

POLICY AND RESOURCES/ CABINET SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

(Council Chamber - Port Talbot Civic Centre)

Members Present:

25 April 2018

Chairperson: Councillor A.N.Woolcock

Vice Chairperson: Councillor S.Rahaman

Councillors: M.Crowley, S.E.Freeguard, M.Harvey,
S.K.Hunt, H.N.James, A.Llewelyn, S.Miller,
J.D.Morgan, S.M.Penry and L.M.Purcell

Officers In Attendance S.Phillips, H.Jenkins, A.Evans, K.Jones,
C.Griffiths, S. Curran and N.Headon

Cabinet Invitees: Councillors R.G.Jones, A.J.Taylor, D.W.Davies,
D.Jones, E.V.Latham, A.R.Lockyer, P.A.Rees,
P.D.Richards and A.Wingrave

1. **REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE RE THE SWANSEA BAY CITY DEAL**

The Committee received information in relation to the latest update on the Swansea Bay City Deal as contained within the circulated report.

Members were clear that the financial information in relation to the City Deal and the Joint Working Agreement (JWA) needs to be made clearer before it is signed up to and that any agreement reached cannot put the Council at risk. The Committee agreed that the Joint Working Agreement (JWA) needs to include all information and stated that all commitments expected from the City Deal are written down for clarity and transparency,

Members noted that any conclusions from the ongoing Valleys Task and Finish Group would be fed into the City Deal process as it is

important that the project delivers benefits for the whole of the County Borough.

Members were pleased to note that they will sign off the final version of the Joint Working Agreement if it is reached and any of the business cases for Neath Port Talbot projects.

Members were concerned that any deal the Council enters into must represent good value for money and not put the Council at risk. Members felt that whilst the delivery of a vibrant and successful City Deal is in the interest of the Council it does represent a significant commitment in terms of time, money and resources against the current climate of austerity alongside the Council's own Forward Financial Plan and budget situation. Members were clear that the correct balance needs to be struck and felt that they were being 'prudent' rather than 'risk averse' in their careful analysis.

It was noted that the final decision on the City Deal and the Joint Working Agreement would be taken to Cabinet and then to Council for endorsement.

Members thanked the officers for the valuable update and noted their support in principle to sign the Joint Working Agreement but only if the issues identified in the report can be resolved satisfactorily and reflected in the Joint Working Agreement itself.

Members looked forward to receiving further information on the detail of the City Deal proposal as negotiations continue.

Following scrutiny, the Committee were supportive of the proposals to be considered at Cabinet.

CHAIRPERSON