



City and County of Swansea

Minutes of the **Scrutiny Performance Panel – Development & Regeneration**

Remotely via Microsoft Teams

Tuesday, 25 January 2022 at 11.00 am

Present: Councillor J W Jones (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

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

Councillor(s)

E W Fitzgerald
T J Hennegan
L James
S M Jones

Councillor(s)

S J Gallagher
C A Holley
M H Jones
T M White

Cabinet Members

Robert Francis-Davies
David Hopkins
Rob Stewart

Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration & Tourism
Cabinet Member for Delivery and Operations
Cabinet Member for Economy Strategy and Finance

Others

Geoff Bacon
Emily Davies
Andy Pearson
Russell Greenslade

Head of Property Services
Scrutiny Officer
Communications and Marketing Officer
Chief Executive, Swansea BID

Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s): P M Black and W G Thomas

33 Disclosure of Personal and Prejudicial Interests

No interests were disclosed

34 Prohibition of Whipped Votes and Declaration of Party Whips

No declarations were made

35 Minutes of Previous Meeting(s)

The Panel considered minutes from previous meetings and agreed the minutes of the meeting on 2 November 2021 as an accurate record of the meeting.

36 Public Questions

No questions were submitted by members of the public

37 Swansea Business Improvement District (BID) - Overview

The Panel received an overview presentation, submitted by Russell Greenslade, Chief Executive of Swansea BID. Discussions focused on the following points:

- *Swansea BID* is one of the original BIDs in the UK and the first in Wales. It was established in August 2006, after being given a positive mandate by a ballot of businesses/organisations in the designated BID area.
- *Swansea BID* operates within the top 20% of BIDs in UK based on its performance and management.
- Members queried how this performance is measured. The Panel heard that this is calculated by an independent body of national stakeholders.
- It was explained that *Swansea BID* is a not-for-profit private sector company with its own board of Directors made up of Private, Public and Third sector representatives that financially contribute towards the BID company.
- It was highlighted to the Panel that the Local Authority is a key strategic partner.
- Members asked if any businesses have now withdrawn or chosen not to contribute to the BID levy. The Panel heard that all businesses contribute, equating to about 813 within the *Swansea BID* area.
- Members queried the exact area covered by Swansea BID.
- Members heard that many new shops that have opened are independent retailers, demonstrating an increase in uptake in vintage clothing and ethical retailing, linking into the student market.
- National traders have also opened as well as independent traders, helping to drive footfall.
- Members queried whether any other areas outside of the central BID area could be included. The Panel heard that, Mumbles, for example had begun to look into setting up a separate BID prior to the pandemic.
- From the BIDs view point, the Panel heard that the City Centre developments have created a new upbeat positivity about the area and are welcomed and supported by the City Centre business community.
- Members commented on previous work of *Swansea BID* and the valuable nature of the work undertaken.
- The Panel remarked on the challenges faced by city centres across the country.
- The Panel heard that Swansea's regeneration projects have been remarked upon by the *London BID*, in relation to the progress and speed of projects.
- It was highlighted that businesses are adapting to an increase in people living in the City Centre, and a need to promote the night time economy.
- Members queried the impact of the closures of large retailers on the city centre trade and how this empty space will be promoted.
- The Panel heard that Swansea was the first place in the UK to install designated click and collect parking spaces in the City Centre.
- Members commented positively on the idea of displays in vacant shop windows, rather than leaving shop windows empty.

- The Panel raised queries over whether the Marks & Spencer food store in Mumbles had made an impact on the City Centre. It was explained that Marks & Spencer had expected an impact and had factored this into their product lines and operations.

38 Foreshore Developments - Verbal Update

The Panel heard a limited overview of the current position, in relation to the existing Swansea Bay Strategy. It was agreed that the Panel write to the Cabinet Member outlining specific areas of interest, a response to which could then be submitted to the Panel *in camera* if appropriate.

39 Project Update Report

The Panel noted the report, for information.

40 Work Programme

The Panel noted the work programme

41 Letters

The meeting ended at 12.00 pm