

Commissioning Gateway Review Report Stage 2 Planning & City Regeneration

Contains:-

Review Overview and Details
Stages review summary
Gateway Approval

Gateway Review Approval
Corporate Management Team
18th January 2017

The Gateway Report will provide an overall status of the Review at Stage 2. A RAG system will be used to highlight the overall recommendations made by the Gateway Review, as defined below:-

RAG	Gateway Decision	Definition
Red	Stop	The Gateway identified significant issues that require immediate action before the Review can proceed onto the next stage.
Amber	Conditional Approval	The Gateway identified issues that must be actioned before next Gateway Review.
Green	Approved	Review to proceed onto the next Stage of the process, but to address any recommendations from the Gateway Review.
Recommendations (if applicable)		Overall RAG
<i>To proceed to the next stage of the commissioning review.</i>		Green
Sign off		
Chief Executive :		
Lead Director/Sponsor:		
Review Cabinet Member:		
Date:		

REVIEW OVERVIEW

Commissioning Strand Lead:	Martin Nicholls
Service Review Lead:	Phil Holmes
Service Review Title:	Planning & City Regeneration

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report is to request approval from the Corporate Management Team to move onto Stage 3 of the Commissioning Process. This document should provide sufficient evidence to assure the panel that the Service Review for Planning & City Regeneration has completed all relevant tasks for stages 1 and 2, and that the review is on track to progress to the next stage within the process.

2.0 SERVICE REVIEW DETAILS

2.1 Service Review Scope

Following a major review of the senior management structure in 2010, a new merged service comprising the former Economic & Strategic Development and Planning Services was created. The service currently combines the Council's planning and city regeneration functions. It is a diverse and multidisciplinary professional service that encompasses Development, Conservation & Design, Strategic Planning & Natural Environment, Economic Development, European & External Funding, Development & Physical Regeneration and City Centre Management.

The Development, Conservation & Design section delivers the Council's statutory responsibilities in the regulation of the development and use of land through the processing of in excess of 2,000 planning and related applications and the investigation of approximately 500 enforcement cases per annum. It also provides a central admin function and a specialist urban design and conservation service including the provision of design and heritage advice, preparation of design guidance and policy and input into public realm initiatives.

The Strategic Planning and Natural Environment (SP&NE) section provides a robust strategic planning and policy framework, maintains, enhances and promotes the built and natural environment for all, and integrates Sustainable Development principles into the delivery of all Council Services. The section comprises six teams covering the following service areas: conservation and enhancement of the Gower Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB); Countryside Access – responsible for the Public Rights of Way network and Access Land; Landscape architecture and tree preservation; Nature Conservation - enhancing the natural environment and biodiversity duties; Strategic Planning, including production of the Local Development Plan (LDP); and Sustainable Development – responsible for integrating sustainable development and well-being objectives into wider business processes.

The Economic Development Team sets the Council's strategic framework for economic regeneration and works collaboratively with internal and external partners to deliver the Council's economic regeneration agenda. The Economic Development Team contributes to the activities of Swansea Bay City Region, including the City Deal, the Public Services Board and

Swansea Economic Regeneration Partnership. It delivers Beyond Bricks and Mortar and co-ordinates inward investment activities.

The European & External Funding Team manages the Council's EU and other grant funding arrangements, ranging from light touch input for finance and monitoring only, to full management and implementation of projects. Current projects include Workways+, Communities for Work, Cynydd, Cam Nesa, Rural Development Plan, Hafod Morfa Copperworks Heritage Lottery Fund project, Welsh Government Vibrant & Viable Places and Gower Landscape Partnership. The portfolio amounts to around £11m of new funding during 2016.

The Development & Physical Regeneration Team is the council's developer interface for major & complex property development schemes. The team is involved in the delivery of high profile development and regeneration projects and strategies. The team have recently completed the Review of the City Centre Framework and are leading the delivery of strategic regeneration projects such as the Viable and Vibrant Places programme, Swansea Central mixed-use regeneration, the Civic Centre site masterplan, Kingsway regeneration and Hafod Copperworks.

The City Centre Management team works with a broad range of internal and external stakeholders to facilitate the operational coordination and management of the City Centre and is the main point of contact for Swansea Business Improvement District (BID). City Centre Management organises several events and a varied range of on-street activities in the City Centre and also over-see the collation of key performance data which monitors the health of the City Centre. City Centre Management is the strategic lead for the management and development of the City Centre evening and night time economy and also manages key services like the City Centre Rangers, Swansea Mobility Hire and Left Luggage and Swansea Market.

All parts of the service are in scope for the commissioning review.

The full detailed scoping document as approved by Executive Board and Cabinet is attached as Appendix 1. In addition from the staff workshop on October 11th, the SWOT (Appendix 2) and PESTLE (Appendix 3) are also attached.

