

Council – 26 September 2019

Councillors' Questions

Part A – Supplementaries

1	<p>Councillors Irene Mann and Peter May</p> <p>There is growing concern regarding the potential impact of 5G on pollinators and consequent effect on bio diversity.</p> <p>Will the Cabinet Member consider a cross party working group to focus specifically on this concern and the potential impact 5G might have on health.</p> <p>Response of the Cabinet Member for Environment & Infrastructure</p> <p>Officers from the Pollution Control and Private Sector Housing Team and the Nature Conservation Team have been consulted regarding this question. A lot of concern has been raised by organisations such as ‘buglife’ and EKLIPSE (Knowledge & Learning Mechanism on Biodiversity & Ecosystem Services) which have concluded that there is “an urgent need to strengthen the scientific basis of the knowledge on EMR (electromagnetic radiation) and their potential impacts on wildlife. In particular, there is a need to base future research on sound, high-quality, replicable experiments so that credible, transparent and easily accessible evidence can inform society and policy-makers to make decisions and frame their policies.”</p> <p>These organisations have highlighted that they feel there is an ‘evidence gap’ with limited number of research studies being carried out. Their concern relates to the potential impact on insects because of the frequency and density of the EMR which has a direct impact on their bodies and can affect their sensory perception and ability to navigate; there is however very little conclusive research evidence to date to prove this.</p> <p>The Council does have a duty under the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 to maintain and enhance biodiversity and also has included a reference to 5G within its LDP: <i>5.2.10 New technologies such as 5G will result in the densification of mobile infrastructure particularly in urban areas which could require more small cell sites in street settings. The planning system will need to respond positively to this evolution in technology whilst being mindful of the impacts on amenity and the historic environment.</i></p> <p>In response to the question of setting up a cross party working group to look at this, whilst I am not against that in principle, I do not believe there is any merit in it at this time.</p>
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Councillors Chris Holley, Jeff Jones & Mary Jones

Will the Leader tell Council if there are any special conditions attached to the foundation works that are currently taking place alongside the LC for the new developments.

Response of the Leader

The Planning and Listed Building Consent approvals for the Swansea Central Project include a number of pre commencement conditions in relation to the groundworks and piling that is current underway in the vicinity of the LC.

The outline planning permission granted for the Swansea Central Project ref 2017/0648/out including the new Arena / undercroft car park / coastal parkland adjacent to the LC incorporated a number of pre-commencement planning conditions including (condition numbers in brackets):

- Risks from contamination (13);
- Piling / foundation design in relation to ground water (17);
- Construction site waste management plan (23);
- Construction environmental management plan (including noise and vibration) (24);
- Construction method statement (25);
- Archaeological watching brief (26 & 27); and
- Arboricultural method statement (34).

The details required by these pre-conditions in respect to the Phase 1 (south side of Oystermouth Road) have been submitted, assessed and discharged. This has included consultation with the relevant internal officers and Natural Resources Wales as appropriate. The information to discharge these conditions and reports setting out the consideration/ approval can be found on the Council planning web site.

The development is proceeding in accordance with the approved details.

The Listed Building Consent (ref 2018/1823/LBC) for works to the grade II listed GWR revetment wall that forms part of the Swansea Central Project was granted by the Welsh Ministers and included a number of pre commencement conditions:

- Details of repairs to GWR revetment wall and stabilisation works (5);
- Method statement for the removal and re-use of stonework (6) and
- Archaeological watching brief (8)

The details required by these pre-commencement conditions have been submitted to Cadw who act on behalf of the Welsh Ministers to discharge Listed Building Consent conditions in relation to Council owned listed buildings/ structures. These pre-commencement conditions have been agreed/ discharged by the Cadw Historic Building Inspector and the work on site is proceeding in accordance with these approved details.

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Councillors Wendy Fitzgerald, Mary Jones & Chris Holley

At a previous meeting of Council the Cabinet Member indicated that the science around 5G would be explored in more depth and that Councillors would be briefed accordingly. Could an update be provided as to what progress has been made towards this goal and could the Cabinet Member inform Council whether the telecoms industry, or any organisation involved with the installation of 5G, has provided the Council with information regarding the timing and location of 5G activation in Swansea.

