

**To:**  
**Councillor Robert Francis-Davies**  
**Cabinet Member for Investment,**  
**Regeneration and Tourism**

*Please ask for:*  
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**Overview & Scrutiny**

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**19 April 2021**

**BY EMAIL**

**Summary:** This is a letter from the Development and Regeneration Scrutiny Performance Panel to the Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration and Tourism following the closed meeting of the Panel on 25<sup>th</sup> January 2021. It covers the agreement with the Ambassador Theatre Group, as operator of the Swansea Arena.

Dear Councillor Francis-Davies,

The Development and Regeneration Scrutiny Performance Panel met on 25<sup>th</sup> January 2021. We would like to thank the Leader and all of the Officers who attended to present the item and respond to the Panel's questions. We also thank the Deputy Chief Legal Officer, Debbie Smith, for guidance regarding this closed session. We greatly valued everyone's engagement and input.

The Panel heard that a specialist Arena consultant (IPW) was appointed by Rivington Land, on behalf of the Council, to assist with procurement of an operator for the Swansea Arena.

We heard that, following the initial pre-qualification stage, four bidders were invited to participate in a single stage competitive-dialogue process. Ambassador Theatre Group (ATG) was identified as the preferred bidder following this process.

Officers described ATG to Members as a leading entertainment business operating at a global level. It is understood that ATG also produces, as well as operates, shows and therefore has full control and ownership of those shows. Officers described the

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business as a leading anchor tenant, for which a General Manager (Swansea) is due to be appointed in February.

We heard that ticket sales will be predominantly through the ATG channel; however Swansea Council's project team will also be involved if they can assist in any way. IPW, during the procurement process, had advised that the figures produced by ATG are typical of comparable operators.

Officers reiterated that City Deal funding of circa £22m was going towards this development, and the overall benefits were far reaching throughout the County. The Leader described how this is a catalytic investment, which has helped result in a bigger second phase project and a positive economic impact of over £100m. The Panel heard that regenerative projects are needed to ensure the economy thrives, and, in this case, the second phase has been dramatically more positive as a direct result of the Arena development.

Yours sincerely,

**Councillor Jeff Jones**  
**Convener, Development and Regeneration Performance Panel**  
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