3.0 STAGE 1 – DEFINE OUTCOMES

P&CR Service Plan Vision: To become one of Wales' leading economic regeneration and planning services, with a can-do approach to promoting the economic, social and environmental well-being of Swansea.

The first stage of the review was to define the outcomes required. This was initiated at a staff workshop (which followed the approved Stage 1 process) held in October. A long list of draft outcomes from the staff workshop were circulated to internal stakeholders for comment. The list of outcomes is included in Appendix 4.

The key findings from the workshop and consultation exercise have been translated into the following four prioritised outcomes:

Outcome	Outcome Detail	Corporate Priority
1 A vibrant and viable City Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>City Centre Regeneration Programme</i> • <i>City Centre Management</i> • <i>Vibrant and well managed Market</i> • <i>Continued Purple Flag status and Evening and Night Time Economy Strategy</i> • <i>Access to City Centre services</i> • <i>Swansea Bay City Deal</i> • <i>City Centre Strategic Framework</i> • <i>Local Development Plan.</i> 	Creating a Vibrant and Viable City and Economy, Tackling Poverty, Building Sustainable Communities.
2. A thriving economy at the heart of the city region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Swansea Bay City Region Economic Regeneration Strategy</i> • <i>Swansea Bay City Deal</i> • <i>Inward investment activities</i> • <i>Strategic Employment Sites</i> • <i>Beyond Bricks & Mortar</i> • <i>Regeneration of Hafod Morfa Copperworks</i> • <i>Rural Development Plan</i> • <i>Swansea Bay FLAG</i> 	Creating a Vibrant and Viable City and Economy, Tackling Poverty, Building Sustainable Communities.
3. A healthy urban and rural environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Well-being goals and duties incorporated into corporate plans, policy and strategies</i> • <i>Measurably improved access to natural environment/open space and improvements to the built environment</i> • <i>Corporate Biodiversity Plan</i> • <i>Green Infrastructure Strategy</i> • <i>Open Space Strategy</i> • <i>Gower AONB Management Plan</i> • <i>Rights of Way Improvement Plan</i> 	Creating a Vibrant and Viable City and Economy, Building Sustainable Communities, Tackling Poverty, Improving Pupil Attainment, Safeguarding Vulnerable People.
4. Sustainable development within existing and new communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Sustainable Development principles embedded in all decision-making</i> • <i>Measurably improved range and choice of places to live, work and enjoy leisure time</i> • <i>Adoption of LDP</i> • <i>Placemaking SPG adopted for LDP Strategic Development Areas</i> • <i>Urban design and conservation</i> • <i>Direct link to the council's overarching prevention strategy and future generation requirements</i> 	Creating a Vibrant and Viable City and Economy, Building Sustainable Communities.

4.0 STAGE 2 - SERVICE ASSESSMENT

4.1 What is the gross expenditure of the service?

The gross expenditure of Planning & City Regeneration is £9,355,021 for 2016/17, broken down into the following budget areas:

a. Development, Conservation & Design

25002	Design & Conservation	£124,500
25025	Planning Applications	£1,162,600
25026	Planning Administration	£287,200
25035	Planning Enforcement	£275,700
	Total Budget	£1,850,000

b. Strategic Planning & Natural Environment

Code	Description	Sum
25001	AONB	£183,800
25005	Countryside Access	£361,866
25003	Landscape	£141,100
25004	Nature Conservation	£332,836
25036	Strategic Planning	£425,600
42560	Sustainable Development	£180,189
	Total Budget	£1,625,391

c. Economic Development

42001	Economic Development	£128,292
42101	Business Development Management (including Beyond Bricks and Mortar)	£256,060
42102	Business Development	£0
	Total Budget	£384,352

d. European & External Funding

16001	European Unit	£0
25006	Gower Landscape Partnership	£148,300
25007	Rural Development Plan (RDP) Business Plan 2	£1,549,100
25008	RDP Co-operation	£0
25009	RDP Animation	£0
25010	RDP Running	£0
25011	RDP Implementation	£0
25012	European & External Funding Team staff*	£0
42105	Employment Gateway	£510,200
42106	Convergence & RDP projects	£373,600
42108	European Fisheries	£0
42109	Workways+ Project	£0
42001	Economic Development	£52,897
42110	HLF Hafod Copperworks - Development Phase	£23,000
	Total Budget	£2,657,097

e. Regeneration & Physical Development

42484	Swansea Vale Joint Venture	£118,600
42483	Development Projects	£695,798
42328	Spatial development	£248,700
42485	Felindre Joint Venture	£0
42486	St David's Shopping	£259,100
42487	Vibrant & Viable Places	£0
42488	City Centre Regeneration	£207,200
	Total Budget	£1,529,398

Note - Revenue budget position is under review to reflect current and proposed city centre regeneration projects.

