



Swansea Bay City Region Joint Committee – 10 September 2020

External Review into the Swansea Bay City Deal Programme

Purpose:	To inform Joint Committee of the SBCD peer review outcome and recommendations
Policy Framework:	Swansea Bay City Deal (SBCD) Joint Committee Agreement (JCA)
Recommendation(s):	It is recommended that Joint Committee: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Approves the external peer review report and authorises the SBCD Portfolio Management Office to implement an action plan based on the six recommendations.
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Legal Officer:	Tracey Meredith, SBCD Monitoring Officer

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The SBCD Programme Management Office (PMO) initiated an OGC Gateway™ review 0 to strategically assess the SBCD's approach and progress to provide further insight and assurance on the SBCD Programme.
- 1.2 The purpose of the external review was for independent practitioners from outside the Programme to use their experience and expertise to examine City Deal progress and the likelihood of the Programme's successful delivery.
- 1.3 The review was led by David Wilkin and three further review team members and was conducted over three days between July 15-17, 2020.
- 1.4 The review outcome was a Delivery Confidence Assessment (DCA) rating of Amber, which is expected at this stage of portfolio/programme maturity and delivery.

- 1.5 Six key recommendations resulted from the three-day review with 22 stakeholders, which are accompanied with details in a 22-page report. The six recommendations are to:
- i. Resolve the inertia introduced by Portfolio/Programme terminology and agree with UKG/WG the *purpose* of the business case to drive its rapid approval and set the framework for constituent Project Business Case approvals.
 - ii. Obtain written confirmation from UKG/WG of explicit description of the conditions required to trigger SBCD funding to flow and negate the need for any further reference other than normal reporting mechanisms.
 - iii. Evaluate the merit of differentiating the accountabilities for strategic oversight and delivery control, thus empowering the Programme Board to exercise its function with agility and in line with the delivery tempo of the programme.
 - iv. Obtain written confirmation from UKG/WG of the acceptance criteria for closing down the response to the external review of February 2019.
 - v. Reinforce the importance of a strong and well-resourced PMO to provide a solid engine room for the SBCD – the ‘information powerhouse’ that underpins momentum.
 - vi. Promote the merit of discovery funding within the Growth Deal approach for project feasibility and innovation work in order to accelerate viable projects and avoid protracted start-up of non-viable projects.
- 1.6 Reviews of this kind represent good programme management practice as they provide a valuable additional perspective to the issues facing the SBCD, along with an external challenge to the robustness of SBCD plans and procedures.
- 1.7 Progress has already been made on aspects of the recommendations and the PMO will be formally producing and reporting on an action plan associated with the key recommendations following approval by Programme Board and Joint Committee.
- 1.8 The next Gateway 0 (Strategic Assessment) is planned to take place in July 2021 and an interim ‘critical friend review’ will take place around January 2021.

2. Background

- 2.1 The external review team carried out 22 online interviews over the first two days of the review, with their findings presented to the SBCD SRO (Senior Responsible Owner) and SBCD Programme Director on the third day of the review.
- 2.2 Representatives of all SBCD primary stakeholders were interviewed as part of the review, including representatives from the Economic Strategy Board, the Joint Scrutiny Committee, the UK Government and the Welsh Government.

- 2.3 The review process was very timely and well-received, reflecting the current position of the SBCD programme and what needs to be done to deliver all City Deal projects as quickly as possible for the benefit of regional residents and businesses.
- 2.4 Attached in Appendix A, the review report has given the SBCD programme an amber status, finding SBCD progress of recent months to be creditable – especially in the context of lockdown working conditions enforced by the Coronavirus emergency.
- 2.5 A number of recommendations form part of the report, which will position the SBCD programme even more positively for success upon their implementation.

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 Financial implications are documented within the attached reports. The external review highlighted the need for clarity associated with the release of funding from Welsh Government. Confirmation will be sought as to the conditions required to trigger the release of further funding.

4. Legal Implications

- 4.1 There are no additional legal implications associated with this report.

5. Alignment to the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

- 5.1 The SBCD Programme and its constituent projects are closely aligned to the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the seven well-being goals for Wales. These alignments are outlined in a Portfolio Business Case for the SBCD, as well as in individual project business cases.

Background Papers: None

Appendices: Appendix A – External peer review report (July 2020)