



Council – 6 July 2023

Councillors' Questions

Part A – Supplementaries

1	<p>Councillors Francesca O'Brien & Richard Lewis</p> <p>Labour run Cardiff Council are considering a City congestion charge. Will the Leader confirm that this will not be an initiative that Swansea Council will consider and agrees that this is a harmful strategy.</p> <p>Response of the Leader</p> <p>As I have said publicly on social media, I can confirm that Swansea Council has no plans to introduce congestion charging within any part of the City and County of Swansea.</p> <p>The Council continues to work towards providing residents with genuine alternatives to private car use through investment in its active travel network and is playing a leading role in the development of the South West Wales Metro in partnership with other regional authorities.</p> <p>To this aim I would ask all members, businesses, and residents to lobby the Conservative UK Government that has denied Wales fair investment amounting to £6bn (£6,000,000,000) in consequential funding by declaring HS2 an England and Wales scheme despite not an inch of track being laid in Wales.</p> <p>This is indeed another great Tory Train Robbery, following successive Tory Governments refusal to electrify the line to Swansea.</p> <p>To put the £6bn in perspective, it is enough to build the north and south west wales metros, resurface every road in Swansea and Wales and still have over £4,000,000,000 (£4bn) left to invest in other infrastructure or capital projects in Wales.</p>
2	<p>Councillors Mike Lewis, Wendy Lewis & Mike White</p> <p>Can the relevant Cabinet Member give details of the pipeline of regeneration projects being taken forward by the Council and its partners in the next 4 years.</p> <p>Response of the Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration & Tourism</p> <p>Please see Appendix 1</p>

3	<p>Councillor Lesley Walton, Fiona Gordon & Mike Lewis</p> <p>Can the Leader confirm if Swansea has seen a reduction in funding under the new shared prosperity arrangements as compared with the previous EU funding arrangements and state what the annual loss or gain is.</p> <p>Response of the Leader</p> <p>Funding levels compared to previous EU levels are difficult to compare on a precise like-for-like basis due to the different methods of distribution and types of programme that were available via EU programmes, and the partial UK Government replacement programmes. A further complication is the nature of each programme and which types of organisation were best placed to apply to them. It is certainly the case that access to innovation and research funding such as Horizon and to some extent the Interreg programmes that were heavily accessed by Higher Education is now limited. Large budgets were also available via European Regional Development Fund for academic/business links and high end research with commercial end product which have not yet been replaced. The key replacement funds are the Levelling Up Fund which has run two competitive rounds so far. Swansea has secured just under £20m under Round 2. In terms of funds accessible directly by the local authority this is comparable to ERDF receipts, but the large scale funds ERDF provided particularly to Higher Education and Welsh Government departments has not been replaced to date. The Shared Prosperity Fund is more tailored around local need, and provides funding for local activity that has not been possible since the Objective 1 2000-2006 programme. However, the funds as with LUF, although welcome, are insufficient to replace the larger scale receipts that Welsh Government and larger national applicants were previously able to access. It does however allow funding to be targeted on regional and local strategic priorities and around local corporate objectives, and is enabling tailored access routes to be created for smaller businesses and communities to access. Funding is also only being made available in a three year window to March 2025, the first year of which was approved only in December 2022, whereas EU funding was made available on a seven year funding timetable. There is no easy way of stating exact figures due to differing timelines for programmes.</p>
4	<p>Councillors Peter Black, Sam Bennett & Mary Jones</p> <p>Will the Cabinet Member explain why car park machines don't contain instructions how to access residents and disabled parking rates.</p> <p>Response of the Cabinet Member for Environment & Infrastructure</p> <p>Where possible instructions are fixed to the machines detailing how to access the residents and blue badge tariffs, in addition revised infograms are being rolled out within the car parks.</p> <p>This information has been supplemented with instructions on the Council website, links via social media,</p> <p>All rates including discounts are also available via the MiPermit app.</p>
5	<p>Councillors Francesca O'Brien & Angela O'Connor</p> <p>We welcome the recent U turn in some parking charges, in the City Centre. However, how do these changes benefit Mumbles or Gower, where prices have increased dramatically. Will similar discounts be available.</p>

Response of the Cabinet Member for Environment & Infrastructure

As part of this year's review in to parking charges, tariffs have been increased across the city and county, but some parking offers have been developed specifically for the city centre in order to try to assist with the economic recovery as footfall has not returned to pre-covid levels. However demand for parking in the beach and foreshore car parks as well as in Mumbles remained strong throughout the pandemic and this demand has continued.

It should be noted that residents are able to access a discounted rate in the same manner as the other pay and display car parks in the city.

