

REGENERATION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

(Committee Rooms A/B - Neath Civic Centre)

Members Present:

18 January, 2019

Chairperson: Councillor S.K.Hunt

Vice Chairperson: Councillor L.Jones

Councillors: D.Cawsey, S.Rahaman, R.L.Taylor, S.Bamsey
and S.Pursey

**Officers In
Attendance:** S.Phillips, S.Brennan, N.Pearce, A.Thomas,
C.Howard, C.Furlow, M.Shaw, N.Headon and
N.Jones

Cabinet Invitees: Councillors P.Richards, A.Wingrave and
R.Jones

1. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Committee noted the Minutes of the meeting held on 7 December 2018.

2. **SWANSEA BAY CITY REGION - VERBAL UPDATE**

The Committee received a verbal update in relation to the Swansea Bay City Deal.

The Chairperson took the opportunity to thank Officers for the briefing which took place in Council prior to Christmas concerning developments with City Deal.

Members were reminded that a series of reviews were likely to be commissioned to establish the implications of the suspension of high profile individuals in Swansea University. The Scrutiny Committee would welcome an update on those reviews when available.

Members asked the following questions:

- Had the review proposed by the Welsh and UK governments now been commissioned? Officers confirmed that this was the case.
- Members asked what were the Terms and Reference.
- Members asked what the timetable was.
- Members asked who has been appointed to carry out the review.
- Members asked what details you can share formally with this Committee.
- Members questioned how this Committee would be kept informed of the way the review develops.
- Members queried if the Committee would be able to receive a full, unredacted copy of the report provided to the governments.

Prior to the meeting, Members were provided with a set of background papers to support the verbal presentation, for their information, which were, the Terms and Reference Programme, City Deal Project Update and Swansea Bay City Deal Independent Review Terms of Reference.

Officers informed Members they would be happy to provide the Committee with updates and it would be for the Committee to decide how they wanted to be informed. Officers explained that Annie-Marie O'Donnell, Audit Manager had been appointed to assist the review.

Members stated the Joint Committee indicated that it was to commission a review of governance arrangements.

Members asked the following questions:

- Members asked had the review been commissioned.
- Members asked what the terms of reference were.
- Members asked what the timetable was.

- Members asked who was conducting the review.
- Members queried if the Committee would be able to receive a full, unredacted copy of the review report when it was finalised.

Officers stated that yes the review had been commissioned and that the terms of reference had been circulated to Members. Officers informed the Committee that Pembrokeshire County Council would be carrying out the review. The intention was to provide the Committee with a copy of the review report when it was finalised.

Members referred to the Leader's statement in Council on the 19 December, it was understood that Swansea University was carrying out internal investigations. Was there any update on this?

Officers explained there was no future information from the University. Recent articles had come out in the press. Officers informed the Committee that other Council leaders were meeting next week. Officers explained that four reviews were taking place and that there would be no movement until the reviews were completed.

Members' stated they were aware that a series of reviews were underway and asked Officers for a fuller understanding of the impact these would have on the Programme.

Focusing on those projects that were designed to impact on the communities of Neath Port Talbot.

Members asked the following questions:

- Members asked what was the status of these projects and were they on hold.
- Members asked whether progress was expected to be made with those projects whilst the reviews were underway.
- Members asked was it intended that the projects would continue, what additional checks and balances had been put in place to secure a sufficient assurance that this Council's interests were properly protected.
- Members asked if the City Deal was to become unviable, would any of these projects be deliverable outside of the City Deal framework.

The Committee was informed that a short summary was circulated to Members and that progress would not be made with the projects until the reviews were looked at. Officers stated it was too early to come to any conclusions in relation to the projects deliverable outside of the City Deal framework. Officers referred to the project update (paragraph 6) that was circulated to Members for their information.

Members stated, whilst some of the projects within the Deal do not specifically deliver for the communities of Neath Port Talbot, as a full partner to the Deal Members were concerned about the potential for reputation damage. The Committee would welcome assurances from Officers as to the measures that had been put in place to mitigate this risk.

Members asked could the Committee be provided with an assurance that would keep us fully informed of developments that fall within this Committee's purview.

Members asked was there any further information that they may feel would be of benefit to the Committee in carrying out its scrutiny role.

Officers explained there would be a report going to Council next month in relation to Budget. Officers assured Members they would be informed on its developments.

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

3. **FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 2018/2019**

The Committee noted the Forward Work Programme for 2018/19.

4. **PRE-SCRUTINY**

The Committee scrutinised the following Cabinet Board items:-

Cabinet Board Proposals

4.1 **Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council and Tai Tarian Shared Lettings Policy: Local Lettings Agreement – Bush Row.**

The Committee received information in relation to Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council and Tai Tarian Shared Lettings Policy as contained within the circulated report.

Members asked how many of the properties were vacant and were advised that there were no vacant properties.

Members thanked Officers and Cabinet Members for the report and the hard work that had taken place.

Following scrutiny, the Committee was supportive of the proposals to be considered by 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 item 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. **URGENT ITEM**

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.

Cabinet Board Proposal

6.1 **Landslide Affecting Properties at Cyfyng Road Panteg, Ystalfera – Discretionary Compensation Payments to Displaced Former Tenants of Cyfyng Road.**

The Committee received information in relation to the Landslide affecting properties at Cyfyng Road, Panteg, Ystalyfera, as contained within the private circulated report.

Members asked how the compensation figures were calculated. Officers stated the figures were calculated based on the formula contained within the statutory instrument, and were determined in accordance with the date the respective tenant left the respective property. Members were also advised that completed application forms and information had been received from tenants as to their respective periods of occupation.

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

CHAIRPERSON