



Council – 30 January 2025

Councillors' Questions

Part A – Supplementaries

1	<p>Councillors Peter Black, Lynda James & Jeff Jones</p> <p>Will the Cabinet Member make a statement on the reasons why Swansea has bid to the Department of Transport to host an e-scooter trial.</p> <p>Response of the Cabinet Member for Environment & Infrastructure</p> <p>Swansea Council has registered an interest in taking part in the Department for Transport (DfT) e-scooter trials, the only legally permitted way in which someone is able to utilise an e-scooter on the highway, and only within designated trial areas.</p> <p>Since 2020, e-scooter trials have been underway in a number of English local authorities, in order that the schemes could be monitored and evaluated by DfT to inform the subsequent legislation and regulatory changes that will be required to enable a wider rollout, if deemed successful.</p> <p>Registering an interest in the e-scooter trials does not commit, nor guarantee that a trial will be implemented in Swansea. It does however allow this proposal to be examined, and the opportunities and implications of such a trial to be established.</p> <p>The development of future / emerging transport options is an important part in establishing a sustainable and robust transport system, fit for current and future generations.</p> <p>There are currently no e-scooter trials being undertaken in Wales, and the authority awaits the formal outcome of the trials, which will consider a wider adoption of future rental e-scooter schemes, and is also anticipated to establish the future position on the use of private e-scooters, which are currently only permitted to be used on private land.</p> <p>Until the DfT sets out the future regulatory environment and requirements for e-scooters, it remains that the operation of any e-scooters in Swansea is not permitted on the public highway.</p>
2	<p>Councillors Lesley Walton, Mike Lewis, Andrew Williams, Mair Baker & Fiona Gordon</p> <p>Can the relevant Cabinet Members update us on how many families and residents received support over the Christmas period via the "here for you this winter" campaign.</p>

Response of the Cabinet Members for Community (Support) & Well-being

The 'Here for you this winter' campaign comprised a number of schemes to support people in Swansea during the winter period. Schemes being delivered as part of the Winter Wellbeing Grant are still ongoing throughout this period and monitoring will be completed in due course, however based on applications received and granted we have given estimates below.

Winter Wellbeing Grants (£650K)

COAST – Free activities for children, young people, families, and those aged 50+. 119 organisations, clubs, and groups were awarded COAST funding over the Winter period (Ending February 2025).

We anticipate that more than 15,000 participants will benefit from the activities, which run until the end of February.

Holiday Food – Food for pupils during school holidays – 47 initiatives.

We estimate that over 25,000 meals have been provided over the Christmas and February half term school holiday periods.

Swansea Spaces – provision of warm and welcome spaces – 80 Spaces funded.

We anticipate that 4,000 beneficiaries will make around 36,000 visits to the Spaces before the end of March 2025.

Direct Food Support – Tackling food poverty and food insecurity – 60 organisations.

Numbers of beneficiaries will be estimated following the grant monitoring process after the end of March 2025.

Councillor Supermarket Voucher Scheme

Over 1,000 vulnerable households supported.

All vouchers were distributed to households before Christmas.

Free bus journeys

Free bus services were provided on 19 dates in the run up to Christmas and New Year

Mr X

809 children and young people were supported by Mr X, in conjunction with Social Services and Housing teams within the Council

3 Councillors Francesca O'Brien, Will Thomas & Angela O'Connor

Would the Leader and Cabinet Member support Mumbles traders' request for one-hour free parking in council owned car parks in Mumbles.

Response of the Leader and Cabinet Member for Environment & Infrastructure

Mumbles main shopping areas contain a significant number of on street limited waiting spaces to allow shoppers to park for short durations to visit shops, with the car parks typically being used for slightly longer stays.

The Council owned car parks in the area see high usage, with limited spare capacity and as such discounting parking tariffs is unlikely to have any appreciable effect on footfall.

Councillors Peter May, Stuart Rice, Sandra Joy & Allan Jeffrey

Please can the Leader provide an update on the 24 projects for 2024 featured on a full page in the Labour Party leaflet circulated early last year.