6 Councillors Wendy Lewis, Phil Downing & Bev Hopkins

Can the relevant Cabinet Member confirm how Swansea compares nationally and internationally for household recycling rates.

Response of the Cabinet Member for Community (Services)

Using the most recently available data, in 2020/21 households in England recycled an average of 44.0% of their waste, households in Northern Ireland recycled 49.1%, households in Scotland recycled 41.0% and households in Wales recycled 65.2%. The European Union average household recycling rate was 48.6% for the same year, though the individual country recycling rates varied between 69.6% in Germany and 4.6% in Kosovo.

In 2020/21 Swansea Council achieved a recycling rate of 64.5%. While this figure met WG's statutory recycling target it meant Swansea were ranked 17th of the 22 Councils in Wales. Recently Swansea have implemented further recycling measures contained in our 2022-25 Waste Strategy. Provisional data for 2022/23 shows Swansea achieved a recycling rate of 72.1% which provisionally puts Swansea amongst the top performing Councils in Wales.

7 Councillors Andrew Williams, Mike Lewis & Lesley Walton

Can the relevant Cabinet Member confirm if progress has or is being made on reducing delayed transfers of care numbers and other social care and health post Covid pressures.

Response of the Cabinet Member for Care Services

The Covid pandemic had a significant detrimental impact both on our population but also on our ability to recover health and care services which had been so severely disrupted.

Whilst we were able to get the majority of our services back up and running quickly, changes in demand compounded by a shrinking workforce meant that recovering domiciliary care services has proved particularly challenging across the whole of Wales and indeed the UK.

In Swansea, waiting lists of domiciliary care were, at times, 300% higher than at any time in our history.

Through innovative recruitment and flexible commissioning arrangements with our external care sector partners, alongside a successful recruitment drive within the Council's in-house domiciliary care services, alongside our investment in high quality reablement services, we have reduced those waiting lists to below pre-covid levels.

This has had positive impacts both for the number of individuals waiting in the community and also importantly for those waiting in hospital.

The term delayed transfers of care has traditionally been applied to those individuals waiting to move from hospital to their next stage of care and the figures in the table below are specific to that cohort of people.

Date	Number delayed transfers of care in hospital awaiting long term dom care (daily)
Pre covid	20
May 2022	22
May 2023	12

Pressures on the overall health and care system remain extremely high and the Council will continue to work with health colleagues, other partners, citizens and carers to continue to improve.

8 Councillors Richard Lewis & Francesca O'Brien

The Sunday and bank holiday bus service in Gower is not available. How can we, as a council, promote public transport when there is no such thing during these days. Our concerns are exaggerated further by learning that the Welsh Labour Government will stop the emergency funding for buses and worry that this will impact on the service even further, can you confirm that the decision by the Welsh Government will not impact the service in and around Gower.

Response of the Cabinet Member for Environment & Infrastructure

I am unable to confirm whether or not the decision by the Welsh Government will impact the bus services in and around Gower at this moment. The Welsh Government remains in discussion with the Council, our regional partners and all other local authorities in Wales affected by the withdrawal of Bus Emergency Support funding. Once the reductions have been confirmed, the Council will be able to fully consider the impacts on networks that may arise.

9 Councillors Sam Bennett, Peter Black & Mary Jones

Has the Council applied for funding from the South Wales Police and Crime Commissioner to help reduce anti-social behaviour and to make the streets safer for women and girls.

Response of the Cabinet Member for Well-being

The Council applies for and receives a number of different grants from the Police and Crime Commissioners Office for a number of different purposes. In 22/23 were we successful as a Council in securing the following:

Commissioner's Community Safety Grant

The PCC grant of **£120,500** is the Commissioner's contribution towards the delivery of Community Safety priorities in Swansea, which is currently utilised to fund a Community Safety Project Coordinator and an Anti-Social Behaviour Reduction Co-ordinator and a Support Officer.

Commissioner's Youth Offending Grant

The PCC grant of **£63,100** is the Commissioner's contribution towards the delivery of Youth Offending Services in Swansea, which is currently utilised to fund outreach support for young people with substance use and a YOS Prevention Co-ordinator supporting the reduction of ASB in young people.

Commissioner's Victim Service Grant

The PCC Victim Service grant of **£25,318** is the Commissioner's contribution towards cost of an Independent Domestic Violence Advocate (IDVA) post which sits in the Council Domestic Abuse Hub. This post works as part of a team to support victims of domestic abuse at high-risk of serious harm and provide a tailored and person-centered safety and support plan so that victims and their families are protected from abusive behaviour.