Response of the Cabinet Member for Environment & Infrastructure Management

Officers have been in contact with Public Health Wales regarding the 'science around 5G', they have provided the following response:

- 5G Technology is at an early stage and current technical standards utilise ICNIRP (International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection) guidelines in application to products. UK network operators are already committed to complying with ICNIRP principles.
- Frequencies being discussed for future use by 5G are around ten times higher than those currently in use, up to a few tens of GHz (Giga Hertz). ICNIRP guidelines apply up to 300GHz
- Recent research has focused on exposure to existing frequencies in use with fewer studies being carried out at the higher frequencies; the biophysical mechanisms that govern the interaction between radio waves and body tissue are well understood and the basis of the ICNIRP restrictions.
- Higher frequencies (5G) would mean less penetration of radio waves and absorption in body tissues and any consequent body heating more confined to the body surface.
- It is possible that there may be a small increase in overall exposure to radio waves when 5G is added to an existing network or in a new area. However, the overall exposure is expected to remain low relative to guidelines and as such there should be no consequences for public health.
- The Chief Transformation Officer (Sarah Caulkin) has confirmed that Vodafone are holding a 5G event at the Liberty Stadium on the 18th September. At this time the Council is unaware of a dates for 5G implementation or whether there is any obligation on the Telecoms Industry to notify the Council, give the National approval for 5G.
- There is also another meeting between the Council and Vodafone being held in October.

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Councillors Lyndon Jones & Myles Langstone

We understand that there is a big push from both Oxford & Cambridge Universities to encourage students from state schools across the UK to study at both universities. Over the past 3 years how many students from Swansea schools have been successful at getting accepted at either university. Which schools and colleges from Swansea are the most successful.

Response of the Cabinet Member for Education Improvement, Learning & Skills

Unfortunately the Seren network does not hold this information.

The table below summarises the information we have been able to gather on the numbers accepted to Oxford and Cambridge:

	Gower College	Olchfa	Gwyr	Bryn Tawe	Gowerton	Bishop Gore	Morryston	Bishop Vaughan
2019	11	1	1	0	0	1	0	0
2018	5	1	0	0	0	2	0	1
2017	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

However, it would be unfair to gauge success from these numbers due to different cohort sizes and grade profiles of learners.

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Councillors Mike Day, Mary Jones & Lynda James

Can the relevant Cabinet Member(s) state what objectives have been set for Community Development and Community Engagement for the next two years.

Response of the Cabinet Member for Better Communities

Our Community Action principles are as follows:

• Participation - We will involve people at the start to find out what they need

• Partnership - We will bring together the right people – what matters is working together to meet needs

• Ownership - We will be open and transparent in our work

• Self-determination - We will support people to work independently that will taper off over time

• Inclusion - We will work to ensure that everyone’s voice can be heard and can contribute

• Empowerment - We will respect and appreciate people for the contribution that they make

There are many examples of community engagement which will continue over the next 2 years, some examples are listed below:

Swansea Council's Life Stages Team run participation and engagement events called The Big Conversation throughout the year as mechanisms to ensure that the voices of all citizens in Swansea are listened to, and as a result can potentially affect change. Other council departments also work with The Life Stages Team to find out participants’ views of certain topics that are relevant to their field of work.

