

**CASINO ADVISORY PANEL
Formal Proposal Cover Sheet**

Please fill in all categories below:

Name of Local Authority:

Council of the City and County of Swansea

Main Contact:

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Name and title of Submitting Officer:

Name: Phil Roberts
Title: Director of Regeneration

Statement of basis of application:

What exactly are you proposing? Please make clear which type of casino you **primarily** wish to be considered for.

Regional - No

Large (state number) 1

Small (state number) 1

If this proposal is unsuccessful what if any is your fall back/ second proposal?

Large (state number) 1

Small (state number)

Type of Area

The population base of the local authority area, e.g. size, socio-economic and ethnicity characteristics, levels of educational attainment

Swansea is both a city and county, an important regional urban centre within South West Wales, but also with a significant rural community within its county boundary. It has achieved significant economic change to date, transforming its economy from a previous reliance on heavy (coal, copper) and maritime industries into one where tourism and modern service-oriented businesses prevail. There is greater potential to exploit Swansea's natural resources, commercial infrastructure and its people's skills, but further regeneration is required to enable it to truly "punch its weight" economically. The following socio-economic statistics testify to the growth required: -

- Swansea has had a rising population since 2000, and is currently estimated at 225,500¹. However, it is still down 1.8% on the 1991 population figure.
- Gross Added Value² in 2003 was £3.0 billion, some 8% of the total in Wales. GVA per head in Swansea was £13,507, 84% of the U.K. average (but representing an improvement from 79% in 1998)
- Gross weekly earnings³ for full-time employees are £389.10, 90.2% of the United Kingdom figure
- 106,900 persons (55,600 male; 51,300 female) are economically active⁴, 76.7% of the working age population, compared with 78.0% across the United Kingdom
- The predominant ethnic group⁵ is White (97.9%), the same as across Wales but significantly higher than in England and Wales (91.3%). 1.0% of the Swansea population are Asian or Asian British and 0.5% are within Chinese or Other Ethnic groupings
- 24.1 % of the working-age population have qualifications⁶ of NVQ4 and above, compared with 25.1% across the United Kingdom. By contrast, 16.0% have no qualifications (15.4% in the United Kingdom)

The current levels of tourism in the area, including any recent trends or developments, as well as infrastructure for tourism such as hotels, other entertainment facilities and transport access, origin of tourists and overall vision for tourism

The latest available data⁷ estimates that in 2004 there were 3,187,000 tourists spending 5,869,000 tourist days in Swansea and generating revenue of £192 million. This represents a 5 year growth of 12.7% in the number of tourists, 5.4% in tourist days and 9.2% in revenue.

¹ Mid Year Population Estimates (2004)

² Regional Gross Value Added 2003 data, published December 2005, ONS.

³ Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (2005)

⁴ Annual Population Survey data for 12 month period ending December 2004. (ONS)

⁵ Census 2001, Office for National Statistics

⁶ Local Area Labour Force Survey (Mar 2003-Feb 2004)

⁷ Scarborough Tourism Economic Activity Monitor (STEAM) City and County of Swansea

A Visitor Survey of Swansea Bay conducted in the summer of 2005 revealed that visitors were skewed towards the 35-54 age group and the ABC1 social groups. 45% of visitors were from across Wales, 44% from England and 10% from overseas. 43% of visitors to Swansea Bay stayed for 4 nights or more, and a further 40% visited on a day trip from home. The majority of respondents to the survey stated that they had visited Swansea Bay previously – only 15% were first time visitors. 88% of respondents said that it met or exceeded their expectations, whilst 94% indicated that they would recommend Swansea Bay to someone else.

Swansea has a wide range of hotels and restaurants, both familiar national chains as well as independent operators. Five-star and budget accommodation is readily available to serve visitors' particular needs. In addition, Swansea boasts an impressive mix of other attractions – clubs, pubs, theatres, a multi-screen cinema and other leisure and recreational facilities.

Investment in the City in recent years has further developed its visitor potential. Major new attractions have been opened: –

- *The National Waterfront Museum*, which houses many innovative and interactive exhibits that recount Wales' fascinating maritime history
- *The Wales National Pool*, the only Olympic-standard swimming pool in Wales
- *The Liberty Stadium*, a modern 20,000-seater sports stadium and home to the Ospreys regional rugby and Swansea City football clubs.

Significant enhancements have been made to the public realm in the city centre and to transport, notably the introduction of Park and Ride facilities on the outskirts of the city centre.

Swansea's waterside location and rural surroundings also have plenty to attract tourists, particularly Gower, Britain's first designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which offers some of the best sandy beaches and scenic countryside in the U.K.

