



**To/
Councillor Robert Francis-Davies
Cabinet Member for Investment,
Regeneration & Tourism**

BY EMAIL

cc: Cabinet Members

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Summary: This is a letter from the Scrutiny Programme Committee to the Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration & Tourism following the meeting of the Committee on 8 January 2020. It is about a proposed cabinet decision on Foreshore Sites – Public Consultation and Procurement Responses Summary and Next Steps.

Dear Councillor Francis-Davies,

**Pre-decision Scrutiny of Cabinet Report:
Foreshore Sites – Public Consultation and Procurement Responses
Summary and Next Steps**

The Scrutiny Programme Committee met on 8 January to consider the report that you intend to present to Cabinet on 9 January, and give a view on the proposed decision.

We thank you and the report authors, Geoff Bacon and Lewis Hinds, for attending our Committee meeting yesterday, to present the report and respond to questions. The Committee also benefited from the advice of relevant officers, and hearing from local ward members and a number of members of the public.

It is clear from the report that the possible development of the seafront has generated a lot of public interest and is a topic that many people have conflicting views on. Cabinet should of course pay due regard to these views, and having held a discussion yesterday on the cabinet report what follows is the view of the Scrutiny Committee. This is our perspective on the proposed decision based on the information seen, and views heard.

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY / TROSOLWG A CHRAFFU

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We noted that the immediate decision before Cabinet is to formally withdraw any further consideration of development of the West Cross site, proceed with 'disposal' of the site at Langland and marketing to invite development proposals, and undertake further investigation on the potential development of the other three sites. We acknowledged that these are early stages in the development process and much work remains before detailed proposals are before the Council, and that no development was guaranteed at this stage.

We also noted the Council's dependency on private investment and development in improving the foreshore and services for local people and tourists and enhancing the Bay, to raise income for the Council, whilst being sympathetic to the natural environment. It was clear that the financial benefits were unknown at this stage as exact amounts of potential capital receipts and rental income will be dependent upon market interest.

Cabinet should:

1. Ensure that Council / community ownership of each site is maintained for future generations, not sold off to private developers but leased, making full use of planning provisions (including S. 106 agreements) and developer contributions in the provision of public facilities.
2. Ensure that public access is maintained, and not reduced, at each foreshore site in any potential development. For example, we would not want to see any loss of free public access such as at the Blackpill Lido. Complementary and additional facilities should be sought to improve the area.
3. Ensure that no development results in a reduction in current facilities / services at each site e.g. new public toilet facilities being equal or greater than current provision / capacity. Any development should add to and enhance public facilities and should not compromise the achievement of Blue Flag status.
4. Have regard to disquiet around the Land at the Skate Ramp - whether it is suitable for the development of a large-scale skate ramp, despite clear support for an enlarged facility within the area. We are aware that Mumbles Community Council is in the process of submitting a full planning application for their skate park. Opinion was expressed to the Committee that perhaps an independent review was necessary of all possible sites within the relevant area to ensure the best location is identified. However, some people disputed whether the provision of car parking, shop or public toilets were essential to development at the site, or concerns about the proximity to the main road and possible impact on traffic, safety and enjoyment of views. We note there will be further discussion with the Community Council about their plans, and necessary due diligence to ensure that the proposal is practical and sustainable in the long term.

5. Note some disquiet around adequacy of tennis court provision at Langland should development proceed, and clarify any intention to dispose of a further tennis court when advertising the site, additional to the area marked out (shown in Appendix A of the cabinet report) when the PIN notice was originally published in May. We heard views that the retention of at least four tennis courts would represent adequate provision and be important to successfully run competitions and attract prestigious tennis tournaments. This should not preclude the Council temporarily using any of these courts for building stores etc. when development is taking place. Cabinet could also be more specific about the facilities that it would want to be delivered at the site, e.g. Changing Places toilet, beach changing / shower facilities, type of leisure facilities etc.
6. Be cautious about the scale of any development at Sketty Lane Car Park and Blackpill Lido. The Committee would be concerned at any large-scale development at these sites. Furthermore, due regard must be given to the designation of Blackpill beach as a Site of Specific Scientific Interest. We would hope that all factors, including environmental impacts, are considered alongside the economic or monetary value of development proposals.
7. Have regard to existing or previous tourism and development strategic plans so that the Council does not spend more money on further work / investigations where ideas have been worked up previously or may have been dismissed following exploration by the Council.
8. Ensure the transparency of future decision-making regarding seafront development that is open to councillor and public scrutiny. We would seek clarity in relation to Recommendation 6 of the cabinet report. What is meant by 'further decisions to progress are to be delegated..'? Will Cabinet not have a further role to play in approving development of the four sites? If it will, what sort of decisions will be delegated? Furthermore, it is important that local ward members are fully engaged in the progress of these sites and that it can be further scrutinised by our Committee.

Cabinet should consider the views of the Committee before making its decision, and provide explanation for any rejection of views expressed. I will attend the Cabinet meeting on 9 January to feedback the Committee's views as contained in this letter.

Your Response

We hope that you find the contents of this letter useful and would ask you to write back by 30 January to confirm the decision of Cabinet and response to the points and questions raised.

We can follow up on progress with you when we see you in March for a Committee Q & A Session.

Yours sincerely,

Mary Jones

COUNCILLOR MARY JONES

Chair, Scrutiny Programme Committee

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