



To:
Cllr Robert Francis-Davies
Cabinet Member for Investment,
Regeneration, Events & Tourism

Please ask for:
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Overview & Scrutiny

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Date
Dyddiad:

1 February 2024

Summary: This is a letter from the Service Improvement, Regeneration and Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel to the Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration, Events and Tourism, following the meeting of the Panel on 16 January 2024. It covers the Tourism Destination Management Plan. A response is required not required.

Dear Cllr Francis-Davies,

On the 16 January, the Panel met to consider the Tourism Destination and Management Plan. We are grateful to Steve Hopkins, Tourism Marketing Manager for their attendance and contributions.

The officer gave us an update on the new tourism destination management plan for Swansea, covering the period 2023 to 2026 which was approved by Cabinet in October 2023. He highlighted several areas of research which has fed into the plan including a visitor survey, a survey of businesses and a hotel demand study. We found the layout of the report excellent, readable, and easy to understand and overall were pleased with the progress of tourism in Swansea.

The officer felt the results demonstrate a positive increase in tourism with 4.2m visitors reported for 2022 with high satisfaction. Although the numbers are high, the plan will look to encourage those visitors to spend more through partnerships with business. New developments may also increase footfall and spending. He also highlighted the high performance in hotel room occupancy which exceeds the Wales average and that an additional three hotels would be needed in Swansea to meet demand.

We noted that the numbers for visitors from the Midlands seemed low with a much greater number coming from within Wales. We asked about the level of marketing in the area and heard that it is carried out in and around Birmingham and it continues to be a core market.

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The visitor survey notes the low satisfaction with public toilets, we queried what was being done to improve this and heard about the work of the Public Toilet Strategy Working Group and the challenges around maintaining cleanliness and anti-social behaviour. We felt one of the main challenges with public toilets is signposting.

We were interested to hear if there is a facility to publicise smaller local events. The officer explained that the “what’s on” guide used to fulfil this but has ceased publication however online, visitswanseabay.com provides event information. He informed us the Council are in the early stages of procurement to develop a new website which will have a greater events presence, with an estimated launch date of Autumn 2024, as well as opportunities for posters or local advertising.

We asked if Blue Flag beaches and green flag parks are included in marketing and heard that they are with particular focus on some blue flag beaches featuring centrally in advertisements. Maintaining blue flag status is important due to the tourism pull these beaches have. We reported the rising number of absent or damaged street signs and the increase in litter around Swansea which the officer noted.

We were surprised to see hotel accommodation was more popular than caravan stays. The officer noted the desire to attract larger hotel brands to Swansea, in addition to this we felt that Swansea lacks smaller boutique hotels and offering a range of different hotel styles is also important.

Your Response

We welcome your comments on any of the issues raised and in this instance a formal response is not required.

Yours sincerely,

Councillor Chris Holley

Convener, Service Improvement, Regeneration and Finance Performance Panel

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