



City and County of Swansea

Minutes of the **Economy, Environment & Infrastructure Policy Development Committee**

Remotely via Microsoft Teams

Thursday, 17 February 2022 at 2.00 pm

Present: Councillor C Anderson (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

J E Burtonshaw
P Lloyd

Councillor(s)

P R Hood-Williams
P M Matthews

Councillor(s)

W G Lewis
T M White

Officer(s)

Caritas Adere
Phil Holmes
Martin Nicholls
Paul Relf
Samantha Woon

Associate Lawyer
Head of Planning & City Regeneration
Director of Place
Economic Development & External Funding Manager
Democratic Services Officer

Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s): P Downing, P K Jones and M A Langstone

35 To receive Disclosures of Personal & Prejudicial Interests from Members.

In accordance with the Code of Conduct adopted by the City and County of Swansea, the following interest was declared:

Councillor J E Burtonshaw declared a Personal Interest in Minute 37 and 40 “High Street Regeneration and Empty Premises”.

36 Minutes:

Resolved that the Minutes of the Economy, Environment & Infrastructure Policy Development Committee held on 20 January 2022 be approved and signed as a correct record.

37 High Street Regeneration and Empty Premises.

The Economic Development & External Funding Manager provided a ‘for information’ report which provided an update on the actions being undertaken to regenerate High Street and address empty premises.

Members’ noted the recovery plan actions currently being progressed and delivered:

- Grant funding allocated to local businesses through the Premises Outdoor Adaptions Grant, to support local businesses to adapt to social distancing requirements majority completed.
- Continuing to administer Welsh Government covid-19 financial support to local businesses through schemes such as direct NDR support and discretionary grants
- Recruitment of new business development officers was completed in March 2021 working under the Business Swansea banner and delivering a range of business support that has included start up grants, themed online seminars and increasing engagement with businesses across Swansea
- Shop Local Shop Swansea campaign rolled out across county, timed with easing of restrictions at different stages over the past 12 months
- Wide range of employability provision including Kickstart placements
- 44 start up bursaries issued to date

The Dyfatty Community Hub proposals outlined in February 2021 around the vacant shop units were progressing well, presenting a great opportunity to locate and test these approaches working closely with all relevant support services and providing a real opportunity to act as enablers in giving local people in particular the tools they need to strengthen the community and generate positive micro-business opportunities. Four of the six units were now refurbished with utilities activated. Initial community engagement had been undertaken, and support would be provided to various groups and individuals to try out their ideas which included new small businesses, support activities and services. Engagement activity had been very positive. In addition the former Lamb Pub was acting as the site office for the Palace Theatre works, in itself creating footfall and creating a temporary use of an existing building complementary to the activities that would start in the shop units shortly.

The enforcement action plan was in place and work was starting on initial schemes.

The key was integration of these activities – no one sector or area of work has all the answers, but the opportunity to create a positive and cost-effective environment to enable people to realise their own futures is real, with a holistic package of support available at the same time at the right time.

In response to Member questions, Officers stated that various marketing strategies were progressing which included the availability of grants and business rate relief. A multi-disciplinary team involving other public sector organisations, the third sector and community groups were also involved in the regeneration of High Street.

The Chair thanked the Officers for their informative presentation and their ongoing work.

38 Work Plan 2021/2022.

The Democratic Services Officer presented the Work Plan for 2021/2022.

Resolved that the Work Plan be noted.

39 Exclusion of the Public.

The Committee was requested to exclude the public from the meeting during the consideration of the items of business identified in the recommendations to the report on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as set out in the exclusion paragraph of 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information)(Variation)(Wales) Order 2007, relevant to the item of business as set out in the report.

The Committee considered the Public Interest Test in deciding to exclude the public from the meeting for the items of business where the Public Interest Test was relevant, as set out in the report.

Resolved that the public be excluded for the following items of business.

(Closed Session)

40 High Street Regeneration and Empty Premises.

The Economic Development & External Funding Manager provided a 'for information' report which provided an update on the actions being undertaken to regenerate High Street and address empty premises.

The Chair thanked for his informative report and ongoing work.

The meeting ended at 2.27 pm

Chair