	<p>The work covers Big Conversations for 5-10 year olds, 11-18 year olds, and specific events for looked after children along with intergenerational Big Conversations for community members over the age of 7.</p> <p>We are currently in the process of establishing a Swansea Poverty Truth Commission. The Commission will bring together Swansea's key decision makers and people with direct lived experience of poverty to work together towards overcoming poverty, making sure that those affected by decisions are involved in the decision-making process.</p> <p>Other elements of community engagement takes place through Safer Swansea and Community Cohesion with interfaith events.</p> <p>The Housing Department hold regular community engagement events with residents.</p> <p>Local Area Coordinators work to help communities become more welcoming, inclusive, confident and connected. They encourage local citizens to take action, letting them take the power and decision making, and it's this which builds strength and long term resilience in communities.</p> <p>Throughout Social Services we work on a co-productive approach. Co-production builds on existing methods of community engagement such as public user involvement but aims to go further by supporting shared decision making. It is based on a set of values that underpin genuine engagement, equality of partners and that everyone's voice is heard. Co-production recognises that everyone has different skills and has a direct influence on decision making.</p> <p>There are no specific objectives around community development or community engagement as we work towards working co-productively objectives will be defined by working in this way.</p>
6	<p>Councillors Peter May & Irene Mann</p> <p>This question is about the proposed modifications to the Broadway interchange:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> It has been quoted that the scheme will cost approximately £1 million. The Welsh Government grant has been stated as £750,000. How will the shortfall be funded. What data has been collected for the volume and timing of vehicles travelling between Glanmor Road and Townhill Road via Lon Cwmgwyn and Lon Cynfor. Has the traffic modelling exercise included data on the increased use of this single track rat run and if so what was it. What data has been collected for the volume and timing of vehicles travelling between Townhill Road and Elphin Crescent via Lon Ger Y Coed and Lon Coed Bran. Has the traffic modelling exercise included data on the increased use of these single track rat runs due to the proposed elimination of the right turn from Townhill Road to Cockett Road and if so what was it. What data has been collected on the likely increase of head on vehicle confrontations in the single track Lons as a result of vehicle displacement due to the scheme and what road safety measures are the council putting into the scheme to mitigate this. What date was the data collected that led to the figure that 340 vehicles were using the right turn over a 19 hour period from Townhill Road to Cockett Road. Was it post June 2018 when UWSTD had vacated the campus which would

	<p>have made this figure lower than a true estimate. What calculations have been made to take into account extra vehicle movements due to the 160 unit development on the site, in particular the extra displacement along Lon Coed Bran and Lon Ger Y Coed.</p> <p>f. What period of statutory formal consultation will take place with residents prior to work starting on the scheme. If there is no statutory consultation, then why not.</p> <p>Response of the Cabinet Member for Environment & Infrastructure Management</p> <p>The scheme will be funded by a combination of Welsh Government grant funding, s106 contributions and match funding.</p> <p>The project is focused on improving movement of all road users along the Cockett Road Corridor, to alleviate predicted traffic growth as part of the LDP proposals and expected traffic growth up to the year 2030. It is anticipated that with increased capacity and reduced journey times along the main arterial routes, that levels of rat running through side roads will decrease.</p> <p>Following the recent public drop in session, officers are currently evaluating what local concerns can be accommodated as part of the overall project and I will shortly announce these proposed additional benefits.</p> <p>The Strategic Traffic Model was created prior to June 2018. This is a highway assignment model which is used to assess the overall effects of changes to land use and the implementation of highway improvements in terms of how travellers can be expected to use the highway network.</p> <p>This uses the most modern and accurate methods to quantify countywide trip origin and destination data both by private car and public transport. The current year model is then validated against on street vehicle counts and public transport usage data to prove accuracy of the model outputs.</p> <p>The projected traffic movements that have been used to inform the design solution have taken into account all current committed developments, those proposed within the LDP and projected traffic growth up to the year 2030. Therefore, it is considered that the assessment of traffic numbers is robust.</p> <p>All statutory formal consultation will be undertaken. I am most grateful for the input from well over 100 residents who attended the drop in session. Their comments and suggestions are currently being evaluated.</p>
7	<p>Councillors Mike Day, Jeff Jones & Lynda James</p> <p>Will the relevant Cabinet Member(s) tell Council what contribution libraries have in delivering Better Communities and will he/she give Council an update on the review of the Library service.</p> <p>Response of the Cabinet Members for Better Communities / Investment, Regeneration & Tourism</p>

The ways in which our Library Service makes a contribution to delivering Better Communities includes the following (some examples are cross-cutting);

Digital Inclusion;

- Free public access PCs, printing/scanning, internet, wifi and digital resources including ebooks and periodicals, access to databases and information resources – for all ages.
- Homework clubs utilising these resources (and print resources)
- Working with Council digital inclusion colleagues to recruit people to Get Swansea Online and host courses and promote other IT learning resources such as Good Things Foundation 'Learn My Way' as well as hosting courses delivered by external partners such as local colleges.
- Partner with external organisations (3rd sector and independent sector) to help the public access free support to develop IT skills e.g. Discovery 3 and Digital Communities Wales.
- Hosting workshops and information sessions on online security and safety for adults and children.
- Registered as an assisted digital centre for Visa applications.

