

CABINET SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

(Council Chamber - Port Talbot Civic Centre)

Members Present:

24 January 2017

Chairman: **Councillor D.W.Davies**

Vice Chairman: **Councillor A.Jenkins**

Councillors: A.Carter, Ms.C.Clement-Williams,
Mrs.L.H.James, Mrs.D.Jones, A.Llewelyn,
A.R.Lockyer, Mrs.K.Pearson, L.M.Purcell,
S.Rahaman, J.Warman and I.D.Williams

Officers In Attendance S.Phillips, H.Jenkins, A.Evans, G.Nutt,
Mrs.K.Jones and Mrs.A.Manlipp

Cabinet Invitees: Councillors A.H.Thomas, E.V.Latham,
Mrs.S.Miller, A.J.Taylor and A.N.Woolcock

Invited Member: Mrs.L.G.Williams

1. SWANSEA BAY CITY DEAL

The Committee received the report of the Chief Executive on the Swansea Bay City Deal and noted a verbal amendment made to Appendix 1 of the circulated report as it related to the Centre of Excellence for Next Generation Services wherein the Lead should be the four Local Authorities only and in relation to the Partners these should be the four Local Authorities and Swansea University.

Following presentation of the report Members raised the following:-

- Members supported the proposal for an in principle decision at this stage as there would need to be more detail around the proposals prior to a commitment being made. The scheme would map the future regeneration of the area however it was important that the governance of the agreement was transparent with direct accountability and clear outcomes. The

Chief Executive agreed and commented that the pre Brexit period should be used to maximize new economic development/regeneration with European Union (EU) grants where possible;

- Members queried the timescale for its implementation and were advised that projects had yet to be identified. The City of Cardiff Council had taken in the region of 2 years since the signing of the agreement. The Chief Executive advised that the scheme would need to become part of the wider budget framework and that in order to make use of the EU grants during the pre Brexit period it would be necessary to make progress as soon as possible;
- Members asked for an update in relation to the work of the Valley's Taskforce and requested that there be a more focused approach in relation to all the valley areas. This would need to include improved access to jobs, transport and social infrastructure;
- Members questioned whether the current model was the best and were advised that this may change going forward and that the Chief Executive preferred a more inclusive of the private sector;
- Members discussed the South Wales Metro Project, which had been introduced by the City of Cardiff Council, and asked whether this could be introduced in the valley areas of Afan, Dulais and Neath, particularly where railway lines still exist. The Committee was advised that the aim of the scheme was to move jobs closer to potential employees.
- Members discussed the proposed delegation to the Leader of Council and were satisfied that this delegation was for the signing of the deal and for the in principle decision only;
- Members asked how much the City Deal would cost the Authority and for assurances that it could be afforded, and were advised that the figures were not yet known and that was why the decision was in principle for the present;
- The governance of the proposed venture was very important and Members were advised that a Joint Committee would be established in shadow form, however each Local Authority involved would have different aims and different communities to serve. It would therefore be a challenge to provide a scheme to address the differing political issues and priorities involved;
- Members discussed and supported the holding of an all Member seminar to appraise Members of the opportunities that could be afforded to the Council through the Swansea Bay City Deal.

Following scrutiny, the Committee was supportive of the proposals to be considered by Cabinet together with the amendments to Appendix 1 of the circulated report and requested that consideration be given to an all Member seminar being convened.

CHAIRMAN