f. City Centre Management

42251	City Centre Management	£506,400
42253	Swansea Market	£392,500
42252	Swansea Mobility Hire	£124,800
	Total Budget	£1,023,700

g. Planning & City Regeneration Directorate Budget

42408	Directorate Budget – Gross Expenditure	£285,083
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4.2 Income generated by Planning & City Regeneration

Planning & City Regeneration will generate £6,314,753 of income in 2016/17, which represents 68% of gross expenditure. Income is generated against the different budgets as follows:

a. Development, Conservation & Design

Code	Description	Sum	Examples
25002	Design & Conservation	£200	Advise on works to listed buildings
25025	Planning Applications	£1,112,791	Planning application fees and fees for fee application advise
25026	Planning Administration	£3,100	Photocopying and planning history searches
25035	Planning Enforcement	£0	
	Total Income	£1,116,091	

b. Strategic Planning & Natural Environment

Code	Description	Sum	Examples
25001	AONB	£105,000	Natural Resources Wales (NRW) grant for AONB Management Plan & Sustainable Development Fund (SDF) grant
25005	Countryside Access	£102,666	NRW grant
25003	Landscape	£113,100	Inter-service credits
25004	Nature Conservation	£183,136	WG grant, RSPCA wetlands project
25036	Strategic Planning	£0	
42560	Sustainable Development	£24,000	Commercialisation of

			services
	Total Income	£527,902	

c. Economic Development

Code	Description	Sum	Examples
42001	Economic Development	£0	
42101	Business Development Management (including BBM)	£9,230	
42102	Business Development	£0	UK Steel plc small business grant funding
	Total Income	£9,230	

d. European & External Funding

Code	Description	Sum	Examples
16001	European Unit	£0	
25006	Gower Landscape Partnership	£148,000	Heritage Lottery Fund & Natural Resources Wales funding
25007	RDP BP2	£1,549,100	
25008	RDP Co-operation	£0	RDP funding
25009	RDP Animation	£0	RDP funding
25010	RDP Running	£0	RDP funding
25011	RDP Implementation	£0	RDP funding
25012	European & External Funding Team staff	£0	Staff project management and grant administration services for externally funded projects delivered in other departments.
42105	Employment Gateway	£510,200	European Social Fund
42106	Convergence & RDP projects	£373,400	
42108	European Fisheries	£0	
42109	Workways+ Project	£0	European Social Fund funding
42001	Economic Development	£0	
42110	HLF Hafod Copperworks - Development Phase	£23,000	Heritage Lottery Fund funding
	Total Income	£2,603,700	

e. Development & Physical Regeneration

Code	Description	Sum	Examples
42484	Swansea Vale Joint Venture	£50,000	Rental income
42483	Development Projects	£27,800	Fees
42328	Spatial development	£0	
42485	Felindre Joint Venture	£20,000	Rental income
42486	St David's Shopping	£542,500	Car parking, rental income
42487	Vibrant & Viable Places	£62,830	Rental income
42488	City Centre Regeneration	£0	
	Total Income	£703,130	

f. City Centre Management

City Centre Management will generate £1,299,700 of income across the following activities in 2016/17:

f (i) City Centre Management Income

Code	Description	Sum	Examples
800001	Fees & Charges	£15,000	Street trading fees
800025	Contributions Local Authorities	£5,000	Internal re-charges for services & projects
800026	Contributions Other Orgs	£101,100	Christmas Market/ event fees & contributions from BID
800027	Contributions Private Contractors	£10,000	External charges for services & projects
800156	Rents/ Hire Income	£39,700	Commercial Lettings fees
	Total City Centre Management Income	£170,800	

f (ii) Swansea Market Income

Code	Description	Sum	Examples
800156	Rents/ Hire Income	£1,070,100	Market stall-holder rents
800236	Miscellaneous Income	£28,100	Casual lettings, storage and other tolls
	Total Swansea Market Income	£1,098,200	

f (iii) Swansea Mobility Hire Income

Code	Description	Sum	Examples
800001	Fees & Charges	£28,400	Hire of mobility equipment & left luggage lockers
800236	Miscellaneous Income	£2,300	Sale of merchandise
	Total Swansea Mobility Hire Income	£30,700	

g. Planning & City Regeneration Directorate Budget

42408	Directorate Budget – Income	£55,000
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4.3 What is the net cost of the service to the Council?