Response of the Leader

Delivery of major initiatives and projects continued in 2024. These were promoted politically and corporately.

For the purposes of this answer, I have focussed on the 24 items highlighted by the council – and I am delighted that progress has been made on each of them.

Examples include the Palace Theatre building, which was reopened in November and is now being run by Tramshed Tech as an innovative shared workspace environment and business hub.

Led by Loft Co, the Albert Hall was also reopened last year. The venue features a main hall including food vendors, as well as accommodation, meeting rooms and office spaces.

Also completed in 2024 was a £7.5m investment into Cefn Hengoed Community School and leisure centre. This has led to a new indoor sports ban there with a 3G pitch that's suitable for a variety of sports.

Major concerts were held at Singleton Park including the Let's Rock Wales retro festival that included bands like the Boomtown Rats and ABC.

The Wales Airshow also returned to the city.

Many play areas across the city were also upgraded in 2024 to benefit children and families. This means over 50 play areas in Swansea have now been upgraded since the investment programme began.

Scores of projects also benefited last year from funding made available from the council through the UK Government's UK Shared Prosperity Fund. Examples include a series of free River Tawe cruises aboard the Copper Jack vessel for people aged over 50, as well as funding to Elysium Gallery and Studios to help with their plans to bring the city centre's former JT Morgan building back into use.

Elsewhere in the city centre, Swansea Market continues to be a success story. The market was named the UK's best large indoor market 2024 and proposals to improve the market's entrances are being developed.

Other 2024 achievements included the coastal park next to Swansea Arena being named the Amy Dillwyn Park in memory of one of our city's most accomplished novelists and businesswomen.

Utilities work to pave the way for Castle Square's transformation also took place in 2024, a contractor was appointed to carry out finishing works at the Copr Bay district, and plans were unveiled for a public sector hub development at the former St David's Shopping Centre site.

Other 2024 achievements included the selection of a preferred developer and operator for the new hotel that would be constructed on land which has been temporarily landscaped between Swansea Arena and the LC.

A new river pontoon was also installed close to the Hafod Morfa Copperworks site and a contractor was appointed late last year to renovate the site's grade two listed laboratory building.

2024 also saw the installation of over 300 energy efficient LED lighting bollards on the promenade, as well as considerable progress for the Mumbles coastal protection project.

Discussions with a number of leading high street retailers and leisure operators about moving into the former Debenhams unit in the city centre also gathered pace last year, and new visuals were released for the major renewable energy project that's being proposed for land in the area of Swansea Port as preparatory work continues.

Following-on from the opening of Swansea Arena, other projects in Swansea being part-funded by the City Deal are also either complete or nearing completion. These include the Innovation Matrix at the University of Wales Trinity Saint David's SA1 Waterfront Campus, as well as the new office development at 71/72 Kingsway.

Significant progress was also made on developments led by the private sector in 2024 too. Examples include the Princess Quarter development led by Kartay Investments, and the biophilic building led by Hacer Developments.

5 Councillors Mary Jones, Mike Day & Cheryl Philpott

Can the Cabinet Member/s reassure Council that owing to the horrific murder of Sara Shariff that all necessary steps have been taken to protect young people that are being educated at home.

Response of the Cabinet Member for Education & Learning

Swansea's Elective Home Education(EHE) team has robust procedures in place to support teaching and learning to ensure 'suitable education' is received. In addition, officers comply with visitation requirements and offer bespoke advice to parents who are considering off-rolling their children. Initial visits have been proactive and alternatives to EHE explored.

Under Section 436A of the Education Act 1996, the guidance places a duty on local authorities to identify children of compulsory school age who are not enrolled in school or receiving suitable education. "Suitable education" is defined as efficient, full-time education appropriate to the child's age, ability, and needs. Local authorities are expected to make reasonable efforts to identify such children. Legal precedent (Goodred v Portsmouth City Council) confirms that local authorities can informally inquire with parents about their child's education without needing to serve a formal notice, provided the information is sufficient. The new guidance outlines expectations of the LA to ensure an initial visit, a 3 month visit and at least 1 annual visit to assess the education being provided is efficient and suitable for learners.

