



## ***REGENERATION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE***

***10.00 AM - FRIDAY, 8 DECEMBER 2017***

***COMMITTEE ROOMS A/B - NEATH CIVIC CENTRE***

### **PART 1**

1. To receive any declarations of interest from Members
2. To receive the Minutes of the Regeneration and Sustainable Development Scrutiny Committee held on the 27th October 2017 (*Pages 5 - 12*)
3. To receive the Scrutiny Forward Work Programme 2017/18. (*Pages 13 - 16*)
4. To scrutinise information and monitoring issues being reported by:

### **Report of the Chair of the Economic and Community Regeneration Scrutiny Committee**

5. Task and Finish Review of Support for Tourism - Progress Report (*Pages 17 - 28*)
6. To select appropriate items from the Cabinet Board Agenda for pre-scrutiny (Cabinet Board reports enclosed for Scrutiny Members).
7. Any urgent items (whether public or exempt) at the discretion of the Chairman pursuant to Section 100B (4) (b) of the Local Government Act 1972
8. Access to Meetings to resolve to exclude the public for the following item(s) pursuant to Section 100A(4) and (5) of the Local Government Act 1972 and the relevant exempt paragraphs of Part 4 of Schedule 12A to the above Act.

## **PART 2**

9. To select appropriate private items from the Cabinet Board Agenda for pre-scrutiny (Cabinet Board Reports enclosed for Scrutiny Members).

**S.Phillips**  
**Chief Executive**

**Civic Centre**  
**Port Talbot**

**30 November 2017**

### **Committee Membership:**

**Chairman:**           **Councillor S.K.Hunt**

**Vice Chairman:**   **Councillor L.Jones**

**Members:**           Councillors J.Evans, D.Cawsey, C.J.Jones,  
D.M.Peters, S.Pursey, S.Rahaman, A.J.Richards,  
R.L.Taylor, O.S.Davies and R.W.Wood

## REGENERATION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

(Committee Rooms A/B - Neath Civic Centre)

**Members Present:**

**27 October 2017**

**Chairperson:** Councillor S.K.Hunt

**Vice Chairperson:** Councillor L.Jones

**Councillors:** J.Evans, D.Cawsey, C.J.Jones, D.M.Peters,  
S.Pursey, A.J.Richards, R.L.Taylor, O.S.Davies  
and R.W.Wood

**Officers In Attendance** Mrs.N.Pearce, S.Brennan, C.Morris, S. Curran  
and Miss.C.Davies

**Cabinet Invitees:** Councillors D.W.Davies and A.Wingrave

**Observers** Councillor H.Jones  
Councillor S.Paddison  
Councillor J.Warman

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1. **MINUTES OF THE REGENERATION AND SUSTAINABLE  
DEVELOPMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 22ND  
SEPTEMBER 2017**

Members noted the minutes with the following amendment.

That Cllr. Dean Cawsey be added to the attendance.

2. **SCRUTINY FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 2017/18.**

Members noted the Forward Work Programme.

Officers highlighted to Members that there was a Special Regeneration and Sustainable Scrutiny Committee on the 10<sup>th</sup> November, 2017 to discuss the City Deal. Members also noted a Special Regeneration and Sustainable Development Scrutiny

Committee on the 27<sup>th</sup> November 2017 to scrutinise the Budget proposals for 2018/19.

3. **TASK AND FINISH REVIEW OF SUPPORT FOR TOURISM - PROGRESS REPORT**

This item was withdrawn for consideration from today's meeting and would be brought back to a future meeting.

4. **PRE-SCRUTINY**

The Committee chose to scrutinise the following items:

**Cabinet Board Proposals**

4.1 **Neath Food and Drink Festival 2017**

Members received an update on the success of the 2017 Neath Food and Drink festival.

Members queried how there was a loss of just over £3,000 and how to prevent there being a loss for future events. Officers confirmed that the reason for this loss was due to an extra supply of generators and additional barriers.

Members asked if the timing of the Neath Food and Drink Festival could be changed from September. Officers confirmed that they had previously looked at doing this and having a date earlier in the summer; however, due to there being similar events throughout the country there was no option of having a different date.

Members asked how much is spent on advertising for this event each year as it was noted that there was not as much advertising this year in comparison to previous years. Officers highlighted that due to the cost of traditional advertising it was more cost effective to use.

