

CASINO ADVISORY PANEL: CARDIFF COUNCIL CASINO BID

This note outlines the points I would like to make at the Examination in Public

I: The Economic Impact Analysis is inadequate

The projected 1,047 jobs in the Casino and Hotels to be created by Aspers (*if* its business plans reach fulfilment) are scaled up to an enduring Cardiff-wide net impact of 2,814 (on unclear assumptions about displacement effects)

This figure is then cited in various parts of the document as the employment Contribution to 'The Sports Village' which will arise if the Casino bid is successful, (i.e. muddling the geography)

To this is then added a series of unexplained guesstimates concerning the jobs that might be created if several other projects that the Aspers receipt might enable to happen are in fact achieved (The 'Snow Box', Leisure Ice, Olympic Canoeing, and Whit Water centre). These generate a claimed grand total (including The Casino complex) of 5,000 jobs

This yields a predicted net **multiplier of 5**. This would be a world record at the national level, let alone the regional or the urban

This is the figure which has been cited without any detailed examination by the media, and by organisations enlisted by Cardiff in support of its bid (GMB, Rhondda Cynon Taff)

II: There is no qualitative Labour Market analysis

A proper LM analysis would examine the types of jobs to be created, and the prospects of their being filled by local people. This is essential to address the CAP's concern with the impact on deprived areas.

No such work is cited anywhere in the Casino documentation

The Casino/Hotels are to be sited near to areas of multiple deprivation (Grangetown and Butetown). The only explanation as to the benefits residents of these areas may receive consists of (misleading) generalisations concerning the effects of recent regeneration, plus claims made for yet-to-exist or recently established organisations with no track record and no clear plans (the Skills Vehicle, the Capital Investment Recruitment and Skills Steering Group)

The fact that many in these areas have not benefited from the recent transformation in Cardiff Bay is not mentioned (relative local unemployment and inactivity rates remain as high, or higher, than before 'regeneration')

There is no mention that a high proportion of new jobs created in hotels restaurants etc in Cardiff have been filled by migrants from EU Accession countries, Russia, etc, rather than local disadvantaged groups

There is no mention of the fact that many of the unemployed and inactive in Grangetown and Butetown face multiple education and employment problems, and other forms of discrimination. Nor that many are Muslim and therefore perhaps unlikely to be attracted to Casino work

III The Social Impact is Barely Examined

There is no serious discussion of the impact of gambling on the community, no details of the present scale of the problem of gambling addiction, no scenarios are examined for possible future social work and policing costs. These problems are waved away with a few opening generalities and statements of good intent in the bid document.

Reference to the potential good work of an organisation established by the Casino promoter which has yet to come into effective existence does not appear very convincing

IV The Cultural Impact has Not Been Considered

The relationship between the development of a large Casino complex and Cardiff ostensible 'culture-led development strategy' is nowhere explained. Many might object that this is not 'cultural development' in any sense that they would recognise.

Conclusion

The prospective Aspers Casino development by Cardiff Bay has been energetically promoted by Cardiff city council. But it has not conducted anything like a sufficient analysis of the likely impacts on the urban labour market, or the social and cultural effects. It follows that it has given insufficient attention to the measures necessary to ensure that the benefits for local people are maximised.

Therefore, should the Panel decide in favour of Cardiff bid, considerable work has yet to be done.

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