Local plans and strategies for the development of tourism, leisure or gambling in the area

The vision published in Swansea's Cultural Strategy "Going from Strength to Strength" commits us to: -

"the promotion of a sustainable and safe environment which supports the development of a healthy, creative and positively occupied community, and encourages the achievement of individual potential. This will be achieved through provision of, and participation in, appropriate, quality, sustainable, and above all enjoyable, cultural opportunities and activities".

The strategy's objectives include the need to adopt plans for all facility provision to ensure equal access and opportunity.

In a strategic report produced on the city centre⁸, a set of aims and priorities were identified for its regeneration, which included strengthening the city's attractions, making the centre highly accessible and upgrading the environment. One of a number of actions suggested in the report to increase the number of attractions was "exploring the idea of a casino linked to a hotel".

In relation specifically to tourism, a Tourism Strategy is currently being prepared to help identify opportunities and determine priorities for exploiting more fully Swansea's potential as a tourist destination. It acknowledges that there is currently a weak attraction base, but identifies a number of opportunities for improving the quality of its night time economy with a mix of major new facilities such as a casino.

The principal needs of regeneration in the area

Swansea has recently produced an Economic Regeneration Strategy in which the principal needs of regeneration have been identified: -

- *Headline performance.* Despite a modern sectoral economy, output and productivity, as measured by Gross Value Added, are significantly lower than the UK average. There is a need to generate more "high value added" economic activity
- *Enterprise.* There are almost 130 fewer businesses per 10,000 of the adult population⁹ in Swansea than the UK average. We need to increase the number of businesses and entrepreneurs with the potential to grow
- *Skills.* Evidence indicates a growing demand for increased skills at all levels. In addition, there is a need to reduce the numbers, particularly of young people, not in employment, education and training
- *Innovation.* We have above average levels of higher technology employment but lower R & D spend than the national average. We need to more fully exploit the potential of our "Knowledge Economy"
- *Investment.* There are many development opportunities, but Swansea needs to better focus on those developments that can attract better quality investment
- *Employment.* Employment levels in Swansea are better than the Wales average, but more could be done to engage the economically inactive, particularly the male working age population, as well as our young and over 50 age groups

⁸ Securing the future of Swansea City Centre – a report by the Urban and Economic Development Group (URBED), with Donaldson, Colin Buchanon & Partners and Michele Grant Associates, June 1997

⁹ VAT registrations by industry. DTI/ONS, via NOMIS

Anything in the area which would make it a good ground for the testing of social impact

There are pockets of extreme deprivation across the rural and urban parts of Swansea. Based on the 2005 Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation, Swansea has three of the 10 most deprived Lower Layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in Wales, located in Castle, Penderry and Townhill wards. Whilst the unemployment claimant rate in Swansea is 2.8%, in Castle ward, the corresponding rate is 5.4%¹⁰. These three deprived wards all qualify as Communities First areas, each with Partnerships, Co-ordinators and Neighbourhood Action Plans. Mechanisms are therefore in place to monitor and assess the social impact of particular activities.

In addition, as the city centre is located in the Castle ward, it would be possible to test the effects of a new casino in an area of significant social deprivation.

Social Impact

What do you consider the social impact of your proposal will be?

The new Gambling Act could make a positive contribution by providing: -

- The better regulation of gambling nationally (by the Gambling Commission) and locally (by democratically-elected local authorities)
- Protection, particularly for children and other vulnerable groups, against exposure to gambling in unlicensed venues
- Codes of practice for the industry to follow in order to offer customers accurate information and address potential problems
- An option to introduce a statutory levy on the industry to help treat gambling addiction (although this power will be held in reserve subject to discussion with the Gambling Commission)

In addition, a casino regulated under the new arrangements could create: -

- An additional and new type of entertainment activity for citizens and visitors to enjoy
- The potential to increase the number of tourists and day visitors to Swansea
- Spin-off trade for other retailers as a result of these additional visitors
- Job opportunities that the casino and other increased trade would generate

By contrast, the potential for a negative impact has to be recognised: -

- The increased incidence of problem gambling
- The social consequences of problem gambling on health and crime
- The economic consequences of problem gambling on bankruptcy and homelessness

¹⁰ Jobcentre Plus administrative system, ONS/Nomis

- The possibility that the economic benefits of the casino could largely be enjoyed by the casino operators and not the local community

If your evaluation of some criteria are negative and some positive (for example economic and social criteria) how will you resolve this?