Following scrutiny, it was agreed that the report be noted.

4.2 **Annual Planning Performance report 2016-2017**

Members received information on the annual Planning Performance, as detailed within the circulated report.

Officers were asked for clarification in relation to the individual projects that are detailed on page 95 of the report. Officers highlighted that the report had been written in accordance with the format and requirements of Welsh Government. Numerous planning applications are received annually and the report would only provide a brief overview. Officers asked Member's to speak to them directly if Members had any query or wanted specific information.

Member's asked for clarification in relation to paragraph 1 on page 95 where it states 'The Council acknowledge that large areas of land are identified as being at risk of flooding and whilst we are able to refuse applications immediately upon submission if they are within zone C2, we are aware that developers have in the past been able to address the concerns of NRW to ensure that future occupiers are not at risk of flooding nor will there be third party detriment.' Officers highlighted that we have a number of constraints affecting developments, one of which is flooding. If this constraint can be addressed through the submission of an acceptable FCA then we give applicants the opportunity to do so. We have not approved any developments within a floodzone without discussing and agreeing them with NRW.

Members asked about the TAN 15 policy and asked what contractual safeguards are put in place for any flooding in the future. Officers informed Members that the Development Advice Maps contained within TAN 15 are now the responsibility of NRW as opposed to WG. Rather than having updates every few years, they are now updated quarterly. They are therefore being kept up to date more regularly and are a more accurate reflection of the risks in place. These updates are sent to the authority and are kept on the Councils GIS system. This information is also used to feed into the Flood Risk Management Plans that the Head of Streetcare is responsible for producing.

Members were concerned that there was no update included in the report on the Transport Hub. Officers advised that a future report would be coming to committee from the Head of Property and Regeneration which would include updates on the current

projects that are taking place within the Neath Port Talbot area as a consequence of the Viable and Vibrant Places Programme. The Transport Hub would be included within this update.

Members asked whether the Authority is using the S106 agreement for Development Sites to the best of its ability. Officers confirmed that they can only ask for contributions for S106 to offset the impact of a development. We have secured financial contributions towards community funds in the past but this is secured outside of the planning process as they are not necessary to offset the impacts of a development.

Members asked how the Public are made aware of the ability to speak at Planning Committee. Officers confirmed that this ability is referred to on the Planning notices, on the website and are included on the front of the Planning Committee agenda.

The Chair of the Planning Committee attended the Meeting to hear the views of the Scrutiny Committee. It was noted that if there are any concerns in relation to flooding issues then to direct them to the NRW. It was highlighted that the department was under pressure and commend the work of the officers.

Members of the Committee and the Chair of the Valleys Task and Finish Group highlighted general concerns that may affect the Valleys. Officers confirmed that a significant amount of information is held by the Planning Service which was secured as part of the LDP process, which is available for use by the Task and Finish Group.

Following scrutiny, the Committee was supportive of the proposal to be considered by the Cabinet Board

#### 4.3 Integrated Network Map – Active Travel

Members received information following a consultation on the revised Existing Route Map and Integrated Map for Neath Port Talbot.

Members asked if there were any future development for the cycle route from Cwmllynfell to Cwmtrwch. Officers confirmed that the route from Cwmllynfell to Cwmtrwch has been identified

as a priority and the Council would continue to look at the routes moving forward.

Members asked what the timescale would be. Officers confirmed that the plan was aspirational and extended over a period of 15 years although there were short, medium and long term proposals within the plan ie 5, 10 and 15 year projects.

Members queried why there was no Equality Impact Assessment included. Officers confirmed that a screening had taken place and there is no requirement to attach a Screening document.

Following scrutiny, the Committee was supportive of the proposal to be considered by the Cabinet Board.

#### 4.4 Local Development Plan (LDP)

Members received an update on the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the first Local Development Plan Annual Monitoring Report and the submission and publications procedures to be implemented.

Members queried the Green field sites in Pontrydyfen. Officers highlighted that the Green wedge the Member was referring to is still included in the Local Development Plan and that a Green Field is different to a Green wedge.