Poverty Reduction and Welfare Rights;

- Provide a venue for employment schemes and clubs to meet e.g. Workways and Communities for Work to meet clients
- Members of the Financial Inclusion Steering Group.
- Promoting, publicising and hosting anti-poverty initiatives such as 'Beat the Bills', Debt Panic Button and the NEST scheme.
- Assistance with accessing online applications for Universal Credit and other information and support or signposting to customers to partners who can further support and help them acquire the skills to gain and maintain sustainable employment e.g. CAB, Welfare Rights etc.
- Providing free family activities and resources e.g. loans of books, multimedia, lego clubs, craft, reading challenges and working with the Childrens Playteam to provide access to board games.

Community Hubs, Service Protection & Building Rationalisation;

- Clydach Library was a pilot site for Services in Community
- Currently working with the DHO in Gorseinon to provide alternative accommodation within the library.
- Shared sites with community centres and schools e.g. Townhill, St Thomas and Penlan
- Work with Friends of Pennard Library to improve the fabric of the building.

Adult Lifelong Learning;

- Hosting regular courses and lectures or talks by local educational establishments or organisations e.g. Swansea University DACE and Lifelong Learning (and see digital inclusion above)
- Providing study space and access to digital resources (see digital inclusion)
- Provision of books and access to an all Wales resource for interlibrary loans
- Delivering workshops and surgeries to make best use of Library resources for learning and pursuing interests and hobbies e.g. Family History Surgeries
- Working with partners on grants and projects to deliver joint educational opportunities for community benefit e.g. partnering on the Centenary of Swansea Football Club and the World of Welsh Copper projects with Swansea University and currently working on a bid for Carnegie UK Trust: Engaging Libraries funding for public engagement with research into happy and healthy communities.

Litter and Community Cleansing and Sustainable Swansea;

- Establishing managed litter-picking hubs for Keep Wales Tidy at 3 (+1) sites in priority areas as part of the Caru Cymru project
- Providing free water and bottle filling stations.

Localised services and Access to Services;

- Provide free and publicly accessible buildings in 17 communities across Swansea – often operating outside of core Council office hours and after school and in school holidays.
- Access point for waste services curb side collection materials i.e. waste bags and caddies etc.
- See reference to Clydach pilot of Services in the Community.

Examples of other relevant partnerships (internal and 3rd sector and statutory)

- 'Bookstart – Books for Babies' with Early Language Development Team/Best Start Swansea and HB Health Visitors.
- Swansea Bay University Health Board (particular primary care clusters and Libraries), Age Cymru and Dementia friendly Swansea for healthy lifestyle classes and activities and information on local services and patient information.
- Cymraeg i Blant sessions and Rhyme times with Mentre Iaith.
- Cuppa with a Copper with police Neighbourhood Teams/PCSOs.
- And providing meeting space and venues for local community groups to meet and provide activities for the wider community e.g. Local History Groups, arts groups and sensory impairment groups e.g. RNIB audiobook reading group

We are able to supply case studies and Have Your Say testimony from customers who have benefited from these services and the outcomes that have achieved.

With regard to the Libraries Review, there have been several iterations informed mainly by the need to drive down costs in order to create a sustainable budget, with savings realised year on year. The latest iteration, to standardise opening hours according to demand, has been implemented and is now part of normal operating