However, if a parent decides that they will pursue a home education option, they must notify the school in writing, which will lead to the child's removal from the admissions register (Regulation 8(1)(d) Education (Pupil Registration) (Wales) Regulations 2010). The school must inform the local authority of the child's details within 10 school days. It is only if the child is educated at a special school arranged by the local authority, that the local authority has any authority to approve the request or not.

Through close work with many families, the EHE team has supported many children previously receiving EHE to re-integrate into school. The number of EHE in Swansea has reduced from the previous year. The team makes strong links with the EHE community and organises regular informal events to provide advice and guidance as well as educational items such as books and stationery.

In terms of safeguarding, Welsh Government guidance states that there is no evidence to suggest that home educated children are at a greater risk of neglect or abuse than children who are educated at school, and a parent's decision to home educate is not considered a ground for concern about the safety and well-being of the child. However, as with any child regardless of where they are educated, there may be circumstances which, individually or combined, give practitioners cause to seek further information about a child.

Welsh Government considers that effective safeguarding arrangements in every local authority area should be underpinned by two key principles:

- safeguarding is everyone's responsibility: for services to be effective each practitioner and organisation must play their full part both individually and in collaboration; and
- a child-centred approach: for services to be effective they should be based on a clear understanding of the personal outcomes for the child and what matters to them. The rights of the child should be central to the approach and their best interests should always be paramount.

In summary, the EHE team works within the statutory framework to support all children who are electively home educated to receive a suitable education. Visitation is undertaken in accordance with the Welsh Government's guidance, at least one visit annually, and our current number of annual home visits exceeds the Welsh average. Safeguarding duties are complied with and are in accordance with Swansea Council's pledge that "Safeguarding is everyone's business".

6 Councillors Andrew Williams, Lesley Walton, Mike Lewis, Bev Hopkins & Fiona Gordon

Will the relevant Cabinet Members update council on the proposed major development due to be delivered in 2025

Response of the Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration, Events & Tourism

Swansea's £1bn transformation will continue in 2025 following on from the completion of projects including Swansea Arena, the Copr Bay bridge, the coastal park and the reopening of both the Palace Theatre building and the Albert Hall.

Projects due for completion in early 2025 include the new office development at 71/72 The Kingsway. Developed by the council and part-funded by the Swansea Bay City Deal and Welsh European Funding Office, the new scheme will provide accommodation for 600 jobs in sectors including tech and digital. Over 75% of the office space there is now under offer and tenants will shortly start to be announced.

Also due for completion in 2025 is the Y Storfa community hub at the former BHS unit on Oxford Street. It will include some council services, the city's main public library, the Swansea office of Careers Wales, the Welsh Glamorgan Archive

Service, Citizens Advice Swansea Neath Port Talbot, the South Wales Miners Library and other public services.

A major project to strengthen and improve the sea defences and promenade in Mumbles is due for completion this year too, along with finishing works at the Copr Bay car park on the city centre side of Oystermouth Road.

A planning application from Skyline Enterprises is likely to be determined this year which - subject to approval - would lead to a major new outdoor leisure destination on Kilvey Hill.

Other progress will include the council continuing to work with the Ospreys to achieve their ambition of playing at St Helens from the 2025-26 season.

Construction work on a new hotel could start in Swansea by the end of 2025 on land between the arena and the LC, and plans are also in place to improve the entrances to our award-winning indoor market.

Work will start on a revamp of Castle Square Gardens this spring as part of a project that will feature a substantial increase in green space including lawns and planting. A new water feature for interactive play will also feature, along with new outdoor seating areas, a giant new TV screen above a bandstand facility, the retention of public use space and two new pavilion buildings for food, drink or retail businesses.

