



City and County of Swansea

Minutes of the **Special Scrutiny Programme Committee**

Committee Room 3A, Guildhall, Swansea

Tuesday, 17 October 2017 at 2.00 pm

Present: Councillor M H Jones (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

S E Crouch
L S Gibbard
C A Holley
G J Tanner

Councillor(s)

C R Evans
D W Helliwell
P Jones
W G Thomas

Councillor(s)

E W Fitzgerald
T J Hennegan
I E Mann

Co-opted Member(s)

P R Hood-Williams

Co-opted Member(s)

J W Jones

Co-opted Member(s)

Also Present

Councillor Rob Stewart

Leader / Cabinet Member for Economy & Strategy

Councillor Robert Francis-Davies

Cabinet Member for Culture, Tourism & Major Projects

Officer(s)

Gail Evans
Kate Jones
Brij Madahar
Debbie Smith

Principal Regeneration Manager

Democratic Services Officer

Scrutiny Team Leader

Interim Deputy Head of Legal, Democratic Services and Business Intelligence.

Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s): B Hopkins and E J King

Co-opted Member(s): D Anderson-Thomas and P M Black

52 Disclosures of Personal & Prejudicial Interest.

In accordance with the Code of Conduct adopted by the City and County of Swansea, no interests were declared.

53 Prohibition of Whipped Votes and Declaration of Party Whips.

In accordance with the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011, no declarations of Whipped Votes or Party Whips were declared.

54 Public Question Time.

There were no public questions.

55 Pre-decision Scrutiny: Castle Square Regeneration.

The Leader, Cabinet Member for Culture, Tourism & Major Projects, and Gail Evans, Principal Regeneration Manager, were present for the committee's consideration of the cabinet report on 'Castle Square Regeneration'.

The Principal Regeneration Manager summarised the key points of the report. She highlighted the location options for the new development as well as the delivery options available. The merits of the various options were set out in the report and the recommended preferred option of each were noted. The report recommended that a full Development, Public Realm and Marketing Brief be prepared based on the preferred options.

The Leader noted the importance of the development working alongside other developments proposed for the City, such as the St. David's development, to deliver a modern City Centre.

The Cabinet Member for Culture, Tourism & Major Projects highlighted the need for commercial offerings as part of the development. Resources are scarce and the commercial offerings will generate income for maintenance of the new development.

The Committee asked questions of the Leader, Cabinet Member and Principal Regeneration Manager which focused on the following: -

- Whether there would be sufficient money to maintain the development and ring-fencing the income generated from the commercial offering for maintenance of the Square
- Whether the growth of student accommodation in the City Centre would effect the planned use of the area
- The financial risk of the cost of the development - having a funding gap and / or not generating appropriate interest in the site to generate sufficient income
- The mitigation of tree loss and planting of wild flowers highlighted in the report was welcomed
- The most appropriate commercial offering - whether smaller café's offering more relaxed venues would be more appropriate than a restaurant
- Concerns over loss of public space and compatibility of the current use of the square for protests, marches, markets etc. with commercial offerings
- Ability to attract appropriate commercial offerings to the location
- Separation of pedestrians and traffic
- Formal play space for the City Centre
- Incidents of anti-social behaviour at Castle Square
- Concern of the new development becoming an extension of Wind Street
- Location of the big screen at Castle Square

The Committee considered the proposed recommendations in the report and raised any issues and concerns that should be brought to the attention of Cabinet ahead of its decision on 19 October 2017.

Whilst the Committee largely agreed that the area was in need of regeneration, the Committee highlighted a number of issues which Cabinet should consider:-

- Financial risk
- Whether this was the appropriate time for the development
- Clarification on scope of maintenance
- Retention of public space
- Separation of pedestrians and traffic

Resolved that the Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee writes to the Cabinet Member on the views of the Committee, for Cabinet's consideration.

The meeting ended at 3.10 pm

Chair