When taking account of the income generated by the Service, the Council's net expenditure on Planning & City Regeneration is £3,040,268 in 2016/17. This is broken down across the different budget areas as follows:

a. Development, Conservation & Design

25002	Design & Conservation	£124,300
25025	Planning Applications	£49,809
25026	Planning Administration	£284,100
25035	Planning Enforcement	£275,700
	Net Expenditure	£733,909

b. Strategic Planning & Natural Environment

Code	Description	Sum
25001	AONB	£78,800
25005	Countryside Access	£259,200
25003	Landscape	£28,000
25004	Nature Conservation	£149,700

25036	Strategic Planning	£425,600
42560	Sustainable Development	£156,189
	Net Expenditure	£1,097,489

c. Economic Development

42001	Economic Development	£128,292
42101	Business Development Management (including Beyond Bricks and Mortar)	£246,830
42102	Business Development	£0
	Net Expenditure	£375,122

d. European & External Funding

16001	European Unit	£0
25006	Gower Landscape Partnership (HLF & NRW)	£300
25007	RDP BP2	£0
25008	RDP Co-operation	£0
25009	RDP Animation	£0
25010	RDP Running	£0
25011	RDP Implementation	£0
25012	European & External Funding Team staff*	£0
42105	Employment Gateway	£0
42106	Convergence & RDP projects	£200
42108	European Fisheries	£0
42109	Workways+ Project	£0
42001	Economic Development	£52,897
42110	HLF Hafod Copperworks - Development Phase	£0
	Net Expenditure	£53,397

e. Regeneration & Physical Development

42484	Swansea Vale Joint Venture	£68,600
42483	Development Projects	£667,998
42328	Spatial development	£248,700
42485	Felindre Joint Venture	-£20,000
42486	St David's Shopping	-£283,400
42487	Vibrant & Viable Places	-£62,830
42488	City Centre Regeneration	£207,200
	Net Expenditure	£826,268

f. City Centre Management

Overall City Centre Management achieves full cost recovery and derives an additional annual income to the Council of £276,000, as follows:

	City Centre Management	£335,600
	Swansea Market	- £705,700
	Swansea Mobility Hire	£94,100
	Net Expenditure	-£276,000

g. Planning & City Regeneration Directorate Budget

42408	Directorate Budget – Net Expenditure	£230,083
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Since 2013/14 Planning & City Regeneration has delivered £1.36 million in budget savings as outlined in the table below:

Financial Year	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	Total
Savings	£54,000	£659,000	£490,000	£157,000	£1,360,000

As of December 2016, Planning and City Regeneration has a draft capital budget of £10.2m for 2016/17 and £5.7m already secured for 2017/18.

4.4 How is Planning & City Regeneration performing?

Planning & City Regeneration prides itself on high levels of performance and customer satisfaction.

For Planning Services, the Annual Performance Report (APR) is seen by Welsh Government as an important mechanism for monitoring Local Planning Authority performance against a key set of National performance indicators and as a means of driving its agenda for modernising the planning system in Wales. It also represents an important tool for benchmarking the performance of authorities across Wales.

The APR for Swansea for 2015/16 demonstrates that Planning Services has already made significant progress in addressing areas of performance that were in need of improvement and in embracing the Welsh Government's agenda for the modernisation of the planning system in Wales. The service is now consistently achieving top quartile performance for key indicators following the investment made in new technology, business process re-engineering and governance/scheme of delegation changes. The full APR is available on request, but in summary:

- The average time taken to determine all planning applications at 61 days was significantly below the Welsh average of 77 days.
- The percentage of all applications determined within required timescales also showed a significant improvement increasing from 71% in 2014-15 to 84%, well above the Welsh average of 77%.
- Significantly, for the delivery of the Council's regeneration agenda, the percentage of all major planning applications determined within required timescales has increased from 6% in 2014-15, which was the lowest performance in Wales, to 36% in 2015-16, which is above the Welsh average.
- Ongoing progress on reducing the backlog of outstanding historic enforcement cases continues, to influence performance relating to the speed of investigation and resolution of cases.
- The percentage of Member made decisions contrary to officer advice has reduced from 23% in 2014-15 to 10% in 2015-16 equating to 0.3% of all planning application decisions being made against officer advice compared to 0.6% across Wales. The quality of such Committee decisions has also improved significantly with 5 of the 7 subsequent appeals made in respect of applications refused contrary to officer advice being dismissed at appeal.
- Significant progress in Local Development Plan (LDP) preparation has been made over the past year. The Deposit LDP has been written, agreed by Council and consulted upon. The representations received are in the process of being assessed and a consultation report is being prepared with the intention to submit the Plan for Examination in early spring 2017.

In terms of customer satisfaction, survey work has revealed that:

- 69% of respondents thought that the Local Planning Authority gave good advice to help them make a successful application (Wales average = 48%), and 55% were satisfied overall with how their application was handled (Wales average = 61%).

- For the City Centre Rangers, 96.4% of customers surveyed in 2015 said they were aware of the City Centre Rangers, and 80.64% rated the Service as 'Good' or 'Very Good'.
- For the City Centre Mobility Hire Unit , a 2015 Customer Satisfaction Survey showed a 100% satisfaction rating of 'Very Good' of the staff, 90% of the waiting time, 90% of the equipment , 85% of the building, 80% regarding the value of the Service and 75% of the opening times.
- Feedback from City Centre Management run events show an average satisfaction rating of 84.2% as Very Good/ Good with 94.7% of respondents rating staff helpfulness as Very Good/ Good.

