



Report of the Director of Place

Economy & Infrastructure Corporate Development Committee -
27 October 2022

Residents' Rewards App

Purpose:	To update the Committee on the Residents' Rewards App.
Policy Framework:	Achieving Better Together, Digital Strategy
Consultation:	Access to Services, Finance, Legal
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For Information	

1. Introduction

1.1 The introduction of discounts, loyalty points, and rewards for the residents of Swansea is a policy commitment. A scheme of this nature would require close links into a wide range of retailers and other private sector organisations across Swansea. The Council is therefore partnering with the Swansea Business Improvement District (**BID**). BID already has the links, relationships, and infrastructure into local businesses and an existing gift card scheme, "Big Heart of Swansea".

2. Residents' Reward App

2.1 An App is the easiest and most cost effective way for residents to access the scheme, as discounts and rewards are constantly changing. An app can also provide useful additional benefits and functionality while residents are out and about across Swansea, e.g.

- The ability to report suspicious packages
- Scanning of QR codes to obtain additional information held within the app
- Personal profiling so the app can push relevant content and discounts based on their location.

2.2 The app will include the following:

- A Loyalty Scheme (Phase 1)
- Ability for retailers to give discount (Phase 1)
- Ability to run competitions (Phase 1) Monthly BID giveaways is part of the loyalty programme
- Data analysis. Such as footfall etc. (Phase 1)
- Personal Profiles, e.g. food preferences could be used to recommend new places to eat with discount/gift cards/loyalty points available. (Phase 1)
- Link to discounts on certain Council run events / services where no such scheme exists already and there is no resultant loss in budgeted income to the Council. Assumption will be full cost recovery is maintained (Phase 2)
- Link to bus travel discounts and tracking (Phase 2)
- QR code functionality to access further information (Phase 3)
- Notifications, e.g. suspect package found, Emergencies in city Centre (Phase 3).

2.3 Digital inclusion is high in Swansea, however it is important all residents can access the app. Officers and BID are exploring ways to support residents with sign-up and access to the app and growing digital inclusion.

2.4 Anticipated benefits of the app includes:

- Loyalty rewards and discounts for residents that can be accumulated and used later

- Increased footfall into the City Centre in the first phase
- A platform and infrastructure to roll out to other high streets in wards across Swansea
- Discounts and loyalty points for residents at certain Council owned venues. As mentioned previously, where no such scheme exists already and there is no resultant loss in budgeted income to the Council. Assumption will be full cost recovery is maintained
- The roll-out to other cities in the future, which would benefit Swansea residents out of county
- Extra safety measures, with a feature in the app which flags any emergency issues, e.g. suspect packages
- Specific sections, e.g. Swansea beauty, and the ability to generally promote tourism, where there are no identified conflicts with other schemes aimed at promoting tourism, for example locally
- A platform to easily add further initiatives, benefits, and promotions for Swansea residents that align with existing schemes and where there are gaps or opportunities.

2.5 Phase one of the system development can begin immediately, delivered in increments. This will be followed by further phases. The aim is to launch phase one in time for St. David's day.

3. Integrated Assessment Implications

3.1 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.

3.1.1 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'.

3.1.2 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.

3.2 An IIA Screening Form has been completed with the agreed outcome that a full IIA report was not required: The summary of impacts has been categorised overall as medium.

3.3 A summary of impacts identified the following risks and mitigations:

- A low positive impact on children / young people 0-18 as some offers or discounts may need to be accessed through a parent or guardian
- A low negative impact on older people. The team is working on ways to support those residents who do not currently have access to a smart phone. Digital inclusion is high in Swansea, however it is important all residents can access the app. The team is exploring:
 - A process where residents can call the Council's contact centre. Staff would register residents on the app and refer them through to the Lifelong Learning team who can explore options for devices and / or provide training
 - A process where friends, family and carers can support those residents without a smart phone

- Physical cards as part of a later phase, although this would be a different scheme as it could not replicate the app functionality, e.g. reporting suspect packages.
- A low negative impact with regard to the Welsh Language. The app will be bilingual however some content / discounts will be added directly by English businesses.

3.4 Summary of Involvement:

BID has the relationships and communication routes into local businesses. Take-up and feedback from residents and businesses will inform how the app develops. In addition the Council will engage with the Poverty Forum and the 50+ Network around the app.

This project supports the Council's Corporate Plan through the Transformation and Future Council priority.

3.5 Well-being of Future Generations:

With regard to the well-being and future generations' considerations, the Council and BID are working together on a range projects and initiatives that support Swansea residents, now and into the future. The app will provide real-time information and offers which will benefit families and individuals. Where people do not have access to smartphone technology the team is exploring ways to support those residents. Research shows that being online can significantly improve people's life chances by:

- Helping people find work;
- Offering improved learning opportunities;
- Getting access to cheaper goods and services online;
- Reducing loneliness and isolation, especially for the most vulnerable; and
- Being part of digital communities, which improve local outcomes through co-ordinated activities and initiatives.

3.6 Cumulative Impact:

The app has the opportunity to positively impact Swansea residents by offering a range of useful features including discounts and rewards. The team is exploring ways to support those residents with no access to a

smartphone so they can access the app and also take advantage of other online services.

This is a new project and concept and will therefore take time to evolve and mature.

The Council will continually monitor this screening as the project develops, engaging with the Poverty Forum and 50+ Network to assess digital inclusion.

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 The Council is supporting the up-front development costs of the app through a grant. This will be funded through the Economic Recovery Fund. Ongoing developments and support and maintenance costs of the app will be funded by BID.
- 4.2 The opportunities for rewards are still being worked through to ensure that any Council running costs are still covered and a 'discount' does not result in an unsubsidised loss, which could impact taxpayers.

5. Legal Implications

- 5.1 A grant agreement is in place between Swansea Council and BID to administrate the up-front grant and implementation of the app.

Appendices:

Appendix A IIA Screening Form