Stripping-out works at the former Debenhams unit will commence shortly in readiness for new tenants. Discussions with potential retail and leisure business tenants are ongoing and announcements will be made as soon as talks are finalised.

Construction work is also anticipated to start this year on a public sector hub at the former St David's Shopping Centre site as part of a partnership between the council and regeneration specialists Urban Splash.

Council workers and other public sector staff will work there once the building is complete, helping enable the redevelopment of the Civic Centre site on the seafront. We'll continue to work closely alongside Urban Splash on proposals for the Civic Centre site, other parts of the former St David's Shopping Centre site and an area of land on the riverfront in St Thomas. More information on these proposals will be made public as soon as we're in a position to consult on them.

Further work to restore and celebrate the Hafod-Morfa Copperworks site will also take place this year. Swansea-based John Weaver Contractors have been appointed to restore the grade two listed laboratory building and repurpose for a restaurant or a number of other possible uses.

Many private sector schemes will be complete in 2025 too. These include the biophilic building development being led by Hacer Developments, as well as the Princess Quarter scheme led by Kartay Investments, who are also continuing with their work to bring a number of retail units on Oxford Street back into use.

Other progress this year will include plans led by St Mary's Square Developments to bring the city centre's Mond building back into use, as well as plans led by Swansea.com for a Cosy Club restaurant at the Exchange Building in the Maritime Quarter.

Supported by the council, work led by Elysium Gallery to transform the former JT Morgan building in the city centre into arts centre is also now under way.

7 Councillors Lyndon Jones & Francesca O'Brien

Retail footfall in Wales declined by 2.9% in 2024. What is the Council doing to support businesses in Swansea.

Response of the Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration, Events & Tourism

The Council and its partners are making significant strides to support retail and other businesses. We are working to deliver and support new investment that will encourage a vibrant mix of uses, generating additional footfall and spend. Our work maximises the use of Council funding and other public sector funding sources, such as Transforming Towns, Shared Prosperity Fund, Levelling Up Fund, City Deal, and Town Centre Loans, to support business and leverage private sector investment.

Swansea Arena, the city's new coastal park and the landmark bridge over Oystermouth Road have been completed. Work to finish the major new office development at 71/72 Kingsway is also nearing completion. Led by the Council and part-funded by the Swansea Bay City Deal, that scheme will create space for 600 jobs.

Work led by the Council to restore and reopen the historic Palace Theatre building on High Street as a shared workspace scheme has been completed, and the transformation of the former BHS unit on Oxford Street into a public services hub called 'Y Storfa' is progressing at pace. Once complete in 2025, that development will be home to Swansea's main library, the West Glamorgan Archive Service and a number of other public-facing council services. Non-council services there will include the Swansea's Careers Wales service and Citizens Advice Swansea Neath Port Talbot.

A huge amount of investment by the private sector is taking place too. This includes major investments such as the completion of Princess Quarter on Princess Way, and construction of the living building at Mowbray Yard and a number of other investments to create new homes and bring empty units back into use in the City Centre core.

A public sector hub is also being proposed for the development site in the area of the former St David's Shopping Centre as part of a partnership scheme between the Council and long-term regeneration partners, Urban Splash. The public sector hub will also enable the redevelopment of the Civic Centre. The plan is for hundreds of council staff to be located at the public sector hub, as well as workers from other public sector organisations.

A specialist retail and leisure consultancy JDM retail were commissioned by Swansea Council to conduct a detailed review of the retail and leisure offer in the City Centre. This study has identified gaps in the range of retail and leisure occupiers and recommended a comprehensive spatial strategy to optimise the retail mix. This work is being used as baseline information to inform the preparation of a new strategy for the City Centre, also to be known as a Placemaking Plan which will replace the current Swansea Central Area Regeneration Framework which has previously guided investment in regeneration since 2016. The new Swansea

Central Area Placemaking Plan will present a new vision for the City Centre and identify new development zones and a deliverable action plan. It will make the best of the city's unique qualities with a range of medium/ long term actions and short-term interventions, with the aim of making it a better place to live, work and spend leisure time. Further public and stakeholder engagement will be taking place on this plan in the coming weeks.

