

Ref: RDB/GHJ/RP/09.11.16

9 November 2016

Councillor Ramesh Patel,
Cabinet Member for Transport, Planning & Sustainability,
County Hall,
Atlantic Wharf,
Cardiff CF10 4UW.



Dear Councillor Patel,

Environmental Scrutiny Committee – Short Task & Finish Exercise- Tidal Lagoon – 8 November 2016

On behalf of the Environmental Scrutiny Committee I would like to thank you, the Leader and the officers from City Operations for attending the short task & finish meeting on Tuesday 8 November 2016. As you are aware the meeting considered an item titled 'Tidal Lagoon'. The comments and observations made by Members following this item are set out in this letter.

The Members note the content of the presentation delivered by the Head of Planning and acknowledge the potential significance of a tidal lagoon infrastructure project of this scale. They understand that the impact of such a project could be vast and hugely complex while acknowledging that the Council is potentially facing a huge knowledge gap on matters which, in the event of the project progressing, would need to be overcome. They agree with the view put forward by you and the Leader that gaining a good understanding of all issues involved with the project is essential for getting the best deal for Cardiff citizens.

Having said all of the above the proposed tidal lagoon is at this stage just an outline proposal. It relies heavily upon a favourable outcome from the Hendry Review and then securing a suitable financial proposal to deliver a multi billion pound project. With this in mind the task group believes that the best way forward would be to:

- Await the outcome of the Hendry Review. Once this is delivered the Members would like to quickly arrange a meeting to discuss the findings of the review (whatever the outcome) and assess what this means for Cardiff. This they feel should be supported by Council officers and independent third party witnesses who are suitably qualified and available to attend.
- Should the outcome be favourable towards delivering the tidal lagoon project then the Members believe that scrutiny and the Council should hold a scoping event to identify and map all of the issues that a project of this scale would inevitably create. The outcome of this event could be used to inform the actions that the Council would need to take and form the basis of terms of reference for future scrutiny of a tidal lagoon.
- In principle the Members agree with the idea of developing some form of joint scrutiny with Newport City Council and any other public bodies with a significant interest in the development of the tidal lagoon. However, before looking to put any such arrangements in place it would seem prudent to reflect on the outcome of the Hendry Review and any subsequent Cardiff tidal lagoon scoping exercise.
- Members note and agree with the comments made by the Head of Planning that additional planning resources would need to be made available to support a project of this scale. Equally the Members feel that scrutiny will require additional support to properly scrutinise a project of this type and scale which is far from business as usual. Thorough scrutiny will require regular meetings over many years and across a very broad range of topics. Specialist witnesses will be required; reports many need to be commissioned; visits will need to take place, etc... All of this work will require additional resources.

Please note that the same letter has been sent to the Leader of Cardiff Council. I would be grateful if you would consider the above comments and provide a response to this letter.

Regards,



Councillor Gavin Hill - John

Acting Chairperson – Tidal Lagoon Short Task & Finish Exercise

Cc:

Councillor Phil Bale – Leader of Cardiff Council

Paul Orders – Chief Executive, Cardiff Council

Andrew Gregory - Director for City Operations

Neil Hanratty – Director of Economic Development

James Clemence – Head of Planning, Cardiff Council

Gareth Harcombe – Commercial Manager, Energy & Sustainability

Paul Keeping – Operational Manager, Scrutiny Services

Davina Fiore – Director of Governance & Legal Services

Members of the Environmental Scrutiny Committee