It will, of course, be important to exploit as fully as possible the positive aspects of the Act in order to mitigate the potential negative social consequences of a new casino. The Authority will work with the Gambling Commission to ensure that any proposals brought forward to operate a casino meet all the licensing requirements, competition specifications, planning permissions and any concerns raised from consultation with local people. The Authority would also give due consideration to proposals from licence applicants that demonstrate a strong commitment to local employment, training, sourcing of goods and services and to community activity, so that Swansea may share in the benefits accruing from the new casino.

At the same time, the Authority will use its powers to remove gambling and gaming machines from unlicensed premises, and work with operators and our local strategic partners to ensure that gambling activity is properly conducted and that vulnerable groups are protected, and where necessary, supported. The Authority is a member of the Swansea Community Action for Responsible Gambling (CARG) group, and with representatives of the police, faith groups, the university and operators Aspers, meets to address problem gambling.

What do you say to those who claim that the effects of your proposals would have a negative impact on social cohesion and the sustainability of your communities?

People and organisations have a right to be concerned about the impact these new arrangements will have on their communities. We would welcome the opportunity to discuss these concerns, but also to present a case for the positive aspects in terms of: -

- Better regulation
- Increased local authority powers through licence to control gambling
- Co-operation with Gambling Commission, strategic partners and operators to protect public (particularly the young and vulnerable)
- The economic benefits in terms of tourism, additional trade and employment opportunities

These could help to mitigate the negative impacts.

At the same time, Communities First initiatives in deprived wards have a responsibility for ensuring their areas are safe and secure places to live, work and play, and will monitor the impact of initiatives to regenerate their communities.

The information supporting your response should include, where appropriate: -

Any recent assessments of the impact of existing gambling in your area on problem gambling, social cohesion and the sustainability of communities in such areas

We are not aware of any assessments of the impact of gambling carried out to date, although the positive and negative aspects of this activity are appreciated and are considered in this submission.

Any policies or procedures in place, or planned, to counter any potential negative social impacts of gambling in your area or optimise any positive social cohesion, including current management arrangements, developer or operator contributions and approved budgets for these policies or procedures

The Authority will use its new licensing powers to regulate and control gambling activity, at the same time ensuring the protection and support of the public.

Under the Gaming Act 1968, the Council has resolved to exclude specific premises from operating Amusement With Prizes (AWPs) machines. Over the past four years, through both proactive and reactive actions, 16 AWP machines have been removed from take-away premises and taxi offices. It is proposed to continue this level of enforcement action within policy under the new legislation.

Administration of AWP permits for premises licensed under the Licensing Act 2003 is developing and, together with proposed responsibilities for other gaming machines, will provide comprehensive information for a continuing and improved enforcement action plan.

Details of how you would test for changes in social impacts if a new casino was to be licensed

The Council will use the mechanisms in place (licensing powers as well as city centre and community partnerships) to assess the economic and social impact of a new casino.

Headline sustainable development indicators will continue to be monitored – employment and economic activity, educational qualifications, crime rates, housing – to determine the economic and social health, particularly of deprived areas. However, additional local indicators would need to be introduced to measure: -

- The level (numbers and value) and growth of gambling under the new arrangements
- The number (and their location) of gaming machines withdrawn from unlicensed venues.
- The participation of (and investment by) the casino operators with local strategic partners in community regeneration and social inclusion initiatives

- Information provided by casino operators to identify the impact, particularly on our more deprived communities, of the casinos on local employment and trade
- Initiatives introduced by local strategic partners and casino operators to prevent the incidence of problem gambling and to treat addiction

Comparable initiatives in place to manage social impact from other activities

Communities First is a major Welsh Assembly Government programme aimed at cutting poverty and helping to improve the lives of people who live in the poorest areas. It is a long term programme running for at least ten years, and encourages engagement by local people in the economic and social regeneration of their areas. Communities First Partnerships are formed in areas of acute deprivation by people with a stake in their communities. With the support of voluntary and public sector organisations, including the local and health authorities and the police, the Partnerships consider local priorities and implement projects through Neighbourhood Action Plans. Regular Partnership forums are held to review the Action Plans and assess what is being achieved.

The Safer Swansea Partnership is a multi-agency group set up under the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act to tackle a whole range of crime and disorder problems. The Partnership brings together the resources of South Wales Police, the City and County of Swansea, the Fire Brigade, Health Authority and also a number of more specialised partners such as Victim Support and Care and Repair. It raises awareness in the communities of the expertise in the Partnership that can be called upon to tackle crime and disorder. It also examines crime audits and consults with the communities in order to agree strategies for addressing crime and disorder in the city.

