



## Report of the Interim Director of Place

Economy & Infrastructure Corporate Delivery Committee – 23 June 2022

### **‘Transforming our Economy & Infrastructure’ Status Report**

<b>Purpose:</b>	To update the committee on recent progress with regard to the corporate well-being objective – “Transforming our Economy & Infrastructure”.
<b>Policy Framework:</b>	Regional Economic Delivery Strategy
<b>Consultation:</b>	Access to Services, Finance, Legal.
<b>Recommendation(s):</b>	It is recommended that the committee:  1) notes the update report. 2) recommends the development of a forward plan of activity for 2022-23 to align with the delivery of the corporate well-being objective.
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#### **1. Background**

- 1.1 The economic recovery from the Covid pandemic is a key priority for Swansea and the region. In response to the challenges ahead, a new South West Wales Regional Economic Delivery Plan (REDP) was produced in 2021. This plan forms the strategic context for programmes and projects that will help transform our economy & infrastructure in accordance with the Council’s Well-being Objectives.
- 1.2 During 2021/22, reports were presented to the Economy, Environment and Infrastructure Policy Development Committee outlining the local economic recovery action plan for Swansea which was developed in partnership with Regeneration Swansea (our local economic regeneration partnership) to support the recovery of the local economy from the covid-19 pandemic.

Significant delivery has already been achieved via key actions that support businesses and individuals and improve the resilience of the local economy in light of the covid pandemic. Deployment of the Council's Economic Recovery Fund has been a major contributor to our progress.

- 1.3 The ongoing delivery of the Council's strategic regeneration and development programme has also made significant progress. Most notably the Copr Bay development, which saw the opening of the Digital Arena in March 2022.

## **2. Delivering Longer Term Economic Recovery**

- 2.1 The REDP now provides the new strategic framework for long term economic regeneration at the regional and local level. The REDP has been adopted by Swansea Council (January 2022) and the South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee (March 2022). It has been produced by the four local authorities in South West Wales in partnership with the Welsh Government. It sets out how we will build on our distinctive strengths and opportunities over the next ten years to develop a more prosperous and resilient South West Wales economy. The REDP has a major influence on wider policy development and will inform our bids into funding streams from all levels of government.

- 2.2 The REDP sets out three 'Ambitions' which relate to the nature of the South West Wales economy that we want to work towards. These are:

- Resilient and sustainable
- Enterprising and ambitious
- Balanced and inclusive

- 2.3 Preparation of the REDP included a thorough analysis of the evidence base on the region's economy, labour market and infrastructure to determine its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. Extensive consultation was undertaken with stakeholders across the region. Development of the plan also included consideration of national, regional and local policy context including the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act, decarbonisation and the achievement of net zero by 2050, technological and demographic change and Brexit.

- 2.4 These ambitions are supported by three complementary Missions, which will guide activity over the next ten years:

- Mission 1 – Establishing South West Wales as a UK leader in renewable energy and the development of a net zero economy: Taking forward the region's major energy related projects and driving the benefits through the region (via industrial decarbonisation, supply chain opportunities, university-linked innovation, etc.).

- Mission 2 – Building a strong, resilient and embedded business base: Understanding and growing the business stock, supporting widespread social and commercial entrepreneurship, creating stronger supply chain and innovation networks, making public sector support sustainable; driving forward technology adoption and diffusion.
- Mission 3 – Growing and sustaining the ‘experience’ offer: Linking environmental quality, quality of life and community character to create a region that retains and attracts talent and investment, and to promote this consistently and powerfully to the outside world

### **3. Delivering Economy & Infrastructure Programmes & Projects**

- 3.1 The REDP sets out some initial key action areas to deliver against the ambitions and missions. These actions, which include key economic development and infrastructure projects, form the basis of a ‘living’ action plan document that will be regularly reviewed by regional partners and will evolve to embrace new investment proposals as they emerge.
- 3.2 The new Regional Economic Delivery Plan will be owned and overseen by the new South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee (CJC), where the REDP is the regional strategy for economic wellbeing.
- 3.3 Initial work has commenced to prioritise the delivery of projects within the REDP. Existing Welsh Government funding sources will be utilised to deliver traditional projects, such as the ongoing city centre regeneration initiatives. In addition, new UK Government funding sources via “Levelling Up” and “Shared Prosperity Fund” will be deployed locally and regionally.

### **4. Integrated Assessment Implications**

- 4.1 The Council is subject to the Equality Act (Public Sector Equality Duty and the socio-economic duty), the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure, and must in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:
  - Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Acts.
  - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
  - Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
  - Deliver better outcomes for those people who experience socio-economic disadvantage

- Consider opportunities for people to use the Welsh language
- Treat the Welsh language no less favourably than English.
- Ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

4.2 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 mandates that public bodies in Wales must carry out sustainable development. Sustainable development means the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, aimed at achieving the 'well-being goals'.

4.3 Our Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) process ensures we have paid due regard to the above. It also takes into account other key issues and priorities, such as poverty and social exclusion, community cohesion, carers, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and Welsh language.

4.4 An IIA Screening Form has been completed with the agreed outcome that a full IIA report was not required. This report covers an overarching strategy, each action as and when pursued will be screened independently. The IIA screening form is attached as **Appendix A**.

## **5. Financial Implications**

5.1 There are no direct financial implications associated with this report. However, it is clear that in order to achieve the long term ambitions set out in the REDP, significant investment is required and any such decisions would be subject to separate cabinet reports at the time with the council continuing to lobby both Welsh and UK Governments to seek appropriate funding.

## **6. Legal Implications**

6.1 There are no legal implications associated with this report.

### **Background Papers:**

Regional Economic Delivery Plan

[South West Wales Regional Economic Delivery Plan - Swansea](#)

Economic Recovery Action Plan

[Item No \(swansea.gov.uk\)](#)

### **Appendices:**

Appendix A IIA Document