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SWANSEA COUNCIL COMMITS TO BUILDING BACK BETTER WITH PLACEMAKING PROMISE

Swansea Council has joined Newport City Council as the second local authority in Wales to commit to building back better by signing the Wales Placemaking Charter.

The news was welcome by Deputy Minister for Housing and Local Government, Hannah Blythyn. She said: “As our national plan, Future Wales includes a requirement for the public sector to show leadership and apply placemaking principles to support regeneration across Wales. The launch of our £15.2 million ‘placemaking fund’ is a key part of this strategy; helping Wales’s town centres to build back better. It’s part of our wider £110m Transforming Towns programme, which funds projects for the benefit of local communities in our town and city centres.

“The support package was designed in collaboration with Wales’s local authorities. One lead authority within each region administers the fund with Swansea County Council being responsible for funding allocations in south west Wales. That’s why it is so encouraging to see the local authority pledging their support for good placemaking by signing the Placemaking Generation. It’s a commitment that really does set the agenda for all future development in the region.”

Swansea Council’s Cabinet Member for Delivery & Operations and Deputy Leader David Hopkins said: “The COVID-19 pandemic has placed significant pressures and demands upon the lives and livelihoods of so many of us, but it has also shown us how important the places where we live are to our quality of life.

“As we look to the future and building back better, our focus is on applying placemaking principles to aid the growth and regeneration of our communities. In Swansea we are determined to build sustainable places that improve health and well-being; taking a proactive role and working in collaboration with the Welsh Government and our development partners to do what is right for the people of Swansea. Our Local Development Plan was shortlisted finalist for the national RTPI Awards for Planning Excellence 2020 as an innovative, Placemaking Framework that will drive our ambitious growth aspirations. The Council has been at the vanguard of advancing the placemaking agenda and signing the Wales Placemaking Charter is yet another reflection of our commitment in this regard.”

Jen Heal, Design Advisor with the Design Commission for Wales said: “Placemaking has a key role to play in making Wales healthier, fairer and more prosperous. It shapes the places we live in, where we

work, how we travel and the quality of the environment around us. It also makes sure that the right development is in the right place.

“That’s why Future Wales is so important as it provides the national framework within which all partners can focus on achieving big ambitions when we develop and regenerate our cities, towns and villages. It sets the direction for development in Wales to 2040 and includes a requirement for the public sector to show leadership and apply placemaking principles to support growth and regeneration across Wales. This is why we are pleased to add Swansea Council to the list of Placemaking Charter signatories – they are leading the way for local authorities across Wales to commit to good placemaking.

“Our Placemaking Charter is firmly aligned with Future Wales and builds on the strengthening focus on placemaking in policy and practice in Wales. The early decisions made at a strategic level are critical for setting the course for placemaking. .”

The Placemaking Wales Charter was developed by Welsh Government and the Design Commission for Wales in collaboration with the Placemaking Wales Partnership – a multi-disciplinary group representing professions and organisations working within the built and natural environment. It features a commitment from some 70 signatories including developers, land owners and public bodies who have pledged to:

- Involve the local community in the development of proposals
- Choose sustainable locations for new development
- Prioritise walking, cycling and public transport
- Create well defined, safe and welcoming streets and public spaces
- Promote a sustainable mix of uses to make places vibrant
- Value and respect the positive distinctive qualities and identity of existing places.

Further information is available at <https://dcfw.org/placemaking/>

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