47% of staff responded to the 2016 staff survey (CCS average was 24%) and the service area scored higher than the council average for all but one question:

- 63% of staff always/ often look forward to going to work (CCS average = 56%)
- 86% of staff are always/often enthusiastic about their work (CCS = 71%)
- 95% felt they are always/ often able to make suggestions to improve the way things are done in the team/ department (CCS = 82%)
- 86% felt their team has a clear vision about where it's going and what it wants to achieve (CCS = 77%)
- 89% were satisfied/ very satisfied with the support from their immediate manager (CCS = 81%)
- 67% were satisfied/ very satisfied with the support to develop their skills and learn new things (CCS = 71%)

Planning & City Regeneration has received the following accolades:

Award	Description
UK Most Sustainable Public Sector Platinum Award	Achieved by the Sustainable Development Team in 2015
Sustainable Public Sector Sustain Wales Award	Awarded to the Sustainable Development Team in 2015
Welsh National Procurement Award	Beyond Bricks & Mortar Team received Community Benefit Award for Good Practice in Procurement 2014
APSE Service Award	2015 Finalist for 'Internal Service Team of the Year' for the City Centre Rangers
NABMA - <i>National Association of British Market Authorities</i>	Swansea Market awarded 2015 'Britain's Best Large Indoor Market'
Purple Flag	Swansea City Centre achieved Purple Flag status in February 2014 for its evening and night time economy which was renewed in 2015.
Swansea Life Awards	Swansea Market: - 2016 Best Visitor Experience - 2014 Big Heart of Swansea Award - 2012 Culture & Lifestyle Award Winner - Retail Category
Trip Advisor	Swansea Market awarded 'Certificate of Excellence' (2015)

Other examples of good performance across the service area include:

- Track record of securing external funding (£60.1m 2007-13, £55m 2014-20, with a further £12.58m currently under consideration) which facilitates a broad range of economic regeneration and environmental activities. All external funding has been secured through competitive bidding processes from Welsh Government, European Union (EU) Funding Programmes and Heritage Lottery, and all projects are delivering against targets that have been agreed as a condition of the grant. One of the strengths of the service is the diverse skill set of staff - securing funding, successfully delivering projects and monitoring/ evaluating activities is a result of multi-disciplinary working between officers across the service.
- £22.25m of inward investment secured in 2015/16 related to property based projects where the Council owned the land
- 1378 training weeks secured through Beyond Bricks & Mortar in 2016/17, as at November 2016.

- Strong partnership working ethos with a diverse range of partners across Swansea and the wider region to promote the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of Swansea.
- As a result of the work of the Sustainable Development Team, the Council became one of 11 local authorities in Wales to become an early adopter for the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act.
- The Sustainable Development Team has set up a community benefit society (the Swansea Community Energy & Enterprise Scheme) to generate renewable energy to support some of the poorest communities in Swansea. A community share offer has raised £425,000 to fund a construction loan for ten solar energy installations with profits from electricity generated anticipated in excess of £500k during the lifetime of the project going into a community benefit fund.
- Swansea is the only area in Wales to have been awarded Purple Flag status for the way it manages its evening and night time economy.
- Occupancy levels in Swansea Market remain stable at around 96-97% and rental arrears are at an all-time low tracking at 3% whilst the national average is 6%.
- City Centre Management incepted Wales' first ever Business Improvement District (BID).
- The service is often held up as a model of best practice, e.g. City Centre Management is recognised for its best practice by the Association of Town Centre Management and NAMBA. Officers from across the service are routinely invited to speak at various national conferences and its projects and services have been published in a variety of guides.

The Planning & City Regeneration service is very diverse and is delivering against a broad range of objectives to promote the economic, social and environmental well-being of Swansea. While some areas of activity lend themselves to quantitative performance measures, others are much more difficult to measure. The most detailed picture of the service area's performance emerges from the Team Scorecards, which set out clear objectives for each Section (linked to the service area's priorities), and which are monitored on a monthly basis by the Head of Service.

