrastructure Management</p> <p>a. From 1st February 2018 to 10th February 2020, 353 Vehicle Crossing Applications were received. 7 were rejected for non-payment of the inspection fee, and 2 were rejected because they did not meet our minimum dimension requirements.</p> <p>One of the reasons for such a low number of rejected applications is that applicants often contact our offices to discuss their proposals prior to submitting their application.</p> <p>We try to look favourably on each application further to our commitment to remove as many vehicles from the highway as possible.</p> <p>b. We do not record this information. On street parking requirements differ from area to area. We do not keep a register of the size or width of the vehicle crossings provided – some applicants require a single vehicle access, whereas other applicants request a larger/wider access to accommodate 2 or more vehicles.</p> <p>c. Safety is of paramount importance when assessing the suitability of each proposed vehicle crossing. Each application is assessed on its own merits.</p> <p>Other matters considered, but not limited to, include the parking space within the curtilage of the property, classification of the road, provision of adequate drainage, levels, planning requirements, removal or repositioning of street lighting columns, street furniture, street name plates, utility or council control cabinets, traffic signs, utility inspection covers, proximity to schools, protected</p>

	<p>trees, conservation areas, amending traffic road orders, land ownership, and or any other mitigating factor for the precise location that the proposed access will be constructed.</p> <p>d. We do not have a limit for the installation or construction of vehicular crossings on any particular street or area within Swansea.</p> <p>e. For all private and internal applications, there is currently a £95.00 inspection fee. The construction fees vary, however, an average cost to the applicant to install a vehicular crossing would be approximately £1,200.</p>
17	<p>Councillors Chris Holley, Jeff Jones & Peter Black</p> <p>Will the Leader confirm the following</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. the amount of cash we will receive for the arena per year from the City Deal for 15 years is £1.5 million, 2. the cost of the loan for Swansea Central is £5.0 million per year over and above our current requirements, 3. confirm that the lease we have with the arena operator will give the council a payment of under a six figure sum plus any profit that is made, 4. what is the cost of the project for the hub which we hope will have some national government departments and local government, 5. the building on the Kingsway which will host a number of high tech companies has a build cost of £30 million which will have some money from the City Deal can the Leader say how much it will be and how the rest is made up. <p>Response of the Leader</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The arena will receive £22.849m city deal funding. Carmarthenshire as City Deal administrators have already received £18m for year 1. The apportionment of payments to each authority is currently being agreed with City Deal colleagues. 2. Borrowing is not hypothecated in this way however based on the borrowing profile figures in the capital budget and most recently taken borrowing at marginal borrowing of 2.35% , when all borrowing has been drawn down as at 21/22, principal and interest shall be approximately £5m. A Capital Equalisation Reserve has been set up to fully cover costs of repayment over the next 6 years. 3. The council has a 30 year lease with Ambassador Theatre Group which is based on a mixture of base rent and a percentage of ticket sales. The final figure is dependent on ticket sales but is likely to be a six figure sum. 4. The cost is currently being worked up by the councils professional team and is subject to finalising the demand. 5. The cost of the building has not yet been finalised and is subject to securing planning and construction tendering. The City Deal will provide £13.71m and a cabinet report to consider funding options will be considered later this year.