



City and County of Swansea

Minutes of the Scrutiny Performance Panel – Development & Regeneration

Remotely via Microsoft Teams

Tuesday, 2 November 2021 at 10.00 am

Present: Councillor J W Jones (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

P M Black
S J Gallagher
C A Holley
M H Jones

Councillor(s)

P Downing
D W Helliwell
P R Hood-Williams
P K Jones

Councillor(s)

E W Fitzgerald
T J Hennegan
L James
T M White

Other Attendees

Mark Thomas

Cabinet Member - Environment Enhancement & Infrastructure Management

Emily-Jayne Davies

Scrutiny Officer

Stuart Davies

Head of Highways & Transportation

Phil Holmes

Head of Planning & City Regeneration

Huw Mowbray

Development and Physical Regeneration Strategic Manager

Gavin Newman

Parking Services Manager

Matthew Bowyer

Principal Telematics Engineer

Mark Thomas

Group Leader Traffic & Highway Network Management

Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s): R Francis-Davies, S M Jones and W G Thomas

25 Disclosure of Personal and Prejudicial Interests

No interests were disclosed

26 Prohibition of Whipped Votes and Declaration of Party Whips

No declarations were made

27 Minutes of Previous Meeting(s)

The Panel considered minutes from previous meetings and agreed the minutes of the meeting on 7 September 2021 as an accurate record of the meeting.

28 Public Questions

No questions were submitted by members of the public

29 City Centre Travel Plan update

The Panel received an update report, providing information regarding the status of the study, work done to date and plans to progress the study going forward. Discussions focused on the following points:

- Officers highlighted this forward-looking report, produced in conjunction with Atkins, having considered highway infrastructure, pedestrians, cyclists, and current / projected traffic levels.
- Pre-Covid levels within the City Centre are returning, but patterns have changed dramatically. The Panel heard that there have been overall changes in the traffic patterns and use of City Centre.
- Officers explained that there is now a situation of trying to anticipate post-pandemic traffic levels, taking account of major project developments.
- Considerations should be had to charging infrastructure points, as well as environmental considerations such as air quality.
- The study focuses predominantly on the City Centre, although looking at ideas on outskirts, such as traffic hubs, park & ride and public transport.
- Looking to accommodate all needs of future users to the City Centre.
- Members commented on many previous travel plans – querying a number of issues as have been present previously and not seemingly changed.
- Officers assert that there has been significant improvement and investment in networks, junction improvements and distributor routes; having made a big impact in some areas.
- Members questioned the Council's intention to create more cycle ways across the City Centre. Cllr Thomas explained that secure bike storage has been constructed at Fabian Way park & ride, taking account of people cycling into the city. Numerous bike shelters have been installed in the City Centre itself, so bikes can be undercover, and new developments in the City Centre should consider bike storage provisions to encourage employees and visitors.
- Officers highlighted that the needs of the City Centre are changing, and new technology is changing ways of travel, therefore there will be constant changes to this travel plan.
- Officers explained that there has been a strong change in focus, although a number of previous iterations, but this study looks at the significant development opportunities, creating a demand for access to those projects.
- Hierarchy different, now informed by the active travel modes such as cycle, public transport, private car. Strong focus on the different modes of accessing the City Centre.
- Swansea Council has tried to minimise reliance on private cars, with focus on improving connectivity in and around the City Centre.
- Strong Placemaking themes running throughout this planning, intended to make areas better and reduce the need to drive if desired, making the City Centre more accessible.
- Swansea has a dominant flow of people from the local area into/out of town.

- Finite road network – need to make best use of this going forward.
- Members queried existing conditions summary, referring to hotspots such as Dyfatty. Officers confirmed progress being made on this.
- Officers explained that Dyfatty is recognised as a pedestrian/cycle hostile environment, aspiring to enhance public transport flows through that junction, having regard to a holistic solution / links with air quality.
- Members also questioned whether the new Road in SA1 will be managed to protect residents living in that area.
- Officers explained that external funding has been applied for, to date unsuccessful. The 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; further funding from Welsh Government now required to construct the road.
- Members questioned whether designs will prevent rat running along that road.
- SA1 link road – Swansea Council sees a benefit here between linking SA1 and enhancing active travel modes linking from University. Will take pressures off junctions along the Fabian Way corridor.
- Park & Ride sites – Members asked if the Council has identified possible sites, particularly from the West, e.g. Mumbles? Officers explained that there is no specific site identified in Mumbles.
- Members raised the need for Park & Ride provision in Swansea West to accommodate rural traffic flows. Members quoted Kittle as an example; traffic surveys indicating over five thousand traffic movements through the village each day.
- ‘Metro’ description conjures up various different descriptions and modes of transport. Officers highlighted that the term metro included a range of transport, integrating high frequency buses and good interchanges between all modes.
- The Council is considering a number of different strands, looking at main line Swansea/West Wales, how to improve journey times, bus reviews, and possible hydrogen-fuelled bus corridor,
- 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.
- Park & Ride – needs to be made more attractive.
- Members commented that bus services should be transferred to the control of Local Authorities.
- Members questioned the timescales on parking near and around the Arena, and whether parking prices at the Arena will be prohibitive.
- Hospital visits – The Panel commented on the need for connecting both hospitals (Morriston/Singleton) with the travel plan.
- Noted that many aspects of transport issues are not within Council control, such as buses, road infrastructure, hydrogen fuel, train and cars. Officers highlighted significant change now through Transport for Wales taking on control themselves.
- Integrated ticket systems needed. Transport for Wales are making progress on this.
- Challenges with longer journeys out to rural areas when not many passengers. Network of feeder buses possible.