4.5 How are we demonstrating 'value for money'?

Planning & City Regeneration demonstrates value of money in a number of ways:

- City Regeneration & Planning services are subject to regular financial audits the outcomes of which have been endorsed and recommendations followed up.
- The service secures external funding significantly in excess of its net cost to the Council each year to fund economic and environmental activities that would otherwise not take place.
- The costs of external providers would be significantly in excess of the current cost of staff within the Authority providing the same service.
- Restructuring of the management of European funded projects across the Council has reduced the number of core staff required for implementation and delivery, and has reduced pressure on central services (e.g. financial services) by reducing the number of requests for supporting information.
- The fees and charges that apply across the service have been successfully benchmarked against similar services offered elsewhere in Wales and further afield where appropriate.
- An independent expert appointed under the Professional Arbitration on Court Terms (PACT) Scheme by the President of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) determined in July 2014 that the rents paid by the Swansea Market traders are fair and represent market value.
- Key data on the health of the City Centre is monitored on a monthly basis by the City Centre Management, which is benchmarked against towns and city centres across the UK on a regional and national basis.
- A range of service lead key performance indicators are monitored each month to assess the performance of services. For example, the City Centre Rangers dealt with 24,642 incidents over

2014-15 and on average covered 350 miles on foot patrol each month whilst Swansea Mobility Hire has averages approx. 11,300 annual trips by service users.

- The economic return on investment into City Centre events is assessed with results showing a consistent positive impact on footfall and economic activity.

4.6 Who else provides the same service – within the council?

- The statutory elements of the planning function are provided exclusively by the Service.
- Legal coordinate Local Land Charge Authority searches and retain the fee income to cover staffing costs and costs of IT and service provision. There may be opportunities to review the resources allocated by the various service areas to furnishing this function.
- Nowhere else in the Council provides the same/similar services as the Strategic Planning and Natural Environment Section. Collaboration is required with other service areas to deliver complementary services, for example dealing with trees on Council land and landscaping of school grounds. The Sustainable Development team also work closely with Performance Management in seeking to embed the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act.
- The Parks Department undertakes work which is of benefit to biodiversity, including the Wildflower meadow scheme, beach management works and Knotweed control service. They also provide opportunities for school visits, volunteering and environmental events in some of the Parks. There is scope for closer working with Parks to improve biodiversity on Council owned land under their management.
- No one individual or Team replicates the service of the Economic Development Team; the team possesses specific economic development expertise that is not available elsewhere in the Council.
- In terms of funding administration, Poverty & Prevention administers the Community Transformation Fund (to encourage community organisations to take on council services to generate savings), the Education Department has a schools grants team that support schools in mainstream grants, and the Tourism Team supports applications for funding from Visit Wales. All EU funded schemes currently sit with the European & External Funding Team
- City Centre Management has recently commissioned the Special Events team to deliver certain events in the City Centre and Marketing Services to promote them.
- With regards to City Centre Management run premises, such as the Market, City Centre Management provides the interface with the Market traders and over-sees the day to day management as well as long term development of the facility. The Estates team supports City Centre Management with property and tenancy related matters and Facilities Management have a premises manager's role within the wider organisation.
- The Neighbourhood Support Team within Housing also provides Rangers who deliver a significantly different service to that provided by the City Centre Rangers.
- Estates Services also deal with rent collection and disposals of Council owned land.
- Sure-Sprung sell mobility equipment, however, this tends to be the larger items some of which is sold at Mobility Hire.

4.7 Who else provides the same service – externally?

- There are a wide range of professional firms and consultants with planning, economic development, sustainable development and environmental expertise who could deliver elements of the advice and services provided by officers in the service. However, external

consultants would not have the same depth and breadth of knowledge of the Council as internal officers, and would need to be on hand to respond to officer and member requests (and meetings), sometimes at short deadlines or immediately.

- Other local authorities provide similar services and there are opportunities for collaborative working with other Authorities particularly in the sharing or pooling of specialist services. An example of this is the Council's Service Level Agreement with Carmarthenshire County Council for Mineral planning advice as there are no in-house minerals planners.
- Personal search agents can carry out Local Land Charge Authority searches.
- The National Trust (on land in their ownership) and Natural Resources Wales also undertake work which conserves and enhances the natural beauty of the landscape of the AONB. Both organisations are part of the Gower AONB Partnership and work collaboratively with the AONB team. Natural Resources Wales are seeking to appoint regional coast path officers.
- There are voluntary-sector organisations (such as National Trust and the Wildlife Trusts) with a biodiversity conservation remit, however this is largely focused around their own landholdings, without the wider strategic remit of the Strategic Planning & Natural Environment Team.
- Swansea Council for Voluntary Services operates a grant finder service and supports third sector organisations with grants.
- The current model of delivery is based on a "mixed economy" with consultants being procured where necessary, including some areas of specialisation. This will be further explored in stages 3 and 4
- Swansea Business Improvement District (BID) represents the businesses in the City Centre to deliver improvements in the City Centre that the businesses agree and fund through a levy. City Centre Management and Swansea BID work collaboratively to fund and deliver services and projects, however, legislation relating to BIDs requires that BID companies add value to and do not replace existing services provided by public service providers such as councils and the police.
- With regards to Swansea Market, some other towns and cities have privately run markets.
- In regards to Swansea Mobility Hire, there are a number of local private companies that sell wheelchairs, scooters and mobility equipment. Bush Health Care, based within the City Centre, also offer a hire service but this is limited to wheelchairs. All the main towns and cities across Wales operate mobility schemes the scale of which depends on the size of the area they serve.