	<p>procedures. Future considerations for the service will be informed by wider strategies for asset rationalisation, including future plans for the Civic Centre and community based services, as yet to be determined.</p>
8	<p>Councillors Chris Holley, Jeff Jones & Peter Black</p> <p>Will the Leader tell Council if he or our Planning department have had any information regarding major developments that may be taking place along the Fabian Way corridor including any in Neath and Port Talbot area.</p> <p>Response of the Cabinet Member for Delivery</p> <p>The Planning Section of Swansea Council have recently been consulted by Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council on a planning application submitted by Swansea University for 3 / 4 storey office building on land adjacent to Ffordd Amazon, which will serve as the National Headquarters of Active Building Centres UK. The submitted application indicates that the vision for the building is to build upon the success of the Specific Innovation and Knowledge Centre which is developing and integrating solar energy technologies to demonstrate active building concepts at scale. The Active Building Centre will be a UK Centre of Excellence, leading activity to drive the market adoption of buildings that can generate and store their own energy, termed 'active buildings'. The planning application has yet to be determined by Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council and can be accessed on their website under their ref: P2019/5148.</p>
9	<p>Councillors Wendy Fitzgerald, Gareth Sullivan & Graham Thomas</p> <p>Would the Cabinet Member confirm that in order for a prosecution to proceed a person dropping litter has to be identified and/or his/her address confirmed.</p> <p>Response of the Cabinet Member for Environment & Infrastructure Management</p> <p>If a Fixed Penalty Notice for dropping litter is not paid, resulting in the matter being put forward for a prosecution, the Court requires a full name, date of birth and home address (or address subject is known to regularly frequent).</p>
10	<p>Councillors Chris Holley, Gareth Sullivan & Gordon Walker</p> <p>Will the Leader tell Council if any discussions have taken place between the Council and Associated British Ports about the future of Swansea Docks and the activities that lay within the docks area.</p> <p>Response of the Leader</p> <p>Council officers attended a meeting with ABP in July 2019. The meeting discussed infrastructure refurbishment works and officers agreed to help explore whether external funding opportunities might be eligible to support their investment opportunities. It was also agreed that future development master planning for the docks area would involve early inputs from the Council's planning officers and further dialogue will follow.</p>

11	<p>Councillors Wendy Fitzgerald, Kevin Griffiths & Mary Jones</p> <p>The short term free parking previously located at the Mariner Street car park for picking up or dropping off rail passengers is no longer available. Alternative arrangements are supposedly in place at the High Street multi-storey car park but there is nothing at the pay machines to indicate how a driver can exit this car park without first purchasing a ticket. Could the Cabinet Member advise when appropriate notices and systems will be put in place so that it is made clear that short term free parking still remains available to rail users.</p> <p>Response of the Cabinet Member for Environment & Infrastructure Management</p> <p>Currently, customers are able to enter High Street Multi Storey car park and exit within a 20 minute grace period. Due to a technical problem the 30 minute grace period enjoyed within the previous Mariner Street car park is unable to be replicated automatically, however, an interim solution is in place.</p> <p>This issue will be resolved with the introduction of a new car park operating system in due course. Signing is being erected within the car park to inform customers of this issue.</p>
	<p>Part B – No Supplementaries</p>
12	<p>Councillors Mike Day, Cheryl Philpott & Susan Jones</p> <p>Will the relevant Cabinet Members tell Council what examples there are of Community Caretakers schemes in place, or planned, in Swansea. What funding is available for such schemes. How can communities request such schemes.</p> <p>Response of the Cabinet Member for Better Communities</p> <p>Community Caretaker Schemes are a volunteering scheme where members of the public can volunteer as a Community Caretaker, borrow equipment and help to make the local community to become a better place. A Community Caretaker is a volunteer who gives up their spare time to help the community.</p> <p>We do not have any Community Caretaker schemes in Swansea and the only example we can find of a scheme of this kind is in Dover, however we do run similar type of schemes in Swansea, some examples are below.</p> <p>SCVS run the Volunteering Centre in Swansea and link to Volunteering Wales. If communities were interested in running such as scheme SCVS could assist as direct to avenues for community groups to access funding for this type of activity.</p> <p>Local Area Coordinators help build relationships within communities supporting people to stay strong and connected, access information in a variety of way, find practical ways of doing the things, develop and use personal and local networks and be part of and contribute to their community.</p> <p>Community Development Officers support the voluntary management committees to Community Centres and Friends of Parks/Open Spaces for example. Community centres are run by voluntary management committees and supported by development officers.</p>

