

Development & Regeneration Scrutiny Performance Panel

8 March 2022

Response to Queries

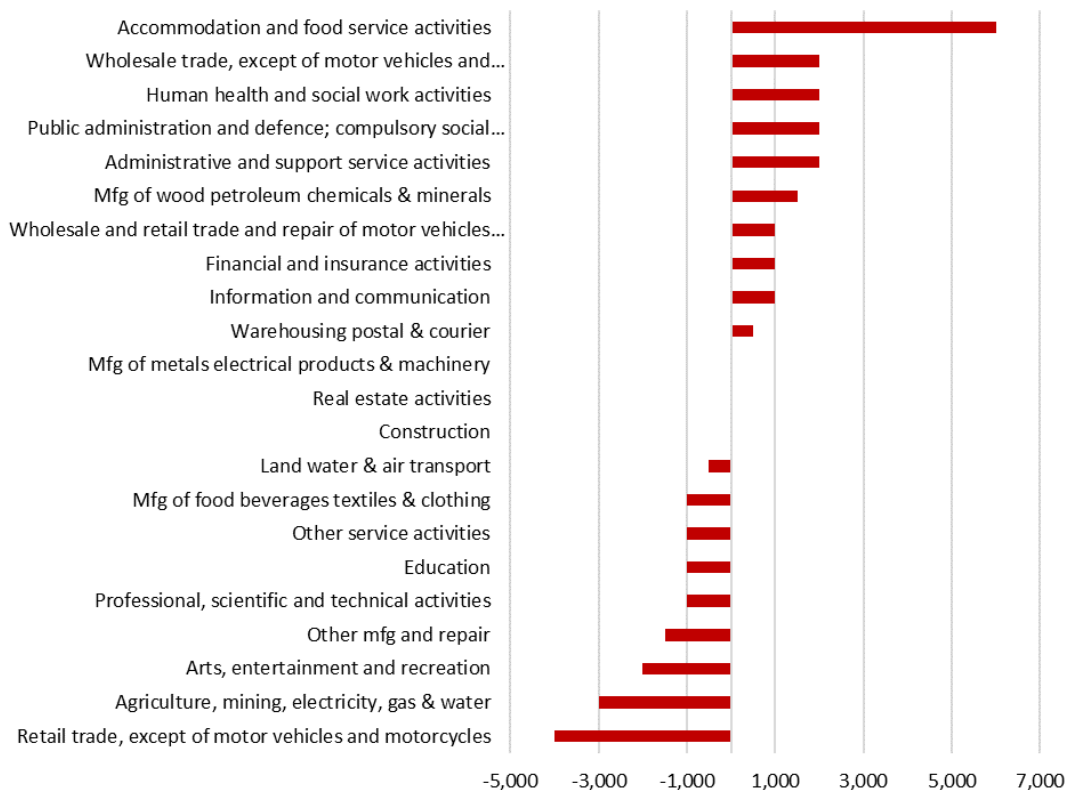
Regional Economic Delivery Plan

Following the report on the new Regional Economic Delivery Plan on March 8th 2022, the Scrutiny Performance Panel requested further information on the breakdown of the 20,000 jobs growth across South West Wales between 2013 and 2019 to understand the specific sectors where this growth has occurred.

Employment by sector data is sourced from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES). This data is only available for 2015 onwards, due to methodology changes in 2015 which made the dataset incomparable with earlier years. It is therefore only possible to review the sectoral employment changes from 2015-2019, and not 2013-2019.

The graph below shows the industrial sectors that experienced the highest levels of employment growth or employment contraction between 2015 and 2019 in South West Wales.

Employment change by sector in South West Wales, 2015-19



Source: ONS Business Register and Employment Survey

Between 2015 and 2019, around 6,000 jobs were created in accommodation and food service activities in South West Wales, with strong employment growth also observed in health, wholesale, public administration and administrative activities

This was offset by employment contraction in the region in the retail sector where around 4,000 jobs were lost, agriculture and utilities (3,000 jobs) and arts and entertainment (around 2,000 jobs lost).

Future Funding Streams

Officers undertook to clarify the position on access to future funding streams. Further details have now been released on the UK Government's new Shared Prosperity Fund, that will be one of the replacements for EU funding. Swansea will be receiving an allocation of £34m over the next three years from the core Shared Prosperity Fund, with a further £7m allocated for the Multiply programme for interventions to improve numeracy levels. In England, Scotland and Wales, local government is being given responsibility for developing an investment plan for approval by the UK government, and for delivery of the Fund thereafter. In Wales the funding is being administered through regional strategic geographies – for Swansea this will be South West Wales. All four local authorities now need to work together, with local partners, to produce an investment plan by August 1st that sets out how we would use and deliver the funding. Alongside this, a second round of Levelling Up Fund has opened. Swansea is eligible to submit 3 capital funding bids (1 bid per MP) and a transport bid to UK Government. Discussions are underway to develop the bids.

In addition to this, Swansea Council is the regional lead for South West Wales for the Welsh Government Transforming Towns programme of capital funding for regeneration schemes. The Economic Development and External Funding team also includes a grant bidding function to maximise access to external grant funding in support of the Council's economic regeneration agenda.

Wind Street

Panel members queried progress with regard to proposed Interpretation Boards based on the history of Wind Street, and it was agreed to provide a response on what the intention is in writing.

Update: it is intended to utilise a vertical wayfinding display panel removed whilst undertaking the street enhancements to hold Interpretation material, located within green space to the south of the street. This will go in during the next few weeks, however further discussions on content need to be progressed.

