



City and County of Swansea

## Minutes of the **Scrutiny Performance Panel - Climate Change and Nature**

Remotely via Microsoft Teams

Tuesday, 28 November 2023 at 10.00 am

**Present:** Councillor S E Keeton (Chair) Presided

**Councillor(s)**

C M J Evans  
O G James

**Councillor(s)**

E W Fitzgerald  
M W Locke

**Councillor(s)**

W G Thomas

**Other Attendees**

Robert Francis-Davies

Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration, Events and Tourism

**Officer(s)**

Michelle Grove  
Steve Hopkins  
Liz Jordan  
Mark Wade

Tourism Officer  
Tourism and Marketing Manager  
Scrutiny Officer  
Director of Place

**Apologies for Absence**

Councillor(s): M H Jones and B J Rowlands

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**1 Disclosure of Personal and Prejudicial Interests**

Wendy Fitzgerald and Chris Evans declared a personal interest.

**2 Prohibition of Whipped Votes and Declaration of Party Whips**

No declarations were made.

**3 Minutes of Previous Meeting(s)**

Panel agreed the Minutes of the meeting on 3 October 2023 as an accurate record of the meeting.

**4 Public Question Time**

No questions were received.

**5 Environmental Tourism Briefing**

Robert Francis-Davies, Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration, Events and Tourism and Steve Hopkins, Tourism and Marketing Manager attended to brief the Panel and answer questions.

Discussion Points:

- Panel feels there are not enough public facilities available, for example, toilets, drinking water taps, cycle racks etc along the more tourist areas of Swansea and the Gower, including the sea front, and queried if there are plans to increase these types of facilities. Panel informed there are public toilets close to all major beaches between Mumbles and Rhossili. Heard the Council is currently investigating options of increasing cycle parking facilities at strategic locations across the active travel network which may capture visitors who engage in recreational cycling.
- Panel feels Welsh Government Active Travel schemes are based more around commuters rather than going to leisure points. Members queried if there is any potential for adding short links from the active travel routes to the tourist destination, as they believe many people would then use these routes. Full response to be provided by the appropriate Cabinet Member following the meeting.
- Panel asked about the Wales Coastal Path and queried if any feedback the Council gets on any sections of the Path is communicated to Countryside Access for Wales. Full response to be provided by the appropriate Cabinet Member following the meeting.
- Panel discussed the cycle map of the area, and how previously in Scrutiny, Members talked about a ski-style map with red, blue, black and green lines showing the difficulty. Panel queried if this had been implemented in the map and how this is going to link up with rural Gower. Full response to be provided by the appropriate Cabinet Member following the meeting.
- Panel stated that Swansea is not registered on the Dark Skies website. Heard the Council does not have Dark Skies status yet but is working towards it.
- Panel discussed how people come to beaches in Swansea to experience 'dipping' in the sea at all times of the year but especially in Winter, and queried if this is worth looking into as a campaign for the Winter as it is extremely popular. Heard this has been discussed with the Beaches Management Group from a safety point of view, as it often takes place at times when the Council is not lifeguarding the beaches.
- Panel noted there are areas cycle path cannot go through due to legal issues as opposition from certain groups. Panel queried if there are rights of way going through these areas for people to walk etc, and if so, can these rights of way be promoted more to encourage more walkers/cyclists to use them. Panel also asked if cycle racks can be located in these places. Panel heard there are public rights of way recorded across the whole of the county which are promoted by means of the website: [www.visitswanseabay](http://www.visitswanseabay) –and the majority are also available as downloadable PDF's. Panel informed that legally, cyclists do not have the right to use public footpaths, whereas they are entitled to use public bridleways.

- Panel asked if the Council anticipates recent changes to bus services will have a big effect on green tourism, and if there are any plans to try and overcome this. Panel heard Bus services on Gower are covered by Adventure Travel (not First Cymru) so not affected by these changes. Most tourist routes in Swansea are still operating Monday to Sunday but the frequency of service has reduced. One of the issues with bus services in Swansea is Swansea has two providers – Adventure Travel and First Cymru and they do not operate a through ticket system. Informed that research in 2022 showed the majority of people are still arriving by car and the ongoing rail dispute is discouraging people using this option.

Actions:

- Information to be provided on potential for adding short links between active travel routes and leisure destinations.
- Information to be provided on communication with Countryside Access for Wales regarding feedback in relation to Wales Coastal Path, upgrading and funding.
- Information to be provided on implementation of a 'ski-style' cycle map.

## **6 Work Plan 2023-24**

Panel considered the work plan and noted items for the next meeting.

The meeting ended at 11.15 am