Swansea Market continues to perform strongly. Occupancy is currently 94% which is well above the national average of 72%. Swansea Market is well respected across the sector. In January 2024, Swansea Market won Britain's Best Large Market award for the third time. Officers were also invited to present at the annual NTMF conference in April 2024 to share initiatives and best practice during which the Swansea Market Supervisor was awarded Market Manager of the Year. Following on from the installation of public toilets and opening of The Market Garden communal seating, eating and events space in the centre, works are advancing to upgrade the Market's external entrances. These works collectively represent an investment of around £1.1 million in the Market with core and external funding.

As part of the £135m Copr Bae district, Swansea Arena was developed by the Council and leased and operated by ATG entertainment. Since opening in March 2022 and up until April 2024, over 350,000 visitors have attended a variety of shows, conferences, and sports events. In addition, the Arena now hosts Swansea University graduation ceremonies. Artists who have already performed at the Arena include John Bishop, Michael McIntyre, Alice Cooper, the Hollywood Vampires and Katherine Jenkins. West End productions including Jersey Boys, Six, Bat Out of Hell and The Musical.

The Copr Bae district is a key attractor and has increased interest in Swansea evidenced by the level of inward investment and development across the city. To reinforce its position, in October 2022, The Estates Gazette, a specialist property publication, shortlisted Swansea with three other UK centres for the City of the Year award for its wider regeneration. The Arena and wider Copr Bae development has been a catalyst for development raising developer and investor confidence together with local retailer support.

Debenhams traded in Swansea City Centre for more than 42 years as the Quadrant's anchor store and was a key link in Swansea's wider retail circuit, alongside M&S and Primark before its corporate collapse in late 2020. The store closed permanently in mid-May 2021. The department store's closure, together with the loss of the corresponding local jobs, is one of the most significant events to disrupt retailing in the City Centre. To provide confidence to the market and local traders, the Council with the assistance Welsh Government grant support, purchased the store in May 2023. Since that time the Council has undertaken numerous surveys and instructed specialist agents to prepare a letting strategy to occupy the vacant space. The agents have subsequently held discussions with interested parties for various uses, including single occupation to a mix of tenure and uses. A number of these discussions are at an advanced stage and further detail will be provided once the interests are secured.

8 Councillors Chris Holley, Jeff Jones & Peter Black

We understand that a number of Capital Regeneration projects in the city have overspent their original budget. Will the Leader give details of each overspend and the particular identification of the financial liability borne by the council.

Response of the Leader

Within the current capital programme, two regeneration schemes have recently been physically completed that have costs incurred that have exceeded original approved budgets.

Updated financial implication positions have been reflected in subsequent FPR7 reports presented to Cabinet. The projects to be highlighted are the Palace Theatre and 71/72 Kingsway.

Both of these projects are subject to the final account with the principal works contractor being settled and as such, due to the commercial sensitivities related to this, it is not possible to place this information into the public domain at this time.

However a confidential briefing note can be provided to members outlining the current position, until such time as a full & final financial update position on both schemes can be provided when the final account positions have been agreed and commercial sensitivities have been addressed.

In terms of projects that experience additional cost pressure that exceed original estimates officers undertake a number of mitigation actions such as value engineering, and securing of additional external funding etc. Officers continue to actively manage projects to ensure they are affordable and deliverable within the capital programme which is currently among the biggest in Wales. Cabinet actively monitor progress on delivery of the capital programme, and revise the programme from time to time. As highlighted previously Cabinet will need to consider the priorities for next phase of schools modernisation within a revised capital programme in due course.