Members queried why certain areas of land have been removed from the Local Development Plan, when the authorities are trying to develop the Valleys. Officers highlighted that there could be a number of reasons why sites are removed eg, flooding, inability to demonstrate deliverability, ecology etc Officers highlighted to Members to come forward if they are interested in any particular sites and we will provide them with the information available. Depending on the location of the site and the constraints involved, will depend on the likelihood of it coming forward for development at a future date

Members asked what the likelihood is, of sites being included back in to the LDP. Officers confirmed that the Local Development Plan has only recently been agreed and unless the Annual Monitoring Reports identified that the plan was not

succeeding in achieving its objectives, a review of the plan is not intended to start until 2020.

Members asked if we had met the targets for housing from the Welsh Government. Officers highlighted that the housing completions for this monitoring period were lower than the annual target; officers confirmed that the main reason that this target was not met was due to a lack of progress on Coed Darcy. It was however confirmed that we still have a housing supply of greater than five years and as such it is not a cause for concern at the moment.

The Chair of Planning attended the meeting and commended the officers for their input and work that is involved within the Local Development Plan.

Following scrutiny, the Committee was supportive of the proposal to be considered by the Cabinet Board.

## 5. **ACCESS TO MEETINGS**

**RESOLVED:** that pursuant to Section 100A(4) and (5) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded for the following items of business which involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 14 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A to the above Act.

## 6. **PRE-SCRUTINY**

The Committee chose to scrutinise the following items:

Cabinet Board Proposals

### 6.1 **Former Afan Lido Procurement**

Members received an update on the procurement tender for the disposal of the former Afan Lido Leisure Centre and overflow car park site.

Members asked if the development had a timescale. Officers confirmed that it would be over a 5 year period ~~at the most.~~

Following scrutiny, the Committee was supportive of the proposal to be considered by the Cabinet Board.

**CHAIRPERSON**

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**Regeneration and Sustainable Development Cabinet Committee Scrutiny Committee  
Forward Work Programme 2017/18**

Date of Meeting	Agenda Item	Officer
23 June 2017		
21 July 2017		
22 September 2017		
27 October 2017		

10 November 2017	Special City Deal	
27 November 2017	Special Budget	
8 December 2017	Tourism Task and Finish Group Update Report (Visit Wales to attend)	Scrutiny Officer/Andrew Collins
26 January 2018		
9 March 2018		

20 April 2018		

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## **NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

### **Regeneration and Sustainable Development Scrutiny Committee**

8 December 2017

### **Report of the Chair of the Economic and Community Regeneration Scrutiny Committee**

#### **Matter for Monitoring**

#### **Wards Affected:**

All

### **Update on the Task and Finish group recommendations in relation to Support for Tourism in the County Borough.**

#### **Purpose of the Report**

1. To provide Members with an update on the progress made in implementing the recommendations made by the Task and Finish Group that was set up to look at the support for Tourism in the County Borough

#### **Executive Summary**

2. The attached Appendix One will provide information on the progress made or otherwise in taking forward the recommendations made at the original review.

## **Background**

3. Members of the previous administrations Economic and Community Regeneration Scrutiny Committee undertook a review of the support for tourism in Neath Port Talbot because they held the view that tourism is an extremely important sector for the County Borough and attracts nearly 1.5m visitors per annum and contributes £110 million each year to the local economy.
4. The Scrutiny Committee regularly received update reports on the Tourism sector from the Regeneration and Economic Development Department of the Council.
5. In 2016 the Committee resolved to undertake a review of tourism support to identify whether there had been any adverse effects on the level and type of support that was provided.
6. The review took place towards the end of 2016 and considered evidence from a number of key stakeholders including Visit Wales, Neath Inspired, Swansea Valley Holiday Cottages, Neath and Tennant Canal Trust and Tourism Swansea Bay.
7. To ensure consistency across the review all stakeholders were asked similar questions to ensure the evidence was balanced to allow the group to make tangible recommendations.
8. An online survey was also utilised that gained a wide range of responses from businesses to elected politicians and the responses identified issues that were subsequently captured within the final recommendations.
9. Four recommendations were made by the group in total and progress on their implementation can be found at Appendix One.
10. One of the recommendations contained within the report was in relation writing a letter to St Modwens. This has been done (copy at Appendix Two and a copy of the response from St Modwens is attached at Appendix Three).