Commissioner's DRIVE Programme Grant

The PCC DRIVE programme grant of **£50,318** was secured in 2021 and continued in 22/23. The **DRIVE programme** is an innovative approach that challenges the behaviour of high risk, high harm perpetrators of domestic violence and abuse. The funding covers the costs of an Independent Domestic Violence Advocate (IDVA) working as part of a team in the Council Domestic Abuse Hub.

Home Office Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) Grant

A total investment to Swansea of **£347,109** for 23/24 was secured via the Commissioner's Home Office Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) Grant which funds specialist interventions that support the work of the CMET (Contextual, missing, Exploited & Trafficked) panel and the Council's multi-agency response to issues affecting young people and the community. This funding was used to support posts in the Council and post with our partners to support this approach.

Home Office Safer Streets Funding

The last round of Home Office Safer Streets funding (round 4) launched on 18th March 2022 with a deadline of 3rd May 2022 for submissions to the Home Office. This process is managed by the Commissioner's Office.

Swansea Council, as part of the Community Safety Partnership was offered an opportunity to submit a bid that met the criteria of Safer Streets, concentrating on the crime type areas of acquisitive crime, anti-social behaviour and Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG but not including domestic violence). The project proposals had to be concentrated on specific geographical areas that were disproportionately affected by the crime types, evidenced by statistics and data. A proposal was considered with South Wales Police, but didn't progress through this round of funding. In relation to future Safer Streets Fund announcements, we are yet to hear of an official date for another round although it is anticipated it could be this year. As a Council as part of the Safer Swansea Partnership will have already commenced research with regard to the crime types previously selected by the Home Office and drilled down to LSOA level across both Swansea and NPT for anti-social behaviour, VAWG and Acquisitive Crime and to determine the areas that are disproportionately affected. Once these statistics have been analysed and the geographical areas

	<p>determined, we can progress what potential project ideas could be developed through the Safer Swansea Partnership.</p> <p>In previous rounds of funding, Swansea Council supported the application from Swansea's Womens Aid which was successful with the Home Office Safety of Women at Night (SWaN) fund. This was an award of £182,750 to reduce incidents of violence against women and girls (VAWG) in public spaces at night in Swansea, including within venues, as well as routes home and to build an evidence base for what is most effective in improving women's safety within this context. This included the introduction of a Safe Spaces scheme, delivery of specialist training to staff within the hospitality sector to issues as they arise. Also a targeted South Wales Police operation, which sought to target specific times and pressure points within the night time economy, collecting and analysing data and intelligence to inform future resource allocation.</p>
10	<p>Councillors Michael Locke, Jeff Jones & Chris Holley</p> <p>The Welsh Government is proposing enabling legislation to introduce Bus Franchising in Wales. Is this Council preparing for a possible change to a Franchise Model for Bus Services.</p> <p>Response of the Cabinet Member for Environment & Infrastructure</p> <p>I can confirm that the Council is aware of the Welsh Government possible proposals to introduce Bus Franchising in Wales. However no decision has been taken and as yet guidance has not been provided so the Council is not in a position to consider and prepare for the possible changes that may result.</p>
11	<p>Councillors Mary Jones, Wendy Fitzgerald & Lynda James</p> <p>What is the Council's position on disturbing land that contains valuable peat reserves.</p> <p>Response of the Cabinet Member for Corporate Service & Performance</p> <p>Swansea Local Development Plan (LDP) Policy ER1 protects carbon stores such as peat reserves, albeit there are very few areas where peat may be found in Swansea. Welsh Peatlands Data can be found on the Wales Environmental Information Portal https://smnrnrw.hub.arcgis.com/apps/d18ef8c74ecc4dc4a0cbf71ab6935ba0/explore However the LDP recognises that renewable energy proposals within upland areas of the County are likely to have an impact on peat soils and there is a requirement to conduct a site specific risk assessment to be considered as part of any such planning application. The uplands area is also designated a Special Landscape Area (SLA) in the LDP and this overlaps with the Future Wales (the national development plan) Pre Assessed Areas for Wind Energy. At this location, the requirement to meet national targets for renewable energy provision outweighs the importance of safeguarding the landscape of local significance. It is not the intention of the coinciding SLA designation to preclude strategic scale wind energy generation development. The purpose of the SLA designation is to ensure that wind turbines and related development are positioned with minimum intrusion on the locally important landscape and to enable the full reinstatement of the special landscape quality following the decommissioning of any wind energy generation development.</p>
	<p>Part B – No Supplementaries</p>

12 **Councillors Peter Black, Cheryl Philpott & Lynda James**

Please list the number of recorded fly tipping incidents by ward for each of 2020, 2021 and 2022

Response of the Cabinet Member for Community (Services)

Please see below a table of recorded fly tipping incidents dealt with, by ward boundaries for the last 3 financial years. These are reported by both the public, and increasingly being recorded by Cleansing Teams proactively monitoring fly tipping hotspots and litter bin locations attracting black bags. In terms of scale of fly tipping, 59% was a car boot or less, 35% a small van load, with only 6% being greater than a small van load.