Public transport now within the remit of Welsh Government, driven by need and environmental considerations.

30 Project Update Report

Huw Mowbray, Development and Physical Regeneration Strategic Manager, updated the Panel on the regeneration projects in Swansea. Phil Holmes, Head of Planning and City Regeneration, also attended for this item. The Panel noted the change in format of reporting, comprising a condensed summary of some projects.

Main discussions focused on the following:

Cop'r Bay – Phase 1

- Considerable issues surrounding lack of labour and materials, impacting upon the final stages of the project.
- Officers confirmed there had been a Covid outbreak on site last week.
- Hotel – funding difficulties currently experienced. The appointed developer is due to submit a revised proposal soon.
- Ambassador Theatre Group (ATG) licence has now been approved by the Council's Licensing Committee.
- ATG Programming to start in March, majority of tickets on sale now sold out.
- Officers confirmed that ATG indicate the sales density in Swansea Arena is ahead of other similar venues, ATG reiterating their positive outlook.
- The Panel queried the Arena car park – Officers explained that the North side is designed to pick up traffic from the West, and the other side to pick up from East-coming traffic.
- Members raised concerns over LED lighting and effect on Marina residents.
- Officers confirmed that LEDs were included in initial planning consent, and that they significantly fade to rear of building. Officers also highlighted the control system allowing lights to be turned off if necessary.
- Screening has been designed by an artist in conjunction with residents.

71/72 The Kingsway

- Contract Documents have been agreed by both parties. This is being forwarded to the appointed contractor, Bouygues.
- Planning – pre-commencement conditions have been discharged.
- Build programme to commence end of November.
- Members queried change in specification of original tender – Officers confirmed that there were a number of original tenderers making suggestions. New sensible suggestions were built into the new tender process, now being progressed by the contractor within budget.

Wind Street

- Officers explained that there have been issues with installations of bollards at the top of Wind Street; some services have been identified during excavations which weren't on original plans.
- Rainbow crossing installations are progressing.

Shaping Swansea

- Contract issued to Urban Splash.
- Positive interest in Civic sites from leisure operators, relating to surrounding sites, encompassing 17 acres, including green areas and car parks.
- Meeting arranged with planning team/ Urban Splash to discuss potential CADW listed status.

Mariner Street

- All residential floors are now complete and handed over for occupation.
- Outstanding works including ground floor shopfronts, vinyl window treatment, s278 works and completion of tower cladding ongoing.
- Practical Completion scheduled for November 9th.
- Fit out of retail units scheduled for December.

Castle Square

- FPR7 Cabinet Report being drafted to seek funding to deliver the project.
- Further meetings to be held with Highways, Lighting, Parks and Cleansing, City Center manager and Events.
- Initial information being sought regarding costs on the basis of current design specification.
- Members sought clarification on the project manager post and potential grant funding, having understood this to have been secured already. Officers explained that Swansea Council is the developer, having appointed a professional team.
- Officers also explained that funds have been allocated for work-up costs; capital costs not approved as yet (FPR7 will seek capital funding to deliver scheme).
- Members queried the funding – clarifying that the private sector would make no contributions.

Community Hub

- Issues surrounding location of archives to be addressed with archive teams.
- Members queried alternative provisions for archives – officers explained they currently sit within basement of civic centre, and there are proposals to move into new community hub building.
- The Panel raised some concerns over the suitability of this proposed location, and are aware that the Scrutiny Programme Committee will address this issue in further detail.
- Some enabling works on site, such as asbestos stripping, to prepare site for contractors.

Pontoons

- The legal documents are currently being drafted and reviewed.
- Terms have been suggested regarding rights and access for the Copper Jack and Rowing Club as prime intended users of the facility.
- Along with access rights, agreement is required in principle to allow vehicular access and parking on short-term approval terms.

Members asked about the *Skyline* project – Officers explained that a revised business case has been submitted to Welsh Government for funding discussions. Skyline have engaged architects on the design, having now changed the restaurant design to be replaced with an area for local food hubs. Officers clarified that Swansea is the only Skyline project currently progressing in Europe.

Members queried the funding position regarding *Penderyn Distillery*. Officers explained that this project is moving forward and discussions with the Heritage Lottery fund are ongoing.

31 Work Programme

The Panel noted the Work Plan.

32 Letters

The meeting ended at 11.50 am