## **Financial Impact**

11. There may be financial impacts associated with this report depending on the outcome of Recommendation 1.

### **Equality Impact Assessment**

12. There are no equality impacts associated with this report

### **Workforce Impacts**

13. There are no workforce impacts associated with this report.

### **Legal Impacts**

14. There are no legal impacts associated with this report.

### **Risk Management**

15. There are no risk management impacts associated with this report.

### **Consultation**

16. There is no requirement under the Constitution for external consultation on this item.

### **Recommendations**

17. That the Committee notes the progress made in implementing the recommendations made by the task and finish group.

### **Reasons for Proposed Decision**

18. To allow the committee to discharge its monitoring functions.

### **Appendices**

19. Appendix One - Task and Finish Group Recommendations - Progress Document

### **List of Background Papers**

20. [Final Report of Task and Finish Group on Tourism Support](#)

## **Officer Contact**

21. Stacy Curran, Senior Scrutiny and Member Development Officer

Email: [g.n.evans@npt.gov.uk](mailto:g.n.evans@npt.gov.uk) Tel: 01639 763194

Recommendation	Reason	Progress	Comment
<p>A dedicated resource is identified to drive forward tourism support which the members felt should sit within the Regeneration and Economic Development Department.</p>	<p>The evidence presented to the review was quite clear that the County was lacking support for tourism development and that this was having a negative knock on effect in securing much needed funding.</p>	<p>As yet there has been no progress in the identification of resources to deliver tourism support.</p> <p>A European funded tourism project is currently being delivered by NPTCBC, however due to the nature of the funding this project is unable to offer the level or type of support that the tourism sector requires to thrive.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>The Destination Management Plan is considered by the Economic and Community Regeneration Scrutiny Committee on a regular basis to ensure the actions are implemented.</p>	<p>We need to ensure that there is sufficient progress in the implementation of the DMP in order to secure the same levels of investment as our neighbouring Local Authorities. Given the evidence received during</p>	<p>The Destination Management Plan will now form part of the Scrutiny forward work programme for the Regeneration and Sustainable Development Scrutiny Committee and is scheduled to be</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

	<p>this review, on the importance of the sector to our economy, it is now even more important that the action plan is monitored regularly. In line with this,</p> <p>Recommendation one (a dedicated resource) would ensure that the DMP is fully implemented and reported</p>	<p>considered on 9<sup>th</sup> March 2018 along with a progress report on the recommendations made by the Task and Finish Group.</p> <p>Without a dedicated tourism resource it will be very difficult to match the levels of investment as seen in neighbouring authorities or maintain progress against the Destination Management Plan.</p>	
<p>An All Member Seminar is organised to highlight the findings of the review that demonstrates how important the tourism sector is to the County Borough.</p>	<p>The initial thoughts on the review of tourism was that it would be a specific item on a formal scrutiny agenda however, during the scoping it became apparent that a wider review would be required and due to the amount and level of evidence that was considered it was</p>	<p>Following the Local Government elections in May 2017 and the subsequent in-depth targeted Member induction programme this has been delayed until the early 2018.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

	agreed that this information needs to be shared with all Members		
A letter is written and sent To St Modwens to establish what they understand their responsibilities are in relation to Neath Canal and stress the importance of the maintenance that is required.	It was clear from the submission from a representative of Neath Canal Navigation Ltd that there is a clear lack of maintenance of the canal and this is jeopardising the future attraction of this site.	<p>A letter has been sent and a response is currently being chased up.</p> <p>A telephone conversation has been held with a representative from Neath Canal that highlighted a lack of resources to undertake maintenance work. However, there seemed to be a contradiction in the evidence received as part of the telephone conversation and that heard during the review.</p>	Ongoing

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*Date Dyddiad* 30 August 2017  
*Direct line Rhif ffôn* 01639 763747  
*Email Epost* g.n.evans@npt.gov.uk  
*Contact Cyswllt* Neil Evans  
*Your ref Eich cyf*  
*Our ref Ein cyf* NE.BLA

Mr R Joseland  
 South West Regional Director  
 St Modwens

To Mr Joseland,

Prior to the Local Government Elections the Economic and Community Regeneration Scrutiny of Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council undertook a review of the support the Council provides to the Tourism sector in the County Borough.