	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023
W01 BISHOPSTON	6	2	3
W02 BONYMAEN	56	42	57
W03 CASTLE	165	249	211
W04 CLYDACH	28	22	49
W05 COCKETT	58	82	77
W06 CWMBWRLA	108	116	119
W07 DUNVANT	6	7	
W08 FAIRWOOD	11	24	10
W09 GORSEINON	24	19	
W10 GOWER	2	13	6
W11 GOWERTON	11	17	12
W12 KILLAY NORTH	4	3	
W13 KILLAY SOUTH	4	2	
W14 KINGSBRIDGE	1	4	
W15 LANDORE	91	65	76
W16 LLANGYFELACH	15	15	22
W17 LLANSAMLET	77	43	61
W18 LOWER LOUGHOR	11	11	
W19 MAWR	31	11	
W20 MAYALS	9	6	5
W21 MORRISTON	104	113	151
W22 MYNYDDBACH	71	77	103
W23 NEWTON	2	6	
W24 OYSTERMOUTH	5	18	
W25 PENCLAWDD	8	6	9
W26 PENDERRY	86	122	147
W27 PENLLERGAER	19	16	7
W28 PENNARD	1	3	5
W29 PENYRHEOL	12	15	
W30 PONTARDDULAIS	21	13	18
W31 ST. THOMAS	47	64	64
W32 SKETTY	50	41	48

W33 TOWNHILL	187	279	240
W34 UPLANDS	155	211	259
W35 UPPER LOUGHOR	7	8	
W36 WEST CROSS	31	24	49
W37 WATERFRONT			11
W38 WAUNARLWYD			8
W39 DUNVANT & KILLAY			11
W40 PONTLLIW & TIRCOED			6
W41 GORSEINON & PENRYHEOL			17
W42 LLWCHWR			20
W43 MUMBLES			17

13 **Councillors Peter Black, Jeff Jones & Wendy Fitzgerald**

Please list the number of pothole repairs by ward in 2022.

Response of the Cabinet Member for Environment & Infrastructure

Pot hole information is not recorded by ward – it is recorded by team, each of which covers approximately one third of the wards. Further breakdown by ward is not practicable as there were 6,600 pot holes repairs carried out last year of which 4,000 were carried out by the pot hole initiative. To produce these figures every pothole repaired would need to be reviewed manually and this would require a significant level of resource.

14 **Councillor Chris Evans**

With forthcoming changes to ALN & SEN provision becoming more school led rather than LA than previous provision, is there any extra support or training being provided to teachers to spot and deal with ALN & SEN children in our schools to ensure nobody slips through the cracks.

Response of the Cabinet Member for Education & Learning

Swansea Additional Learning Needs and Inclusion Team (ALNIT) together with colleagues from the wider Education Directorate have provided schools with significant levels of support at this time to implement the Additional Learning Needs and Educational Tribunal (ALNET) legislation to ensure all children in Swansea schools have the best possible experience in school.

Identifying learners who are not making progress in their learning and then supporting them with appropriate interventions is not new to school staff, but the ALNET legislation has placed more emphasis on school staff formally making the decision on whether a child or young person meets the criteria of Additional Learning Needs (ALN) and then putting the appropriate support in place. To upskill staff in Swansea schools and support them in doing this, the local authority has extensive strategies to ensure this is achieved and that the process can be sustained.

To identify children with learning difficulties and potential ALN, Swansea Council invested significantly in upskilling staff in every school in Swansea to identify the assessments that are required to help them accurately identify need and then to carry out those assessments. Many of the staff who undertook this training pursued it to masters level and the staff who work in secondary schools are now finalising the

qualification that will enable them to assess children and award them access arrangements to support them when sitting their formal examinations. Every school has been supplied with online and hardcopy assessments and over 70 staff (teaching and non-teaching) have also taken up an externally accredited training to assist in the administering of formal assessments. Swansea Council pre-empted the change of focus to school colleagues identifying need identified and therefore implemented this project to support the school led approach.

