

Report of the Head of Planning and City Regeneration
To Economy & Infrastructure Policy Development Committee

Economic Recovery Action Plan

19th November 2020

1. Introduction

- 1.1 An important message in the wake of the Covid crisis is a clear understanding that the problems being faced have accentuated the regeneration journey the City and wider county has been on, accelerating new ways of working and interacting, but also highlighting their drawbacks and the need for interaction in social hubs in all spheres of life.
- 1.2 The most visible sign of confidence has been the ongoing delivery of our major strategic investments, most notably the Digital Arena project, which, with careful planning has proceeded at pace and is now forming a new part of the Swansea skyline. Still programmed to meet the published timetable for completion, this and other major projects look beyond the Covid crisis. Design work has also continued on the 71&72 The Kingsway Digital Village development at the site of the former Oceana building. Another major development that prepares the way as a major social hub for working and playing that has been so missed during the Covid-lockdown.
- 1.3 Following easing of the lockdown restrictions, partnership working between City Centre Management, Swansea BID and our many businesses and traders has ensured the seamless and safe reopening of our City Centre. Welsh Government have approved repurposing of Transforming Towns Targeted Regeneration Investment (TRI) Programme funding to provide grant assistance to businesses to adapt to trading in line with social distancing requirements and a new Swansea Premises Outdoor Adaptions Grant has been launched. Every effort continues to be made to ensure safe and easy access to key facilities. The Rural Development programme has opened a fast track grant funding window to support rural communities, and the Crowdfund Swansea platform has launched a new funding round to support community organisations.
- 1.4 Planning for the future, as stated above, is becoming an accelerated version of the journey we were already on. We need more city and town centre living. We need more jobs of all types across all sectors of our economy and the skills training in place to ensure our people are qualified to take them, or create them. We need more start-up businesses. We need our existing businesses to have the confidence to invest and grow. We need more quality office space for businesses to interact in open social environments. We need greener and more vibrant public spaces. We need people to shop local. Our ongoing programme of major grant and interest free loan investments, with many secured in the past few months, are ensuring all this work is being advanced.

2. Swansea Economic Recovery Action Plan

- 2.1 To support the recovery of the local economy from the covid-19 pandemic the Regeneration Swansea partnership is developing an economic recovery action plan for Swansea, which sets out the actions we need to take to support businesses, support individuals and improve resilience of the local economy. It will draw in funding and resources from Swansea Council, Welsh Government and other partners. The economic recovery action plan expands on the Council's wider Covid Recovery Plan.
- 2.2 The Economic Recovery Action Plan is focusing on the key aims of:
- Raising Confidence
 - Supporting Businesses
 - Championing Local Food
 - Supporting Tourism
 - Developing Skills & Employability
 - Growing the Green Economy
- 2.3 Successes to date include:
- The successful reopening of the city centre through partnership working between City Centre Management, Swansea BID, local traders and businesses. Data from Centre for Cities showed that Swansea was one of the most successful cities in the UK at attracting footfall back during the summer following the relaxing of covid-19 related restrictions.
 - Launch of the Swansea Premises Adaptions Outdoor Trading Grant in July, using Welsh Government Transforming Towns Targeted Regeneration Investment (TRI) funding. Over 200 grant awards are being made to local businesses across the county.
 - Administering Welsh Government grants to local businesses to support them through the covid-19 pandemic through schemes such as the covid-19 business rates grants, start up grants, cultural freelancer grants, local lockdown grants.
 - Extended and adapted employability provision to continue supporting individuals throughout the pandemic, including short term unemployed. Over 300 people have been supported since the start of the lockdown in March, over 130 helped into employment and over 1,500 training weeks created through Beyond Bricks and Mortar.
 - A Shop local campaign is being launched this month to encourage people to support their local businesses and economy.
- 2.4 Actions currently being progressed by the Council and Regeneration Swansea partners include:
- Exploring potential for using vacant space in city centre for meanwhile uses to support new and growing businesses and cultural/ creative activities
 - Developing proposals for a business centre to support new and growing businesses
 - Securing funding for small start-up bursaries to support new businesses and self employment.

- Setting up paid work placements within the Council and expanding existing provision of work placements with employers utilising existing employability programmes and as part of the new DWP Kickstart programme
- Delivery of the #Brand Swansea project, a pilot grass roots initiative to improve perceptions of Swansea and feed into development of a Swansea brand
- Developing programme of work to promote local food and support local producers through the Swansea Food Partnership, to build on the increased use of local food producers/ suppliers in recent months

2.5 The economic outlook is still uncertain, so the economic recovery action plan is a working document that is evolving as circumstances change. A full copy of the latest draft plan is included in Appendix A.