Existing/planned job creation and skills training programmes benefiting local people

Swansea has two higher education and two further education institutions, providing an extensive range of academic and vocational training. Combined with this institutional education, the area is served by a number of private training providers operating the Government's Work Based Learning Programmes. Additionally, there are a number of specific initiatives funded through the Jobcentre Plus service to address unemployment, particularly long term unemployment and those economically inactive and in receipt of incapacity or sickness benefit.

As a result of the Welsh Assembly Government's Wales Spatial Plan three significant sectors are being considered for particular action regarding the development of a Skilled and Competitive Workforce, i.e. the care sector; tourism, catering and leisure; and construction. A Learning Partnership is currently under development involving all the key deliverers of education in the area to develop a strategic approach for the future delivery of learning.

The Swansea Skills Service coordinates basic and key skills provision across the City and County of Swansea. It aims to raise awareness amongst potential participants, referral agencies and employers as to the availability and location of provision, from basic and key skills to ICT and job search skills such as CV writing and interview skills.

Details of existing and planned relationships with relevant voluntary and public organisations which would support your social impact policies and activities

The Swansea City Centre Partnership of public, private and voluntary organisations is an established partnership with a vision “to develop Swansea City Centre as a premier destination and a vibrant and dynamic place to shop, live, work and visit.” Its priorities include taking forward a strategic and co-ordinated approach to the future development, management and marketing of the City Centre, as well as providing a safe and secure environment. The Partnership publishes an Action Plan detailing the priority tasks, their targets and estimated costs, and identifying the partners with a lead responsibility for delivery. It co-ordinates its activities as appropriate with other established partnerships, such as the Safer Swansea Partnership, Pub and Club Watch, the British Crime Reduction Partnership and Communities First.

Need for Regeneration

How do you expect your proposal to assist regeneration of your area and the wider area?

The opportunity to license casinos under the new arrangements would enable the consideration of operator proposals that could potentially create significant new leisure facilities alongside the city’s existing leisure amenities – theatres, museums, cinema, restaurants, bars and shops. Sound proposals, if approved and properly implemented, would generate considerable interest, not only in Swansea, but across the South West Wales region.

The licences would attract a large private sector investment into the city from operators to create the necessary facilities, as well as on-going income (rent and rates) from their activities. The vitality of the city will increase, buoyed by the interest in the new attractions among local people as well as visitors (particularly day trippers) and tourists. Businesses and other facilities will benefit from this vitality through additional trade. Individuals securing employment from the casinos or from the businesses will enjoy the benefits of economic activity in terms of income, skills and experience.

Where appropriate, your response should include information as follows:

Supporting information, including from relevant government bodies, regarding the regeneration and employment status and activity rate

(male/female) of your area together with details on the timing and levels of public and private investment for this regeneration

Headline information on Swansea's economic status is provided in the "Type of Area" section above.

Other relevant **private sector** investment within the city centre includes: -

- A new casino development in Salubrious Place as part of a mixed leisure scheme involving a new cinema, restaurants, and residences to be completed in 2007 (Phase 1 development of a hotel, multi-storey car park and restaurants has been completed)
- Planned relocation by an existing casino operator from High Street to larger premises at St David's Centre
- Refurbishment of large retail site on Princess Way to include accommodation for two major national fashion retailers by the end of 2007

Other relevant **public sector** investment within the city centre includes: -

- Major refurbishment and re-opening of Swansea Leisure Centre in 2008
- Significant enhancements to access and public realm along Princess Way during 2006 linking the City Centre to the New Waterfront Museum
- The re-development of the Authority's County Hall into a modern Civic Centre, housing a new central library, a public exhibition area, an Archives and Family History Centre and a café. The new library is due to open in early 2008

Supporting details of the level of additional economic value that your proposal would create, including the anticipated incremental increase in GVA (Gross Value Added) and employment

Casino operators Aspers, prior to the construction of a new unit in Salubrious Place, made a detailed assessment of the market for a large casino in Swansea. The conclusion of this work revealed that there is an opportunity for a substantial new leisure facility in Swansea to complement the existing vibrant nightlife of the Wind Street area and to add to the new hotel and restaurants already completed in the Salubrious Place development. The casino and a new cinema are now nearing completion as part of the Phase 2 of the Salubrious Place/York Street development.

The company has confirmed that a large casino in Swansea would provide an initial investment of between £5 million and £10 million for the city and an on-going economic benefit of over £10 million per annum, further aided by a local procurement policy. It would also employ between 350 and 400 people. In support of these estimates, the Council has also noted a study commissioned by the North West Regional Development Agency, which estimated the Gross Value Added of large and small casinos to be £12 million and £7 million per annum and new employment of 377 for large and 181 for small casinos.

