



To:
Cllr Mark Thomas
Cabinet Member for Environment
Enhancement & Infrastructure
Management

Please ask for:
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Overview & Scrutiny

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1st December 2021

BY EMAIL

Summary: This is a letter from the Development and Regeneration Scrutiny Performance Panel to the Cabinet Member for Environment Enhancement and Infrastructure Management following the meeting of the Panel on 2nd November 2021. It covers the City Centre Travel Plan Update Report.

Dear Councillor Thomas,

On the 2nd November, the Panel met to discuss the City Centre Travel Plan Update Report. The Panel were grateful to all who attended to provide information and answer questions. We are writing to you to reflect on what we learnt from the discussion and to share the observations of the Panel.

Discussions focused on the following:

The Panel heard that this report was produced in conjunction with Atkins, having considered highway infrastructure and various modes of transport. It was explained to us that the study has focused predominantly on the City Centre, although taking account of some aspects of more sub-urban and rural outskirts, such as traffic hubs, park & ride sites and public transport amenities.

Members raised concerns over similarities with previous travel plans, querying a number of issues as having been present previously or displaying minimal changes. Officers explained that there has been a strong change in focus, concentrating on the different modes of accessing the City Centre. Officers assured us that there have been

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significant improvements and investments in networks, junctions and distributor routes; having made a big impact in some areas across Swansea.

We understood that there is now a strong Placemaking theme running throughout the planning, making the City Centre more accessible and minimising reliance on private cars, intending to improve connectivity in and around the City Centre.

It was explained to us that, since the Pandemic, traffic and footfall levels within the City Centre are returning, although traffic patterns have changed dramatically as has the use of the City Centre.

Officers explained to us that that Swansea Council is now trying to understand and anticipate post-pandemic traffic patterns, taking account of major project developments, such as the Arena. It was highlighted to us that considerations will be had to electric charging infrastructure points, as well as environmental considerations such as air quality.

You explained to us that secure bike storage has been constructed at Fabian Way Park & Ride, taking account of people cycling into the city. We also heard that numerous bike shelters have been installed in the City Centre itself, and new developments in the City Centre will consider bike storage provisions to encourage cycling amongst employees and visitors. Officers highlighted that the needs of the City Centre are changing, and new technology is changing ways of travel.

The Panel queried the sometimes-challenging nature of the topography and geography across Swansea as a basis for a cycle network. Members commented that cyclists do not always stay on the cycle paths.

We queried the existing conditions summary, referring to hotspots such as Dyfatty. Officers explained that the Dyfatty junction is recognised as a problem for cyclists/pedestrians. It was highlighted that plans aspire to enhance public transport flows through that junction, having regard to a holistic solution / links with air quality.

Members questioned the development of a new Road in SA1, and how this will be managed to protect residents living in that area. Officers explained that external funding has been applied for, although to date these applications have been unsuccessful. Swansea Council is now preparing and revising applications to secure funding. It was explained that the initial stages of funding for land purchase have been successful and that further funding from Welsh Government is now required for the construction phase.

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Members raised their concerns over possible rat-running along this new road. Officers explained that Swansea Council sees a benefit between connecting SA1 and enhancing active travel modes linking from the Swansea University Bay Campus.

It was explained to us that Swansea Council is considering a number of different 'metro' travel schemes, aimed at improving journey times, bus reviews, and a possible hydrogen-fuelled bus corridor. Officers highlighted that the term 'metro' included a range of transport, integrating high frequency buses and good interchanges between all modes.

The Panel discussed previous Park & Ride schemes, highlighting that sites need to be made more attractive to users, as well as more accessible.

The Panel commented on the need for public transport provisions connecting both hospitals (Morrison and Singleton), noting this was not currently addressed.

It was explained to us that many aspects of transport issues are not always within Swansea Council's control. Officers explained that significant change will likely be visible through Transport For Wales taking on control themselves, such as initiatives to implement integrated ticket systems.

We discussed the challenges faced by bus routes with longer journeys out to rural areas and the possibility of a network of feeder buses through main arterial routes, such as Gower Road, which experience daily traffic congestion. Members raised the need for Park & Ride provision in Swansea West to accommodate rural traffic flows.

Your Response

We are interested in any thoughts you may have on the contents of this letter. We would be grateful if you could please provide a written response to the following points by 22nd December 2021:

- 1) We note the increase in the number of cyclists across Swansea – please would you clarify the quantitative data behind these statistics, particularly relating to the number of people cycling for leisure and/or work.
- 2) Please provide any relevant information or travel plans in relation to rural areas beyond the City Centre.
- 3) In relation to the Dyfatty and Fforestfach junctions, we would like to know if there has been an appraisal of traffic flow.

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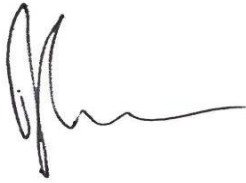
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- 4) We would like to know if any proposals are to be expected for a congestion charge scheme in Swansea City Centre.
- 5) In relation to Singleton Hospital and Morriston Hospital, what are the plans for car parking provision and transport links between the two sites?

Yours sincerely,



Councillor Jeff Jones
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