Appendix A: Draft Economic Recovery Action Plan – November 2020

Actions	Timescale	Partners (lead in bold)	Funding	Progress to date	Next steps
Aim: Raising Confidence					
Delivery of reopening city centre action plan	July 2020	City Centre Management / BID	Council/ BID	Successful reopening	Completed
Support businesses to adapt to outdoor trading/ social distancing through delivery of TRI Premises Outdoor Adaption Grant (POAG) in city and district centres	Grant launched 29.7.20 and closed 4.9.20.	Swansea Council / BID	WG TRI	207 applications are being processed	Finalise issuing of grant awards and collect case studies of completed schemes
Explore potential for pop up activity (food related, cinema, cultural events etc) in city and district centres and the beachfront	July 2020 onwards	Swansea Council	WG TRI	Related to PEDG meanwhile use scheme, and POAG grant funded schemes	
Explore potential for repurposing indoor vacant space (retail, leisure, commercial) for meanwhile uses to support growth and sustainability of new and existing business	July 2020 – March 21	Urban Foundry Meanwhile Spaces PEDG pilot	WG TRI PEDG	Legal documents being prepared	Identify potential vacant spaces
Delivery of the new #Brand Swansea initiative	July 20 - March 21	Key Cymru CIC UWTSD	WG Transfor- ming Towns Revenue grant	Website developed UWTSD students already linked up and working on the project Linking with Shop Local Morrison pilot Social media content being shared	Pop up space in city centre Who are we?/ Where are we? Photography competitions

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Investment in transport infrastructure in city/district centres and connecting routes to promote walking/ cycling (incl. showers/lockers).	March 21	Swansea Council	WG TRI, Swansea Bay FLAG	Funding application submitted to Swansea Bay FLAG for Copperworks pontoon TRI PEDG funding acquisition for Clydach Canal Trust	
Accelerate investment in private rented/ owned city centre living	To March 2021	Swansea Council/ partners	TRI SLG	In progress through SLG programme	Delivery of schemes
Aim: Supporting Businesses					
Administration of WG Covid-19 financial support grants for local businesses	Ongoing	Swansea Council WG	WG	Start up grants, Cultural Freelancer grants, POAG and Lockdown discretionary grants administered through EDEFT, and NDR grants through business rates team	
Develop a business/ enterprise centre to support new start ups and growing businesses	By March 21	Swansea Council/ WG Business Wales	Swansea Council/ WG	Budget for business development secured	Finalise proposals, engage partners
Implement Shop local initiatives to capitalise on localised shopping habits developed during lockdown: pilot scheme in Morriston	By March 21	ED Swansea Council Swansea BID 4 the Region	WG Transforming Towns revenue	Publicity material developed for Morriston, Engagement with local traders	Launch county wide campaign and Morriston pilot November
Introduce small scale security free property enhancement grants to support new businesses that don't have equity for PEDG	April 21	WG/ Swansea Council	WG TRI	Premises outdoor trading grant providing foundation for this	Discuss extension of this with WG

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Provision of low cost, flexible business premises (office, retail, leisure) on easy access terms to make it easier to start up a new business	From July 20	Swansea Council, Urban Foundry	WG TRI	PEDG Meanwhile Spaces pilot is starting point for this	
Continuing to provide modern, flexible floorspace and co-working space to accommodate new and growing businesses.	By March 21	Swansea Council/ Partners	WG TRI	Progressing through TRI strategic projects and PEDG	Progress pipeline schemes
Develop local hub concept in city and district centres	By March 21	Swansea Council / WG	WG TRI	Proposals being worked up	Identify locations and funding requirements
Support small businesses to start trading online	By March 21	Swansea Council/ Superfast Business Wales/ Business Wales	Free advice offered as part of Superfast Business Wales provision Funding for websites not available	Initial discussion with Superfast Business Wales on support available	Engage with local traders to determine requirements
Continuation of Foundational Economy project work to support local suppliers to access construction contracts	Initial phase to Dec 20	ED Swansea Council	WG Foundational Economy grant	Engagement with local SMEs has identified their barriers. One contract let in smaller lots	Two new frameworks being developed
Small scale business grants (revenue) to support new business starts	By March 21	Swansea Council/ WG	WG	Discuss with WG	
Aim: Championing Local Food					

