

**Swansea Bay City Region Joint Committee - 8 February 2024**

## Innovation Matrix & Precinct Update

<b>Purpose:</b>	To update Joint Committee on progress on the Innovation Matrix Project and the outcomes of the recent external Gateway Review
<b>Policy Framework:</b>	Swansea Bay City Deal
<b>Report Authors:</b>	Ian Walsh (Innovation Matrix SRO) and Geraint Flowers (Innovation Matrix Project Lead)
<b>Finance Officer:</b>	Chris Moore, Section 151 Officer, SBCD
<b>Legal Officer:</b>	Debbie Smith, Monitoring Officer, SBCD
<b>FOR INFORMATION</b>	

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Innovation Matrix is a key component of the Swansea Bay City Deal's vision to establish a digital future for Swansea. The project will deliver an initial 2,200m<sup>2</sup> of high-quality floor space and complement the University's existing IQ and Y Fforwm buildings, in the heart of UWTSU's Innovation Quarter.
- 1.2 The project team have progressed the project to Construction Stage (RIBA 5) and the Project has recently been subject to an external PAR Gateway Review.
- 1.3 The Project Team will provide an update on progress and also note the intended actions to address the outcomes of the review process.

### 2. PAR Review

- 2.1 In accordance with the PDM project Integrated Assurance and Approval Plan (IAAP), a PAR Gateway Review was scheduled and undertaken from the 19<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> September. The review was undertaken by an independent team led by Julie Palmer who undertook seventeen 'conversations' with stakeholders. The review was framed by a Terms of Reference provided by the project team.

2.2 The project received an Amber-Green Delivery Confidence Assessment (DCA) rating recognising that the Innovation Matrix project is on track for successful delivery whilst acknowledging that there are risks that will need careful attention.

2.3 The summary finding of the Review were:

- Construction is well advanced, and on track, with effective project management and assurance methodologies in place.
- A highly experienced University Project Team who have a track record of successful builds and lettings, e.g., Yr Egin.
- An innovative and well thought through operational model offering benefits for both Business and Academia through partnership and collaboration.
- Enthusiastic and widespread buy-in for the Matrix operating model.
- The University has invested in a dedicated team (INSPIRE) to connect University staff, students and knowledge centres with businesses and organisations, Resource is allocated to the Matrix in support of the partnering model.
- Very positive working relationships across all areas associated with the project, and this is being seen a 'single' team.
- Lessons have been learned from previous projects and where possible incorporated into the design of the Matrix build.
- Potential occupancy forecast is positive with some 75% of the space under contract or Head of Terms (HoT) type agreements.
- Partners/Tenants being able to work with Architects to ensure the design meets their needs.
- Flexible internal layout can cater for short, and longer-term partner needs.
- Sound and supportive Governance structure

2.4 With regard to the Precinct element of the project, the Review Team did not consider it appropriate or helpful to the SROs to consider a Delivery Confidence rating at this Gateway Review as there is insufficient clarity around the future direction to be able to provide a full and fair assessment.

2.5 The Review Team made seven recommendations to the SRO to ensure that the project is positioned for effective management and delivery. The recommendations relate to the appointment of a SRO, organisational capability, customer engagement, benefits realisation, lessons learned and planning for the Precinct project. The detailed recommendations are presented the full Review report, attached at Appendix A. The Review team recommend that the Innovation Precinct undergoes a Project Assurance Review (PAR) once the change process concludes to assess the delivery plans and the revised Business case.

### **3. Financial Implications**

3.1 Risks and issues are managed through monitoring and evaluation at both Project and Portfolio level and reported, via the Swansea Bay City Deal's Portfolio Management Office, to the Joint Committee, where appropriate.

3.2 Specific Programme financial risks are outlined within the strategic case component of the Business Case.

3.3 The procedures around the management of City Deal funding are detailed within the Joint Committee Agreement.

#### **4. Legal implications**

4.1 There are no legal implications.

#### **5. Alignment to the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**

5.1 The SBCD Portfolio and its constituent programmes / projects are closely aligned to the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the seven well-being goals for Wales. These alignments are outlined in a Portfolio Business Case for the SBCD, as well as in individual programme / project business cases.

**Background Papers:** None

#### **Appendices:**

Appendix A: Innovation Matrix & Precinct PAR