Are there parts of your area, the regeneration of which would particularly benefit from your proposal, and how would this come about?

The city centre would benefit particularly from the proposal in terms of: -

- Vitality, through new investment and more visitors
- Trade, through spin-off opportunities for businesses close to the casino
- Employment and economic activity, either from the casino directly or from the nearby businesses recruiting more staff

However, it is important that the regeneration benefits particular groups of people within the community. The Authority will, with its partners and the operators, seek to ensure that access to opportunities is given to: -

- Those in deprived communities (the Castle ward, within which the city centre is located, has an unemployment claimant count rate of 5.4%¹¹ compared with the average across Swansea of 2.8%)
- The young (some two thirds of the gambling industry's workforce is between 20 and 44 years of age¹²)

How and why do you expect that the “multiplier effect” of the additional economic activity to be created by your proposal would outweigh the potential leakage of money from the local economy?

As has been outlined above, there is great potential for additional economic activity to be created from the proposal. However, in order that this activity secures benefits for Swansea and is not drained away, the proposal must be managed effectively and delivered in partnership with the operators to Gambling Commission regulations. The careful consideration of licence applications and the rigorous implementation of regulations and codes of practice will give the best chance of ensuring that Swansea secures greater prosperity, particularly for its young and economically dislocated citizens.

The Authority would also expect licence applicants to quantify their likely contribution to the local economy in terms of their impact on local employment, training, sourcing of goods and services and community activity, so that it may have confidence that Swansea will benefit from additional economic activity.

Any other regeneration outputs and outcomes you are seeking to achieve from the development of a new casino.

The proposal would seek to secure greater protection for its citizens, particularly the more vulnerable groups – children and problem gamblers. Under the new licence, gambling activity will need to be properly regulated, so that the young are not exposed to potential addiction. In addition, mechanisms must be put in place with the agreement and co-operation of the

¹¹ Count of claimants of Jobseeker's Allowance. Source: Jobcentre Plus administrative system, ONS/Nomis, February 2006

¹² Labour Force Survey 2003

operators and our partners to identify and support the needs of problem gamblers.

Willingness to licence

Having regard to Section 166 of the Act, what strong evidence can you provide which demonstrates the willingness to license a casino in your area if it is selected? The information supporting your response should include, where appropriate: -

Council resolutions in favour and relevant supporting Council meeting minutes

A report of the Economic and Strategic Development Cabinet Member to authorise the submission of an application to the Casino Advisory Panel for a new type of casino in Swansea was approved by Cabinet on 16 March 2006.

Details of any local pre-existing polling or market research to establish the extent of support among the area's population

No market research or local consultations have yet been undertaken.

Resolutions of support by the Local Strategic Partnership

Confirmation of support has been received from the Swansea City Centre Partnership and the Swansea Economic Regeneration Partnership.

Relevant tourism or leisure strategies, or local plans which demonstrate the extent of consideration and commitment

The commitment of Swansea's Cultural and Tourism strategies has been referred to in the above section "Type of Area".

Details, including contact details, and key issues raised in correspondence from any national or local organisations or individuals who have expressed either: -

- ***Support for a casino in your area***
- ***Or objections and concerns that a new casino should not be licensed in your area***

Together with details of your engagement with such groups or individuals or points raised in your responses to them

Correspondence has been exchanged with the Swansea City Centre Partnership and the Swansea Economic Regeneration Partnership, and letters of support for the Council's submission to the Casino Advisory Panel have been received. Contact details: -

Rosemary Morgan
Chair
Swansea City Centre Partnership
Morgan La Roche Solicitors
PO Box 176
Bay House
Phoenix Way
Swansea
SA7 9YT
Tel: (01792) 776776
Fax: (01792) 776777
e-mail: info@morganlaroche.com

Philip James
Chair
Swansea Economic Regeneration
Partnership
c/o 4 Queens Road
Sketty
Swansea
SA2 0SD

The Council has also received support from casino operators Aspers and the Rank Group. Requests were made to the companies for information they might have that could support the Council's submission. The companies have responded to this request, and some of this information is included within this submission. Contact details: -

The Aspinall Group & Packer
Organisation
64 Sloane Street
London
SW1X 9SH

Rank Group Gaming Division
Stafferton Way
Maidenhead
Berks
SL6 1AY

The Salvation Army telephoned to seek confirmation of the Authority's intention to submit a proposal to the Casino Advisory Panel. The organisation indicated that it would be writing to the Authority's Cabinet Member for Economic and Strategic Development to express its concerns about the new casino arrangements, but at the time of drafting this submission, no letter has been received. However, a letter from the Salvation Army was published in local newspaper The Evening Post on 27 March 2006, expressing concern about the Council considering an application for a Super-Casino. Major Granville Myers of the Salvation Army in Swansea hoped that the Advisory Panel "will look at the down side and not just the possible benefits". He was concerned that the Panel "will only have two weeks before bids need to be made to the government at the end of March, and this will make the task of hearing concerns from the community a very difficult one indeed".