9 Councillors Andrew Williams, Lesley Walton, Mike Lewis, Bev Hopkins & Fiona Gordon

In the last few months winter storms have hit Wales and Swansea, being fallen trees, damage, and flooding. The response from the council teams was excellent. Will the relevant Cabinet Members update council on the work undertaken by the various council teams to help keep residents safe and recover from the storm damage

Response of the Cabinet Members for Community (Services), Environment & Infrastructure and Corporate Services & Performance

Preparation for and delivery of the response to the recent winter storms was a significant cross-service team effort. We are incredibly proud of the officers and operatives involved. Despite the difficult conditions they faced, the response was delivered with professionalism and without any injuries - a testament to the robust safety systems in place. All staff involved have been personally thanked for their outstanding dedication and hard work. Below is a summary of the service responses:

Tree Services Unit (TSU): As the first point of contact, the arborists responded to hundreds of reports of fallen trees, with many volunteering additional time to provide continuous support. Their exceptional skill and resilience under pressure ensured a swift and effective response to the unprecedented challenges. Recovery will take several months.

Parks Transport and Operations: Staff from these teams volunteered to assist despite not being on call, providing vital support to the arborists. They worked tirelessly, often in extremely challenging conditions, operating heavy agricultural plant and chainsaws to clear fallen trees and debris. Their collaborative efforts ensured roads and public spaces were made safe efficiently and effectively.

Highways: Highways emergency teams were inundated with calls and acted decisively, closing roads where necessary and working closely with both internal teams and external organisations such as BT and National Grid to address infrastructure damage. Their efforts extended to managing flooding incidents and ensuring essential roads and pathways were reopened safely.

Countryside Access: This team played a crucial role in reopening public rights of way, demonstrating exceptional commitment by clearing debris and ensuring accessibility for residents as quickly as possible.

Bereavement Services: Staff from this team volunteered to assist despite not being on call, providing vital support to the arborists and Parks operatives throughout the region, including at Morrision and Oystermouth cemeteries where fallen trees had blocked the main entrances. This ensured funerals were not affected so prioritising the needs of bereaved families.

In doing this vital work, these council teams, supported by other teams throughout the storm and since, fulfilled an important public duty in keeping the city moving and ensuring the safety of residents. The dedication and hard work shown by all involved under such difficult conditions was truly exceptional, and we extend our heartfelt thanks to every team member who contributed to this remarkable effort.

10 **Councillors Chris Holley, Jeff Jones & Peter Black**

It has been reported recently in the press that there is a shortfall in the number of apprenticeships available in the City Region. In relation to Swansea will the Leader tell Council what the shortfall is and in what sectors.

Response of the Leader

Clarity and context are needed regarding the recent City Deal Joint Committee meeting dialogue, what was reported in the press and how these relate to the query raised. The apprenticeship numbers reported were specifically linked to the Swansea Bay City Deal (SBCD) Skills and Talent Business Case and not the wider regional apprenticeships numbers.

In terms of the SBCD Skills and Talent Programme, the Apprenticeship recruitment figures are lower than the projected business case at this stage due to delays in delivery across several City Deal projects. Since approval of the Programme, there have also been changes in Welsh Government Funding for Apprenticeships and eligibility criteria.

Risks are being mitigated by working with regional strategic partners with plans in place to ensure targets are met by 2030 as per the Skills and Talent Business Case.

With regards apprenticeship figures within the Swansea Local Authority Area, there is no known shortfall in Apprenticeships available, with full allocations of Apprenticeship funding being spent and Swansea out-performing other Local Authorities within the region in terms of apprenticeship recruitment.

The Skills and Talent programme are working with key strategic partners across the region, including industry, training providers, Local Authorities and Welsh Government and are confident the target apprenticeship figures will be achieved by 2030.

11 **Councillors Andrew Williams, Lesley Walton, Mike Lewis, Bev Hopkins & Fiona Gordon**

Will the Leader and relevant Cabinet Member update on local and regional support available to help those impacted by the decision to cease virgin steel production at Tata Steel in Port Talbot including the step being taken to help people find new employment.

Response of the Leader/Cabinet Member for Well-being

A £100m transition fund has been made available to help the estimated 2,800 Tata steel workers facing redundancy and the supply-chain. This fund is made up of £80m from the UK Government via the Wales Office and £20m from Tata to coordinate support and training opportunities for affected workers.