13	<p>Councillors Chris Holley, Mike Day & Gareth Sullivan</p> <p>Given the amount of building and refurbishment taking place in Swansea, can the Cabinet Member tell Council how many skip licences have been issued in each of the last 2 financial years, and the period since April 2019. What are the arrangements for ensuring compliance. How many fines have been levied for non-compliance over the same period.</p> <p>Response of the Cabinet Member for Environment & Infrastructure Management</p> <p>1262 Skip licences were issued in 17-18, 1266 in 18/19 and 589 to date in 19/20. Unlicensed skips 17/18 only one total £156, none 18/19 or this year to date.</p> <p>This is a reactive service only, A list is maintained of all licenced skips which staff use to check skips as they are noted. We work with most companies so illegal skips are rare. If they are checked and found non-compliant a retrospective licence is issued (at increased cost) or the skip is removed and where possible recharged.</p>
14	<p>Councillors Mike Day, Mary Jones & Graham Thomas</p> <p>What facilities does Swansea have for the collection and disposal of surplus electronic devices, such as mobile phones, computers, etc. What happens to such equipment and what costs are incurred or income is generated from such items.</p> <p>Response of the Cabinet Member for Cabinet Member for Business Transformation & Performance</p> <p>Digital and Transformation Services have commissioned a service from a company who collect, securely wipe devices of data and then disposes of them securely either by stripping and recycling parts or selling the equipment on. They are fully certified and highly secure. The current arrangement provides Swansea Council with an account, which is currently in credit, and allows the Council to pay for the collection and wiping of data securely and receiving a credit for any recycled parts that are sold.</p>
15	<p>Councillors Chris Holley, Mary Jones & Jeff Jones</p> <p>Will the Leader/Cabinet Member tell Council how many staff are employed by this Council, how many are in each Directorate along with the sickness levels in each department and if there are any reasons for the increase in the number of employees off with work related problems.</p> <p>Response of the Cabinet Member for Business Transformation & Performance</p> <p>Staff numbers and FTE's are a constantly moving feast, as are departmental structures, the most material being the cessation of the single department of People. I have used the most up to date data which is the end of August for non-schools based staff and the end June for schools based staff (given the summer holiday closure).</p>

Full Time Equivalents (FTE's)		
	2019	2018
Place	2,311	2,412
Resources	563	581
Education (exc Schools)	621	577
Social Services	1,558	1,660
Schools	3,846	3,842
<p>FTEs are reducing across the majority of business areas as austerity continues to bite but the number is relatively static in schools. The increase in Education is primarily related to Catering & Cleaning where there has been a TUPE transfer of staff and where additional hours have been extended to current staff where posts are not filled and there is a business need therefore increasing the overall FTE figure.</p> <p>Snapshot sickness levels are as follows:</p>		
Total Sick Days		
	Aug-19	Aug-18
Place	3,390	3,007
Resources	420	315
Education (exc Schools)	1086	371
Social Services	2,444	2,775
	Jun-19	Jun-18
Schools	3,935	2,944
<p>Sickness is materially up across the board. However there is a reduction within Social Services and the majority of instances remain recorded as not work related.</p> <p>NB Regarding the large increase in Education, it should be noted that in March 2019 a system issue with 2018 data reporting was identified and therefore the data does not provide a full picture across the Business area for this period. This has now been rectified.</p> <p>Those currently recorded as directly work related (based on self-certification/disclosure by the employee) are as set out below. The figures reflect that there has been a reduction across the majority of areas including a reduction in work related stress absences.</p>		
Recorded Absences due to Work Related matters		
	2019	2018
Place	21	31
Resources	0	3
Education (exc schools)	9	3
Social Services	17	24
Schools	1	3

	<p>Mitigating Actions</p> <p>To support the Council in mitigating sickness absence, the HR&OD team are consulting with Trade Unions on a revised Management of Attendance Policy. We are also working closely with Service Units and Directorates particularly in areas of high absence to support management of absence.</p> <p>Our Occupational Health team continue to provide a range of support for Managers and employees in the management of sickness issues.</p>
16	<p>Councillors Wendy Fitzgerald, Susan Jones & Jeff Jones</p> <p>Could the Cabinet Member advise whether there is a health and safety reason that requires petrol service stations to supply disposal plastic gloves for optional use by customers.</p> <p>Response of the Cabinet Member for Environment & Infrastructure Management</p> <p>The provision of gloves at petrol stations is not a health and safety requirement, they are provided as a courtesy to protect customers from fumes/odour and dirt and to prevent their transfer into the vehicle.</p>