Actions	Timescale	Partners (lead in bold)	Funding	Progress to date	Next steps
Create local food co-ordinator post to deliver local food work programme	By March 21	ED Swansea Council	Tbc	Swansea Food Partnership (SFP) agree dedicated post required and resources required to take ideas forward	Write JD and spec, Identify funding and management line i.e. internal or external to Swansea Council
<p>Increase accessibility to and promotion of local food:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shop Swansea, Shop Sustainably, Shop SMART (SSS) campaign • Outstanding in the field (OSTF)/ Swansea Food events and experiences • Local food heroes – spot light event pop up restaurant • Creation of Local food trail map, and co-ordinated events • Good food retail reward scheme • Meet the producer/ know your farmer/grower events 		SFP- SSS campaign	Tbc	<p>SFP Workshop held Activities for points 1-3</p> <p>To utilise existing resources where possible South West Wales Food directory, SPF Instagram account</p> <p>Meeting with City Centre Management to discuss OSTF</p>	<p>Swansea Council and SFP comms for the SWWFD</p> <p>SFP Instagram</p>
<p>Establish Avenues to Market programme</p> <p>Food hubs</p> <p>Creation of Online selling platform and physical space for distribution and click and collect.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumer Marketplace • Business Marketplace • Producer Marketplace • Local food broker to work with Farmers, Growers, fisherman and the hospitality industry • Creation Local food consortium • Wholesale cooperatives • Create a consumer led local supply chain 		<p>ED Swansea Council SFP</p> <p>Indycube</p>	<p>Tbc</p> <p>Identified WG SCDM</p> <p>RDP</p>	<p>Avenue to Market EOI revised</p> <p>Specs in development for programme specifics</p> <p>Pilot tests for marketplaces elements to be incorporated in RDP Application</p>	<p>Funding streams to be identified and awaiting on appropriate Schemes to open EOI window</p> <p>Submit PIF application to RDP by 25.11.2020</p>

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				Other elements present to SFP and local business to gauge demand	
<p>Increase support for business start up and growth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food incubator units for new start ups • Business pathway tool kit – online resources • Increase opportunities for new start ups 			TBC	<p>SFP Workshop September held</p> <p>Online resources for pathway seen as a priority</p>	
<p>Increase food space</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local food night market /food parks – containers to create a healthy street food culture • Supply Swansea showcase shop /stall staffed by producers as a collective • Development of a dedicated multi-use food centre including food hall for retail, dining experience, business unit for food development and events • Opening up roof top space for growing/ food production - supply to the market/hospitality • Open up land for commercial allotments to micro and small producers to use to establish business <p>Create opportunity for local producers link with food banks for supply/accept food vouchers</p>		<p>ED Swansea Council</p> <p>ED Swansea Council/ City Centre Management</p> <p>Swansea Council</p> <p>Room to Grow/ City Centre Management</p>	TBC	<p>Early research being undertaken on location and viability</p> <p>Discussions with City Centre Management</p> <p>SFP Workshop September held</p> <p>Meeting held between stakeholders and presented to Swansea Regen</p> <p>Meeting held with Planning to discuss growing places</p>	Further work to develop the proposals

Actions	Timescale	Partners (lead in bold)	Funding	Progress to date	Next steps
<p>Policy review to ensure local procurement and sustainability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of procurement in public sector Review planning requirements to include all new food premises and retail to incorporate percentage of local food offer 				SFP Workshop September held Actions on hold	
<p>Explore potential for semi-permanent food stalls/pitches, as part of the city centre and beachfront regeneration scheme, to enable city centre traders and food start-ups the chance to find new outlets for sales</p>		Indycube ED Swansea Council /SFP		Proposals being developed	SPF to revisit and connect with partners
Aim: Supporting Tourism					
<p>Photography contract: City centre orientated brief to provide a selection of images accessible to all city centre businesses (not only 'Visit Swansea Bay Marketing Partners').</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To capture engaging images of city centre businesses eg food & drink, shops, accommodation To showcase how businesses have adapted to operating within the new government guidelines Visually demonstrating that these adaptations are working – in order to help build customer confidence Both the destination and individual businesses will have access to this content to showcase the centre as a space that is a good place to live, work and visit. 		Swansea Council Tourism & Marketing Team/All		<p>Discussed potential to link with Brand Swansea project</p> <p>We have commissioned, from existing delegated budgets, some photography contracts to cover eating out and local attractions. Such is the fluidity of the situation, we are unable to commit to fulfilling these actions as larger contracts.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure Funding Contract Procured Contractor briefed Images received Distribution to Partners for access by businesses