The majority of the Tata direct workforce reside across South Wales; in NPT (52%), Swansea (15%) and Bridgend (14%), with the remaining 19% residing in another 14 LAs across Wales. There are further employees in the supply chain which hasn't been quantified. Equally the exact final numbers of workers as part of the overall headcount who will face redundancy hasn't officially been confirmed by Tata at this point. Of the overall headcount of approx. 3700 it was previously indicated that between 2000-2500 could face redundancy with others being furloughed, redeployed or retrained.

Utilising this funding allocation the Tata Transition Board has increased capacity in NPTCBCs Employability service as NPT is expected to face the greatest level of redundancies. Alongside this a regional Employment and Skills Fund has been launched which will allow affected workers to re-train and develop new skills, regardless of where they reside. The fund can provide workers with a grant of £1000 provided this funding leads to a guaranteed job, up to £10k for skills development, qualifications, professional certificates and licences which lead to a meaningful new careers, and in exceptional circumstances grants of up to £20k may be available for more specialist qualifications.

To access this funding affected workers who reside in Swansea will be signposted to our existing Welsh Government Funded Communities for Work and Shared Prosperity Funded Pathways to Work projects in the first instance. Further details on the support on offer in Swansea can be found here; [Employment and Skills Flexible Fund - Swansea](#). From here an Employment Mentor will meet with the Tata or supply-chain worker, discuss their skills and goals with a view to developing an action plan which will likely include exploring training opportunities which may be funded from the regional Employment and Skills Fund.

To-date 40+ affected employees have been supported by staff in our Swansea teams, some of which have received official redundancies. Staff are actively working with this group to source training and employment opportunities, working in partnership with the NPT council team to access funding support. Swansea staff also have a physical presence every Wednesday afternoon in the Workstation in

	<p>NPT so that support is on hand for those who are unable to meet due to shift patterns.</p> <p>Alongside the employability support, the Business Swansea Team is on hand to support those workers who are interested in starting a business or becoming self-employed. Individuals living in Swansea are eligible to apply for the UK SPF funded Business Swansea pre-start grant that can provide up to £10,000 funding towards eligible start up costs.</p> <p>The Tata Transition Board is in the process of setting up a Business Start Up fund for all affected individuals in the Tata Steel UK supply chain and Tata Steel UK employees. A Supply Chain Transition Fund is available to impacted supply chain businesses that are reliant on Tata Steel for more than 30% of their turnover. The Tata Steel Transition Information Hub website provides further information on both these Funds: Tata transition business support - Neath Port Talbot Council. Other funds are available specifically for businesses based in NPTCBC, this includes the Business Growth Fund and Business Resilience Fund.</p>
	<p>Part B – No Supplementaries</p>
<p>12</p>	<p>Councillors Peter May, Stuart Rice, Sandra Joy & Allan Jeffrey</p> <p>Please can the Cabinet Member confirm how much has been spent in 2024 on renovations, structural works and developments at the current depot premises (including Pipehouse Wharf).</p> <p>Response of the Cabinet Members for Corporate Services & Performance</p> <p>Deferred to 6 March</p>
<p>13</p>	<p>Councillors Peter May, Stuart Rice, Sandra Joy & Allan Jeffrey</p> <p>The council issued a press release on the 25th September regarding the proposed Active Travel Scheme in Uplands being halted. In the release it said that the council were in discussions with the Welsh Government about retaining the grant. Has the grant been retained by the council for other schemes or has it been given back to the Welsh Government and what was the value of the grant.</p> <p>Response of the Cabinet Member for Environment & Infrastructure</p> <p>The Council remain in discussions with Welsh Government and Transport for Wales over reallocation of the grant award.</p> <p>Active Travel Fund can only be reallocated for approved schemes in development, there are proposals to reallocate £481k into other ongoing schemes, and we remain in discussions over the remaining £874k. Once agreed, these will be the subject of a further report to Cabinet.</p>
<p>14</p>	<p>Councillors Mike Day, James McGettrick & Kevin Griffiths</p> <p>Will the Leader tell Council how many visits has the Council received from potential inward investors for each of the previous 3 calendar years, who they are, what industry they are in, how many jobs would be created and what the outcome of these visits have been. Where the information is commercially sensitive, will the</p>

