

Swansea Bay City Region Joint Scrutiny Committee

(Remotely via Teams / Hybrid meeting in Council Chamber)

Members Present:

6 September 2022

Chairperson: Councillor R.James

Vice Chairperson: Councillor T.Bowen

Councillors: Beynon, G.Morgan, Sparks, Holley, A.Dacey
and M.Harvey

1. **Chair's Announcements**

Apologies had been received from Councillors Brian Hall and Jan Curtice, and Jonathan Burnes, Programme Director.

2. **Declarations of Interest**

There were none.

3. **Quarterly Monitoring Reports**

Phil Ryder, Portfolio Manager, introduced the report and noted that there were two elements; the dashboard and a summary provided by the projects.

He outlined the data captured within the dashboard, which was contained within the report.

The key aspects from the headline programs and projects were as follows:

- Bay Technology Centre; continued to take prospective tenant visits, hoping to see tenants to occupy these and bring the building up to capacity shortly.
- Property Development Fund; was launched in July 2022, and expressions of interests had been completed and were being reviewed by the project team.

- Pembroke Dock Marine (PDM); the infrastructure element was underway, with the development of the slipway. The financial issues due to the change of requirements of the slipway had now been overcome.
- Pembrokeshire Demonstration Zone (PDZ); environmental scoping and technical procurement awarded, technical and environmental work streams underway.
- Marine Energy Test Area (META); META project staff held a workshop for year 10 engineering students at Pembrokeshire College increasing awareness of the emerging industry and opportunity in Pembrokeshire.
- Marine Energy Engineering Centre of Excellence (MEECE); Had presented to Neath Port Talbot Council's Manufacturing and Innovation Forum. Also presented a paper at the Ocean, Offshore & Arctic Engineering (OMAE) Conference in Hamburg.
- Pentre Awel; Unanimous approval of the Reserve Matters Application (RMA) at Planning Committee in June 2022. Strategic partnership with Cardiff University in place to lead on innovation and business development functions building on their innovation partnership and expertise.
- Swansea City & Waterfront Digital District; Swansea Council Beyond Bricks and Mortar team won a highly commended accolade at the UK-wide Go Awards scheme for their work on the Copr Bay project. 71/72 Kingsway site was ongoing and on target.
- Homes as Power Stations (HAPS); funding agreements were now in place, and they had their annual performance review with Welsh Audit team in July 2022. Recommendations had been made following this, which were currently being implemented.
- Digital Infrastructure Programme; numerous specialists had been appointed and the delivery timelines had been finalised.
- Campuses Project; a further three team members had been hired to support the project, and the ecological assessment had been conducted at the Sketty Lane site.
- Yr Egin; the Change Identification Notice process had formally started. The preferred delivery solution for phase two was currently being discussed to ensure that what was proposed to be delivered was fit for purpose, as the business case had been written approximately five years ago.
- Skills and Talent; First pilot project application has been reviewed by Skills Solution Group who recommended approval to RLSP. Following Regional Learning and Skills Partnership (RLSP) Board discussion it received approval.

In response to queries from Scrutiny Members, it was confirmed that phase one of Yr Egin had been built, but additional space was required for phase two, and this was currently being looked at. It was crucial to ensure the space was fit for purpose and to ensure the employment numbers and the sector growth was met by the building provided.

RESOLVED: That the Committee noted the report.

4. **Financial Monitoring Report**

Richard Arnold, Finance Manager, introduced and outlined the report. The report detailed the forecasted year end outturn position of the Joint Committee and the Portfolio Investment Fund.

Members of the Scrutiny Committee raised concerns regarding the private and public sector interventions, the slippages experienced due to the delay of construction procurement and tendering, and enquired in to whether or not the portfolio could be delivered within the scheduled 15 years. It was confirmed that an impact of Covid-19, inflation and the increase in construction costs would have an impact; however, a large proportion of the portfolio was already in delivery, which would help mitigate this. It was also suggested that if this was a concern of the Scrutiny Committee, it could be added to the dashboard for monitoring.

RESOLVED: That the Committee noted the report.

5. **Audit of Accounts**

The Finance Manager, introduced the report, and explained that the Auditor General was responsible for providing an opinion on whether the Statement of Accounts demonstrate a true and fair view of the position of the Swansea Bay City Deal Joint Committee as at 31 March 2022. The officer summarised the findings from the undertaken audit, as outlined in the report.

RESOLVED: That the Committee noted the report.

6. **Joint Committee Statement of Accounts 2021/22**

Richard Arnold, Finance Manager, introduced the report and explained that Carmarthenshire County Council, as the Accountable Body, was responsible for the financial stewardship of the Swansea Bay City Deal. This was the second year the Swansea Bay City Deal Joint Committee had to compile a Statement of Accounts in line with the Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014, as amended in 2018.

RESOLVED: That the Committee noted the report.

7. **Annual Report 2021-2022**

Phil Ryder, Portfolio Manager, outlined the report, which provided the Joint Scrutiny Committee with a summary of key activity for the last 12 months and forthcoming 12 months planned activity along with case studies of completed work and various other aspects covering delivery achievements and planned benefits/outcomes.

RESOLVED: That the Committee noted the report.

8. **Urgent Items**

There were none.

CHAIRPERSON