

Councillor Jeff Jones
Convener
Development and Regeneration
Performance Panel

(By email)

Please ask for: Cllr Robert Francis-Davies
Direct Line: 01792 63 7440
E-Mail: cllr.robert.davies@swansea.gov.uk
Our Ref: RFD/WLN
Your Ref:
Date: 6 December 2021

Dear Councillor Jones

Thank you for your letter of 1st December 2021. Further to the five points raised in your letter, I respond as follows:

1. In relation to Castle Square, please clarify whether any private funding source will be allocated to this project.

It is anticipated that the only private sector funding will be a contribution towards occupier fit costs of the units.

2. Please confirm whether the Arena will host an opening event prior to the first ticketed events in March.

The Council are currently working with the Ambassador Theatre Group ATG and the Safety Advisory Group on a commissioning event for the arena prior to opening. Details are currently being discussed but it is hoped that this event in late February can accommodate a formal opening of the Copr Bay phase 1 development. Further information will be shared in the new year.

3. Please outline car-parking provision at the Arena site, including access points off Oystermouth Road.

Car parking provision for the arena includes approximated 984 space at the new North and South car parks. In additional parking is available at Paxton Street, and the Quadrant car park together with the NCP at Wind Street. Additional car Parking is provided at East Burrows Car Park. In total there are in the order of 2500 spaces available within close proximity to the arena. In addition to car parking six double bay coach drop off and pick up areas have been constructed. Two at the service area to the Arena, two at Wellington Street and two incorporated in the central island off the bus lane adjacent to Paxton street car park. These spaces will be available to all coaches entering Swansea operating a drop off and pick up service.

4. Please confirm if potential parking problems at Swansea Marina have been considered and what plans are in place to mitigate such potential problems.

The Council has met on a number of occasions with marina residents to discuss various aspects related to the scheme including the possibility of parking along Victoria Quay just behind the revetment wall. To address this concern the council has looked to introduce a TRO in this vicinity to prevent illegal car parking but taking account of local business requirements for servicing. As such the council is looking to introduce a 6m service bay at the top of Victoria Quay to accommodate business together with no loading or waiting elsewhere along Victoria Quay which residents are supportive.

5. We would like to formally note our long-standing concerns regarding the affordability and long-term financial viability of the Arena development as a whole.

The panel's ongoing and often repeated concerns are noted. I would remind however that in terms of capital affordability the S151 officer has advised Council recently that all external borrowing has been completed and advised Cabinet that the capital financing budget continues to underspend. I therefore see no affordability concerns with the financing.

As regards its ongoing use and delivery there will be revenue spend and income related to the Arena, as there is on many of our functions, which as a public body we are not always expected to necessarily make a direct commercial/financial return which is why we are funded from council tax and block grants. There are well documented spill over benefits for both the Council and the wider economy however through increased car parking income, retail, hospitality and tourism footfall etc. as well as being the catalyst for future private sector investment and regeneration.

Yours sincerely



**Y CYNGHORYDD/COUNCILLOR ROBERT FRANCIS-DAVIES
AELOD Y CABINET DROS FUDDSODDI, ADFYWIO A THWRISTIAETH
CABINET MEMBER FOR INVESTMENT, REGENERATION & TOURISM**