Probability of implementation

To enable the Panel to satisfy itself that, if selected, the proposal has a high probability of implementation, what evidence can you provide to demonstrate the overall feasibility of your proposals? The information supporting your response should include, where appropriate:

A market demand analysis relating to both resident and tourist demand

Aspers has confirmed its estimate for the annual visitor total to a 'Large' casino in Swansea to be between 500,000 and 700,000 (or 1,400-1,900 per day). The majority of customers would be derived from Swansea and the immediate surrounding areas, but a significant proportion would be derived from other parts of South Wales and further afield. A large casino would attract a larger proportion of its customers from outside the Swansea area than the smaller 1968 Gaming Act unit currently under development.

Catchment area and customer base

Aspers estimates the population living in the "core" target market area as approximately 500,000. This is calculated on the basis of a 30 minute drive time but with a bias towards the areas to the west and north of Swansea to reflect the fact that Cardiff, to the east, is a stronger competitive threat than the centres to the west and north.

Information on the criteria you would be using to identify appropriate and sustainable localities for the new casino

Swansea has an ambitious vision of its future, such that "By 2020 Swansea will be a distinctive European city, a city where everyone matters, a city that values its culture and heritage, a city that compares with the best, a city that invests in the future¹³". This ambition is important in that it sets high standards and expectations for our development activities, and it challenges Swansea to be distinctive and innovative in its approach to achieving economic and social prosperity.

In realising this ambition, rigorous objectives are set for the design of appropriate developments, and these objectives apply equally to the location of major leisure facilities such as a new casino.

In accordance with the Welsh Assembly Government's land use planning policies¹⁴, the Authority applies a sequential test in approving sites for certain land uses, considering in the first instance whether there is a need for additional provision (evidenced by unmet demand or by satisfying Unitary Development Plan policies), and then determining the best location for the type of development under consideration. Major retail and leisure uses, for example, which need to be accessible to a large number of people, are preferably to be located in urban centres.

In addition, the Authority seeks to achieve sustainable design solutions, and the Welsh Development Agency's guidelines¹⁵ provide a comprehensive framework for development design: -

- *Vision* – what will the development achieve?

¹³ "Ambition is Critical" – Swansea's Community Plan

¹⁴ "Planning Policy Wales" – Welsh Assembly Government, March 2002

¹⁵ "Creating Sustainable Places" – WDA publication

- *Economic viability* – can the high standard of development required deliver the economic and social benefits at an acceptable cost?
- *Engagement* – can we secure the agreement of the stakeholders to the development?
- *Efficiency* – is the development efficient in terms of land use and does the location have a density of population to support public transport and commercial services?
- *Ease of movement* – is the location accessible to all modes of transport?
- *Environment* – does the development enhance, or at least preserve, the existing environment?
- *Context and character* – do the proposals respond positively to the contextual requirements of the location?
- *Continuity and enclosure* – does the development demonstrate a consistent design approach between the roadway and the building line?
- *Legibility* – does the layout make it easy for people to find their way around?
- *Variety and diversity* – does the development offer a mix of uses?
- *Adaptability* – can the development be adapted for different uses over time?
- *Resource use* – can the design minimise resource use and maximise energy efficiency?

The above policy considerations have been applied in enabling the casino developments currently underway, and would be used in future to consider competitive proposals submitted to the Authority to operate a casino under the new licensing arrangements.

Existing and proposed transport infrastructure, so far as it would relate to your proposal

Swansea is well connected to both the South West and South East Wales regions via the M4 motorway, regular Intercity and other rail services and a network of local buses.

Within Swansea, the city is well served by road and rail services, and a variety of car parking options (including 24 hour parking) enable convenient access to shops, entertainment and leisure venues.

Establishing an integrated sustainable transport system is a key focus of Swansea's Local Transport Plan, which seeks to develop high quality transport alternatives and to connect quickly and easily peripheral communities with the city centre.

Park and Ride is a fundamental element of the Plan. Four park and ride facilities are planned, situated on the main approaches into the city. Two facilities are already operational, at Landore and Fabian Way. Patronage at both sites continues to grow with Landore now operating at more than 6,000

cars per month and Fabian Way at 4,000. A third Park and Ride facility is being developed in Fforestfach and a fourth site is being identified to the west of the City.