Swansea Council continue to produce an extensive training menu which is available to all school colleagues (as well as to independent settings, Further Education Institutions (FEI) as well as LA colleagues). Most of this training is offered in person, either on line or now we are post pandemic, face to face. Training via this menu is delivered from a wide variety of people including the Learning Support Team, Education Psychology Team, Data Base Team, Health colleagues to name but a few. As well as this, there is an extensive online training offer that is available to anyone with a Swansea Hwb email address which can be accessed at a time and location that suits the individual.

Enhancing this general training offer is a focussed project that was initiated in 2019 to upskill staff from all schools in Swansea to support our children and young people who experienced difficulties with social communication and Autism. Initial training focussed on transferring knowledge and skills and as well as training, manuals were purchased for every school to help with identifying need and then supporting the children to make the best possible progress. We are currently in the third phase of this project with funding in excess of £10,000 being awarded to every school to fund a social communication friendly environment. This project links to our transformational programme to support sufficient specialist places.

Whilst the ALNET legislation gives schools the flexibility to decide how best to support children and young people, there are times when a referral to the local authority for placement in a specialised school needs to be made. The ALNIT team have developed and recently refined the process for submitting such requests, have offered many training events and have a team on hand to support school staff making such referrals. Processes defined by the legislation have been summarised and easy to follow guidance been issued to staff at regular intervals. Question and Answer sessions and guidance have been arranged and this year alone, six ALNET implementation and support days have been arranged for Additional Learning Needs Coordinators (ALNCOs) which have been fully funded to cover their release (using grant funding). These days have focussed on enabling ALNCOs to understand and then carry out their role. Similarly, these days have also been arranged (and funded) for Specialist Teaching Facility (STF) managers/teachers.

ALNCO and STF Manager/Teacher development days have been arranged and these have focussed on areas that address requirements of ALNET including building consistency of identification and consistency of provision offered by our schools.

Swansea Council has worked closely with our health colleagues and continue to do so with the aim of ensuring our children in Swansea have their needs identified early and that up-to-date information can be provided to best support their needs.

It is hoped this overview demonstrates significant ongoing training and guidance that Swansea Council has in place to support all schools in Swansea to ensure our children and young people to make progress.

15 **Councillor Chris Evans**

Given its success in Scandinavia, is the Council looking into the possibility of large heat pump driven district heating systems as a way to rapidly decarbonise whole areas of the county and would the Leader be happy to ask the Welsh Government to pilot a system here.

Response of the Leader / Cabinet Member for Service Transformation

As outlined in the recent report approved by Cabinet the Council has undertaken detailed feasibility of a new district heating network which is connected to the Blue Eden development. This was carried out utilising community regeneration funding which confirmed the viability of such a network connected to the renewable heat generated from the development itself. Meetings have already taken place with DST innovations and Siemens and meetings with other partners are due to take place over the coming weeks.

Discussions have also taken place with BEIS about possible funding route and initial interest has been sought and obtained from a range of business and asset holders in the area to confirm if there is sufficient critical mass to make the project viable. The Council has also progressed several its own housing schemes using heat pumps and will continue to explore the technology on its future scale development both directly delivered and in partnership with developers as it moved away from conventional gas boilers to renewable sources in its housing stock.

16 **Councillors Sam Bennett, Mary Jones & Gordon Walker**

Can the Cabinet Member provide a status update on each of the Helwick, Seamark and Canning, in terms of upkeep and plans for repairs and maintenance.

Response of the Cabinet Member for Culture, Human Rights and Equalities

The Seamark is owned by an independent Trust and the Council has no plans to invest in its upkeep, repair or maintenance. To date efforts to enforce the Trust's obligations to its repair and/ or removal have been fruitless, but this remains the intention. Helwick and Canning are part of the Council's Museum Service collection, referred to as 'Floating Exhibits'. A sum to improve /restore their appearance was previously secured from the Council's Economic Recovery Fund, but due to escalating costs for dry docking and supply chain pressures, this proved to be inadequate. The monies have been secured in the Capital budget, whilst additional funding is sought. Bids have been unsuccessful so far, partly due to the continued escalation of costs to over £260,000 for the Helwick; with costs in excess of £500,000 for both vessels, yet adding no real value to the vessels or public interest, save for ensuring they are watertight, clean and in repair.

Further options have been scoped and are being explored, including seeking a permanent, alternative home for Canning, which has historic relevance to other Docks e.g. Liverpool, and investing all available resources to improving the overall interpretation and appearance of Helwick e.g. through digital apps/VR immersive tours, and physical improvements to its condition, as we are unlikely to ever make the vessel fully accessible and financially sustainable as anything other than a site based landmark attraction. All options require up to date full surveys 'in water' for both vessels, and quotes for these are currently awaited. No decisions have been made, and we await costs and Cabinet briefings following.