4.8 What Commercial Opportunities can Planning & City Regeneration pursue?

The service already pursues a wide range of commercial activities which are generating income for the Council. In addition, it is actively exploring new commercial opportunities across the service, as follows:

- Further opportunities to commercialise the city centre through sponsorship, advertising and expansion of street trading and lettings
- There is potential for the Development & Physical Regeneration Team to advise on acquisition of assets, with a view to the Council actively managing them to create future income streams to support borrowing and major regeneration projects.
- The European & External Funding Team is working with the Corporate Commercial Team to explore the possibility of charging for grant searches, bid writing and project administration.
- The Beyond Bricks & Mortar Team (within the Economic Development Team) is exploring the potential for generating income from undertaking studies on Social Return on Investment for other Public Sector organisations.

- The Strategic Planning & Natural Environment Section is exploring possibilities of charging for specialist advice and training (e.g. in Sustainable development, Japanese knotweed, ecological advice & surveys) and providing services to other sections (e.g. for landscape architectural advice and Strategic Environmental Assessments) to save on consultancy costs. As an example, undertaking the iterative Strategic Environmental Assessment/Sustainability Appraisal of the LDP in-house has saved the Council around £60k in fees.
- There is potential to increase income generation from Bishops Wood Centre and income could be earned from Public Right of Way searches by reorganising the Authority's search service.

4.9 What work is Statutory and Non Statutory?

The Wellbeing of Future Generations Act places a well-being duty on local authorities to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. The work of the Planning & City Regeneration service contributes to this duty. In addition:

- The Authority has a statutory responsibility for functions associated with the determination of all planning and related applications submitted within or straddling its administrative boundaries and to deal with any associated appeals or consultations including Development of National Significance and Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project applications. Since March 2016 the Authority has also had a responsibility to respond to statutory pre-application enquiries in a format prescribed by Welsh Government. It also provides a non-statutory pre-application advice service over and above its statutory requirements which generates additional fee income.
- Planning Enforcement is not a statutory function, however, the Authority has a duty to address unauthorised development which is causing demonstrable significant and material harm.
- Two full time staff are employed to carry out the planning element of the Local Land Charge Authority search which is a statutory requirement. Fee income for this service is currently retained by Legal with this resource currently being subsidised by planning application fee income.
- The provision of an urban design and conservation service is not a statutory requirement; however, it provides invaluable input into the delivery of the Authority's statutory functions, corporate regeneration initiatives and objectives. The Authority also has various statutory duties in respect of ancient monuments, listed buildings and conservation areas which are dealt with by this team.
- The vast majority of the Strategic Planning & Natural Environment Section's work is statutory, except landscape architecture service which is intended to be income generating. All teams have responsibility for the preparation, monitoring and review of statutory plans and strategies to be adopted as Council policy. Non-statutory work includes preparation of Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) - this provides detailed explanation of adopted policy to enable better informed decision-making.
- The work of the Economic Development Team is primarily non statutory, but the team provide input on TAN 23 economic development planning assessments.
- External funders will not support statutory activity so all the work of European & External Funding Team is non statutory.
- The work of the Development & Physical Regeneration Team is primarily non statutory but the team provide advice to the planning department on scheme viability linked to planning applications.
- City Centre Management has to fulfil statutory compliance with its legal responsibilities in leases as landlord, and as tenant and premise management including Fire Risk Assessment, Health and Safety at Work etc.

4.10 How many staff do we have delivering the service?

The Planning & City Regeneration service has 150 employees in scope –

- Development, Conservation & Design – 43 staff (39 FT 4 PT)

- Strategic Planning & Natural Environment – 31 staff (22 FT, 9 PT)
- Economic Development Team – 7 staff (3FT, 4PT)
- European & External Funding Team – 27 staff (23 FT, 4 PT)
- City Centre Management - 21 staff (15 FT, 6PT)
- Development & Physical Regeneration – 21 staff (16 FT & 5 PT)

30 staff (20% of the total) are grant or externally funded.

In recent years the service has deleted a significant number of senior management and team leader level positions in response to budget savings and ER/VR requests. These reductions have, in the main, been absorbed within the service, reducing management tiers and spans of control. The total number of ER/VR reductions within the service since 2010 is 18 - which represents over 10% of total staff numbers.