Actions	Timescale	Partners (lead in bold)	Funding	Progress to date	Next steps
<p>Videography contract: City centre orientated brief to provide a series (possibly three) short videos for launching via social media channels and as a YouTube advert. Accessible to all city centre businesses for use on their online platforms.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Showcasing the city centre as a dynamic and rejuvenating space (new developments eg Arena – ‘watch this space’) • Highlighting how the city centre has adapted to the ‘new normal’ and how customers can interact with businesses enjoyably and safely to build customer confidence • Both the destination and individual businesses will have access to this content to showcase the centre as a space that is a good place to live, work and visit. 		<p>Swansea Council Tourism & Marketing Team /All</p>		<p>Discussed potential to link with Brand Swansea project</p> <p>Such is the fluidity of the situation, we are unable to commit to fulfilling these actions as larger contracts at this moment in time. Through ongoing engagement with businesses, we know that some are closed, some only accepting key workers and services within them are reduced due to Covid.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding secured • Contract Procured • Contractor briefed • Videos received and released on destination platforms • Distribution to Partners for access by businesses
<p>Gateway signage and outdoor media: to promote visiting and enjoying the city responsibly as government restrictions continue to be eased over time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design, procure and erect gateway signage at key entry points to the city centre to promote responsible behaviour – ‘Visit Swansea Bay. Responsibly’ Suggested sites include: Fabian Way, Carmarthen Road, City Centre bus station, City Centre railway station • Secure outdoor media at poster sites at key entry points to the city to boost message in an engaging way 		<p>Swansea Council Tourism & Marketing Team, and Transport Team /All</p>		<p>Significant resources need to be identified to deliver these actions. The actions would benefit the whole of the destination, not just the visitor economy and would extend to student and inward investment marketing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure funding • Research possible sites • Permissions (landowners, if not Council) • Explore Planning issues • Contracts Procured • Contractors briefed • Signage/ Promotional

Actions	Timescale	Partners (lead in bold)	Funding	Progress to date	Next steps
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To dress both the city centre and its venues (Swansea Museum, Glynn Vivian Art Gallery, Grand Theatre etc) and possibly major structures such as the Quadrant, city centre car parks etc, with attractive promotional material, including banners, to both enhance the city environment and promote a sense of responsibility – 'Enjoy Swansea Bay. Responsibly' All with the aim of promoting responsible behaviour and in turn boost customer/visitor confidence in returning to the city centre for leisure and shopping 					material erected/ installed
<p>Copywriting contract: specifically to write content for specialist journals using the contractor's expertise or drawing on that of the Partners.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure the city centre redevelopment plans have traction in relevant fora, eg development contractors, planners etc 		Swansea Council Development Team/ All			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure Funding Contract Procured Contractor briefed X Articles secured and published
<p>Additional funding for this sector to re-open as many business located outside city and districts</p> <p>Extended events programme to support the sector</p>					
Aim: Skills and Employability					
Extend and adapt employability provision to continue supporting clients, including those who are newly unemployed	July 20	Swansea Council	WG / ESF	Adapted provision to remote/ online working, launched Short Term Unemployed Project, expansion of CfW+	

Actions	Timescale	Partners (lead in bold)	Funding	Progress to date	Next steps
Explore opportunities to enhance local employability provision with WG	Ongoing	Swansea Council	WG	Discussions with WG/ WLGA	
Set up paid work placements within the Council and expand existing provision of work placements with employers utilising existing employability programmes and as part of the new DWP Kickstart programme. Also, to provide in-work mentoring support for those individuals on placement.	November 20 onwards	ED Swansea Council DWP	WG/ ESF DWP	Approval secured for Council placements and Kickstart bid. Employers signed up and draft Kickstart bid prepared.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit Kickstart bid for external placements • Identify and establish a range of internal Council placements
Utilise labour market and business intelligence gained through the delivery of programmes, networks and business development function to identify vacancy trends and skills needs to help shape service delivery and create career pathways.	Ongoing	ED Swansea Council/All	n/a	Discussions and review ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of CRM system
Reviewing employability provision to ensure a joined up offer to citizens	By Jan 21	Swansea Council	n/a	Review underway	Finalise proposals
Dedicated Mentor/ Employer Liaison Officer to support self-employment/ entrepreneurship	By March 21	Swansea Council	WG/ ESF	Exploring potential to fund within existing employability provision	Identify budget
Set up small start-up bursaries to support business starts/ self-employment	Dec 20	Swansea Council	WG/ ESF	Exploring potential to fund through existing employability provision	Confirmation of budget
Aim: Grow The Green Economy					
Promote green infrastructure investment through delivery of the pilot Green Infrastructure schemes	By March 21	Grant recipients, supported by	TRI GI funding	Funding agreements issued	Funding agreements signed and award letters issued

Actions	Timescale	Partners (lead in bold)	Funding	Progress to date	Next steps
		Swansea Council			
Raise awareness of green infrastructure for businesses / organisations to build the local green infrastructure sector	By March 21	Nature Conservation Team & ED Swansea Council/ NRW	ENRAW funding	Scoping proposals	
Promote development of green economy through the Western Gateway Partnership		Swansea Council/ Western Gateway partners	UK & Welsh Govt	Swansea Council agreed as the Lead for green investment priority	