	<p>Leader provide a confidential means of communicating the information to Councillors.</p> <p>Response of the Leader</p> <p>Deferred to 6 March</p>
15	<p>Councillors Sam Bennett, Mark Tribe & Graham Thomas</p> <p>Can the relevant Cabinet Member tell Council how the work of all the Foodbanks across the City and County is coordinated.</p> <p>Response of the Cabinet Member for Well-being</p> <p>The work of foodbanks in Swansea is supported in a number of ways:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) A Swansea Food Poverty Network has been established, meeting every other month. The network, coordinated by the Tackling Poverty Service, provides a platform for the various foodbanks to network, share good practice and liaise with council officers on a number of issues, such as provision over holiday periods like Christmas. The network also allows for other relevant information to be timely circulated across foodbanks. 2) The Tackling Poverty Service maintains a listing of foodbank opening hours in Swansea on the council's website. www.swansea.gov.uk/foodbanks 3) The Tackling Poverty Service administers funding aimed at tackling food poverty and food insecurity via a number of grant application processes throughout the year. This funding provides essential support to foodbanks to meet ongoing high levels of demand.
16	<p>Councillors Kevin Griffiths, Mark Tribe & Gordon Walker</p> <p>Can the Cabinet Member update us on where we are with combustible external materials on council owned buildings and are we now compliant.</p> <p>Response of the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services & Performance</p> <p>Deferred to 6 March</p>
17	<p>Councillors Sam Bennett, Nicola Furlong & Michael Locke</p> <p>Could the Cabinet Member provide, an estimated date of delivery for the parks in SA1, and provide an outline for the reasons for the delay in the delivery of the parks in SA1.</p> <p>Response of the Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration, Events & Tourism</p> <p>The park areas in SA1 are expected to be delivered by Oct/Nov 2025. There has been a two year delay in their delivery for a combination of reasons. Firstly, the detailed design of the main park area could not be finalised until the planning applications on the adjoining sites had been determined. Secondly, the Landscape Architect responsible for the design of the park retired resulting in a transition period whilst resourcing capacity was addressed along with redrafting of the proposed designs. Thirdly, the main park area has been used as a builder's compound from May 24 until the end of last year to enable other works in the area to be</p>

	<p>delivered. The local ward member has been kept regularly informed of the situation and the procurement process has now commenced with works currently anticipated to start on site May 2025.</p>
18	<p>Councillors Mark Tribe, Mary Jones & Mike Day</p> <p>When dialling the Council contact telephone number 01792 636000 you are then given the option of pressing 1 for Welsh or 2 for English. How many callers request the response in Welsh and what percentage of the total calls does this represent. There also appears to be a significant number of internal contact numbers that are no longer in use, can the Cabinet Member advise us how often the system is updated.</p> <p>Response of the Cabinet Member for Service Transformation</p> <p>During the period 1/10/24 – 31/12/24 the main number received 188 calls to the Welsh Operator line, out of a total of 6,875 overall, being 2.8%</p> <p>With regards to internal phone numbers, the phone directory was reviewed in its entirety last Summer, with around 30% of entries being deleted after confirming the operating procedures and service provision with the departments concerned. Departments are reminded periodically to ensure the directory is kept up to date, particularly when staff join or leave, service names are updated, phone numbers change etc. These formed some of the actions presented to the Scrutiny Customer Contact Working Group in February 2024 to improve overall call handling across the Council.</p> <p>The Council is in the process of undertaking a Phone Access Review, which is due to complete by the end of March 2025. Any findings and recommendations from the review will be presented to the Corporate Management Team, Cabinet Members, and Scrutiny as part of the Customer Contact Scrutiny Panel work.</p>