5.0 EMERGING RISKS, ISSUES & OPPORTUNITIES

5.1 Emerging key Issues

- The service currently receives significant amounts of EU funding. Despite the UK's exit from the European Union, EU funding sources remain active for the next 2-3 years meaning existing programmes are likely to run to 2021 as a minimum. Subject to the Brexit negotiations there is also the possibility that transitional arrangements and further funding opportunities may extend considerably beyond 2021
- A good range of other external funding sources have been identified and the European & External Funding Team is adding value by supporting teams across the Council that can make use of this funding in support of corporate priorities whilst providing a consistent approach to back office management of the funds and professional liaison with funding bodies.
- The plethora of new Welsh Government legislation and the emphasis on regional working in planning, transport and economic development will have an impact on the service.
- A change in shopping habits (including the move away from the high street to the internet) is redefining the role of city and town centres. This has necessitated a review of Swansea City Centre strategies / activities and influenced city centre regeneration proposals.
- A reduction in resources elsewhere in the Council (legal, HR, facilities, reduction in maintenance activities) is affecting the service's ability to deliver its priorities

5.2 Any emerging opportunities or quick wins?

The following quick wins have been identified:

- Service/Section/Team Plans on a page/scorecard linked with employee performance management appraisal and development review to enable more joined up working
- Interactive use of Council's website, to reduce officer time spent dealing with queries with members of the public and other interested parties and speed up responses to enquiries.
- Improved communications strategy/media coverage, including updated intranet and internet sites, to promote work including better use of Social Media
- The Service regularly undertakes public consultation on plans and strategies. Development of an in-house e-consultation service would save over £3,000 per annum which is currently spent on an externally hosted service.

- Use of in-house mapping services, e.g. for producing LDP proposals map and hosting on-line interactive map would save £7,000 on use of consultants to provide this service.
- Publishing Council strategies online could save printing costs, e.g. publishing the LDP online could save over £15,000 in printing costs.
- Implementation of sponsorship opportunities across the service e.g. a banner sponsorship scheme in the City Centre.

5.3 Any Lessons Learnt from the Process so far?

From these initial stages of the commissioning review it is clear that the service is highly multidisciplinary, with a breadth of complementary professional and operational services that join up to support Swansea's urban and rural economies. The work of the service is both strategic and high profile, with strong links to the corporate priorities, as evidenced by the service's lead role in the regeneration of the city centre, the preparation of the Local Development Plan and most recently the council's contribution to the City Deal.

Financially, the service is punching above its weight, generating significant income and external funding for the Council. It has also taken a significant pro-rata share of budget saving as part of the Council's response to austerity measures and has consistently delivered against targets.

Where available, national benchmarking datasets demonstrate that our performance is improving, perhaps best illustrated by the top quartile status of the planning applications service PIs. Our work is also recognised nationally, with the award winning Beyond Bricks & Mortar Service, the Sustainable Development Team and various City Centre Management functions. It was also pleasing to see the recent staff survey results, with staff morale significantly outperforming the council average.

Like any other Council service, we face risks and issues moving forward. With the necessary corporate inputs, the commissioning review will assist the service in mitigating these risks. In previous years the service has responded well to change and challenge, dealing with the significant loss of tacit knowledge from the many ER/VRs that have been approved as part of ongoing budget savings. Based on the evidence in this initial report I believe the service can continue to deal with the challenges ahead, using the commissioning review process to become fit for the future and sustainable in the long term.

5.5 Risks

- Failure to secure funding (e.g. Swansea Bay City Deal) would impact on ability to deliver regeneration proposals.
- Match funding can be difficult to source. Although external grants can often be matched against each other, funding from the applicant organisation is often seen as a marker of intent and commitment to a scheme.
- There is a high profile and expectation attached to the regeneration of Swansea City Centre, but only modest human and financial resources to deliver this.
- Delivery of outcomes is dependent on partnership working with a range of external partners.
- Failure to comply with statutory duties may lead to intervention by the Welsh Government, Natural Resources Wales or the Police, and could have significant financial and political implications.
- Delays to the LDP and a failure to adhere to the recently approved Delivery Agreement would

be damaging in terms of the criticisms that it will generate from the Welsh Government and negative perceptions more generally in terms of the Council's ability to strategically plan for future development. It also increases risks and uncertainties associated with having no up to date planning policy to counter hostile applications on un-favoured greenfield sites (note the UDP is 'time expired' after 2016).

- Lack of maintenance, enhancement and promotion of the natural and built environment would result in a loss of ecosystem services, biodiversity and reduction in accessible natural greenspace – which would impact on health and wellbeing / quality of life.

5.6 Are there any issues you require a steer from the Gateway Review Panel?

- Confirmation that the outcomes listed in section 3 are adequately defined and capture Council wide issues

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Scoping Document

Appendix 2 – SWOT Analysis

Appendix 3 – PESTLE Analysis

Appendix 4 – Outcomes

Appendix 5 – Stakeholder Consultation List

Additional information is available on request in relation to the Planning Performance Framework, customer satisfaction figures, PI's and detailed budget information.