Another key element of the Plan is an improved bus service. The Council is developing a new Metro bus network in partnership with the Welsh Assembly Government and operators First Cymru, and new links between districts and the city centre are being developed. The new network will be served by a futuristic StreetCar, carrying up to 100 passengers (with access for people with disabilities) and will provide an express service between designated stops across the city.

Statement of the current provision for gambling in your local authority area or nearby, including any recent trends or developments in this

In 2004/5 there were four licences granted for casinos in Swansea.

Swansea currently has a casino in the High Street area of the city centre, operated by Grosvenor Casinos (a Rank Group company). The company has, however, secured a licence for the relocation of this casino to larger premises in St David's Centre within the city centre. The High Street licence will need to be surrendered when they relocate to the new premises. Rank has confirmed that the St David's Centre venue could be used as a "small" casino, although they would prefer about 30,000 square feet of premises to operate a small casino and 50,000 square feet for a large casino. The company would consider another scheme to increase the viability of such a development, and would bid for either a small or a large casino licence under the new arrangements.

A second casino, with 57,000 square feet of available space, is being built by Brunswick Mansford as part of a major leisure and residential development in Salubrious Place. The construction of the casino and cinema is due for completion this year. The developers are due to hand over the casino building to Aspers in May. The company is committed to fitting it out and opening a casino under the 1968 Gaming Act regulations in early 2007, and would also be willing to upgrade the casino to be compliant with the requirements of a 2005 Act "large" casino.

A licence has been granted for Lanes in Orchard Street in the City Centre, which we are informed anticipates opening in August 2006

Grosvenor Casinos has a further casino licence for premises outside the city centre in Carmarthen Road alongside the current Mecca Bingo (another Rank Group company). This is not operating currently.

The impact of competition on existing casinos (if any) and other leisure based activities

There is a potential for existing casinos to lose trade from a competitor operating under new licence arrangements, where immediate entry will be

allowed and gaming facilities and services more varied. However, there may be opportunities for existing operators to distinguish their services from the new casinos by appealing to those customers who may prefer the advantages of a membership-restricted venue (smaller, quieter “club” venues with greater level of customer service provided).

Potential critical mass effect of a cluster of casino and leisure based activities

A critical mass has yet to be reached, and Swansea has further potential to develop leisure activities within the city centre and to drive up service quality through competitive activities. Grosvenor, Aspers and Lanes have confirmed this confidence in the city centre with their current proposals for the city centre.

Estimated overall investment potential analysed between public and private sector investment and if sufficiently advanced how that would be funded

Upwards of £1 billion investment is estimated in Swansea over the next 10 years. Some £240 million of this investment alone is anticipated from the city’s regeneration of its docklands into an attractive and modern mixed-use area with easy access to the city centre – the SA1 Swansea Waterfront. £190 million of this waterfront development will come from the private sector.

Within the city centre, about £109 million investment is expected in the next two to three years, of which £46 million is public sector investment in infrastructure and public amenities, funded by the Welsh Assembly Government, EC Objective 1 programmes and by the Council. This initiative is attracting the private sector to invest approximately £63 million in the new leisure and retail opportunities now being created.

Relating specifically to casino development, the investment is being undertaken by the private sector. As stated earlier, a new large casino in Swansea is estimated to generate additional initial investment of between £5million and £10million, whilst a small casino could attract up to £7 million of further private sector investment (based on an estimate by the North West Regional Development Agency).

Current level of investor interest

Grosvenor, Aspers and Lanes all have casino developments or proposals for Swansea. In addition, Grosvenor and Aspers have expressed an interest in bidding for a new licence under the 2005 Gambling Act.

How would you anticipate gambling spend to change following the implementation of your proposal?

Gambling is likely to be characterised by: -

- Increased numbers of people participating in gambling at casinos
- The prevention of gambling by children and identified problem gamblers
- A reduction in average spend as the majority of participants will be casual or irregular gamblers

Regional and Local Context

The information supporting your response should outline the relevant policy context of Regional Spatial Strategies and sub regional policy areas and how they relate to the emerging Local Development Framework. This context should address any development strategies, policies and initiatives, inward investment proposals and regional economic strategies which are or would be relevant to the location of a new casino within a local authority area.

The Wales Spatial Plan is the key statement of strategic planning and development intent in Wales. It considers a broad raft of spatial development issues including many socio-economic factors such as strategic investments and areas where deprivation is concentrated. The Plan divides Wales into six areas, with Swansea the pre-eminent centre within the “Swansea Bay – Waterfront and Western Valleys” area.