The review made a number of recommendations including one for a letter to be sent to St Modwens in relation to an issue that had been highlighted as part of the review. The recommendation and reason behind it are included below:

Recommendation	Reason
A letter is written to St Modwens to establish what they understand their responsibilities are in relation	It was clear from the submission of evidence from a representative of Neath Canal Navigation Ltd. That

to Neath Canal and stress the importance of the maintenance that is required.	there is a clear lack of maintenance of the canal and this is jeopardizing the future attraction of the site.
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The review had heard that it was Neath Canal Navigation Ltd that had been established by St Modwens as part of the deal for land at Llandarcy but the group had no funding available to undertake key maintenance of the canal and this was having a detrimental effect on the areas as a tourist destination.

The Committee responsible for monitoring the recommendations of the task and finish group has changed to the newly formed Regeneration and Sustainable Development Scrutiny Committee and it is their wish to have a response on the above recommendation if at all possible. This will allow it to understand any issues that may not have been brought to its attention.

A Copy of the final report is also attached for your information also.

Yours sincerely,

**Neil Evans**  
**Senior Scrutiny and Member Development Officer**

The Company of Proprietors of the Neath Canal Navigation (NCN)

Coed Darcy Suite 26

Llan Coed House,

Llandarcy,

Neath,

SA10 6FG

18<sup>th</sup> September 2017

Subject : Response to reference to Neath Canal in the Review of Tourism Support in NPT.

To : Mr Neil Evans Senior Scrutiny and Member Development Officer NPT.

Dear Neil,

Further to your recent exchange of emails with Mr Rupert Joseland, Chairman of Neath Canal and our telephone discussion; Rupert asked me to respond to you.

Firstly for correctness I hope you don't mind me pointing out some factual errors in the review document. The Neath Canal Company was established a long time ago and was not as a result of St Modwen acquiring the canal as part of a much larger asset transfer from BP in 2009. Also under recommendation 4 of the review please note that the representative providing feedback on Neath Canal is not a representative of NCN but rather a member of Neath & Tennant Canal Trust.

The present major shareholder of the canal is St Modwen and through a long standing management arrangement with NPT CBC, which was pre transfer to St Modwen, the northern section of the canal from Resolven to the south of Glynneath is managed and supported by NPTCBC and the southern section from Resolven to Briton Ferry is managed and supported by St Modwen. Overall the canal company makes an operating loss year on year, in particular since the loss of revenue from water sales arose when BP closed its local facilities but even so both organisations endeavour to maintain the canal infrastructure in working order but most importantly structurally safe. A recent Atkins structural survey, commissioned by St Modwen, over the whole of the canal has confirmed this although things such as lock gates and mechanisms are deteriorating over time and through lack of use and these facilities will require significant investment in the future if the canal is to remain navigable. Unfortunately there is no demand for boating on the canal and hence justifying such expenditure will be difficult against a back drop of annual losses and no boating demand.

The part of the canal infrastructure that is widely used is the towpath. This provides a safe access to the public to their place of work, for walking in general, for joggers and particularly cyclists and the section of towpath from Briton Ferry to Tonna is part of the designated Sustrans cycle route.

For the southern section of the canal the maintenance is carried out, under our instruction, by a small company Groundtech Wales employing 4 men each week, 52 weeks per year. The main concentration of the maintenance team is to keep the towpaths safe for use and involves such things as surface repairs, hedge and tree cutting, grass cutting, removal of fallen trees, knotweed spraying,

towpath stabilisation, litter picking etc. In terms of the waterway, control of water levels, waterway clearance of obstructions and weed cutting are the main activities in addition to basic maintenance repairs to the waterway structures.

The maintenance costs for the southern section alone exceed £100k per year.

In terms of the N&TC Trust using their trip boat on the canal each summer, from Neath town centre to Tonna, then we ensure this section of waterway as a priority is in good order for their use. Unfortunately their boat is in need of repair and as a result they decided not to run it this summer.

So in summary, I hope the content of this letter provides some context to the efforts both St Modwen and NPTCBC provide on a daily basis, in difficult financial circumstances.

Both Rupert and myself are happy to discuss further if you so wish.

Yours sincerely

John Smith

Manager Neath Canal.