The Plan overall, has five strategic themes as well as a number of ‘Propositions’ and ‘Actions’ for each of the six spatial areas. With regard to Swansea, the Plan recognises the need to strengthen Swansea’s position as Wales’ second city and sees Swansea Bay as a driver for development and growth in both the regional and national context. In addition, it recognises the need to regenerate Swansea itself as a key centre.

Priorities identified for development by partners in the Swansea Bay area include “Leisure, Tourism, Culture and Heritage”, “Integrated Transport”, “Inactivity” and “Competitive Workforce”.

At a local level, Swansea’s Community Plan has created a vision of Swansea as a distinctive European city, and identifies a number of strategic themes for delivering the vision. The most relevant theme in the context of this submission is “Prosperity”, and this theme is explored more fully in Swansea’s Economic Regeneration Strategy.

The Strategy defines the Prosperity vision for the city, that by 2020 Swansea will be “an internationally competitive economy, Wales’ leading centre for the Knowledge Economy, an economically active population...known for its high skills, providing critical labour mass in our priority (sectoral) clusters, and a proud, vibrant and ambitious city”. A major priority cluster is tourism, and a link is made with the Tourism strategy currently being developed.

To what extent would identification of your area assist in achieving regional economic objectives for employment, skills and regeneration?

In particular, in England, the consideration, policy position and attitude of the Regional Planning Body (Regional Assembly) toward your proposal should be requested at an early stage and noted.

The regional economic objectives are set by the Welsh Assembly Government. Its two main priorities¹⁶ are to: -

- increase employment still further, so that over time the Welsh employment rate matches the UK average, even as the UK employment rate itself rises; and
- raise the quality of jobs, so that average earnings increase and close the gap with the UK average.

Actions will focus on: -

- supporting job creation and helping individuals to tackle barriers to participation in the world of work
- investing to regenerate communities and stimulate economic growth across Wales;
- helping businesses to grow and to increase value-added per job and earnings;
- investing in our transport networks and other economic infrastructure;
- ensuring that all economic programmes and policies support sustainable development, in particular by encouraging clean energy generation and resource efficiency.

Given the above agenda, the proposals, if approved and implemented effectively, would contribute to these objectives by offering a significant new employment opportunity for people currently economically inactive but willing to work and acquire new skills. Aspers has confirmed that it recruits a significant number of its trainees directly from local Jobcentres with a stipulation that all or most of these should be people who have held no more than one previous job. The company would expect 60-80 Swansea employees to be hired in this way via a scheme called WorkStart.

The additional private sector investment into the city centre would be a welcome boost in terms of improved infrastructure and an attractive new facility to stimulate tourism and leisure activity.

Community benefits

In general terms, what community benefits does the authority expect to accrue from the licensing and town planning processes?

The Council is concerned that the economic regeneration of Swansea achieves a greater spread of prosperity across the community, characterised by higher employment and economic activity, a healthy business environment and better engagement and access to opportunities for citizens in our more deprived areas.

¹⁶ Wales: A Vibrant Economy. The Welsh Assembly Government's Strategic Framework for Economic Development

It is anticipated that the proposal will provide: -

- Significant new job opportunities that many of our economically inactive citizens can access
- Employee training and customer service career prospects for people who may have relatively little previous working experience
- A socially responsible approach from the operators towards community engagement
- The protection of the regulatory system to help prevent illegal gambling and addiction

Unique characteristics

What outstanding characteristics of your proposal or area might differentiate it from similar proposals, so far as you know them? Please refer to any aspects of your proposal that you think are unique and which the Panel may reasonably take account of in reaching its decision.

Swansea is a modern waterfront city with a unique mix of attractive urban and rural characteristics that have considerable appeal to its visitors. It is also an important regional centre for the South West Wales economy.

The economic and social conditions prevailing in Swansea exhibit some interesting characteristics that provide opportunities for evaluating the impact of a new casino: -

- A growing population and economy, but one which still lags significantly behind the UK average
- A fast developing city centre, but which is located within an area experiencing high levels of multiple deprivation
- A popular visitor and tourist destination but with still further potential to exploit
- A Communities First area encompassing the city centre, with mechanisms for engaging with the community and monitoring the effects of community initiatives

With a new 57,000 sq ft casino currently under construction and the relocation and opening of a further two casinos, Swansea is creating the infrastructure which could potentially be used to evaluate the impact of the new gambling arrangements.

For these reasons, Swansea's proposal provides a good test of the new Gambling Act regulations to contribute to the economic and social regeneration of an area.