

P-06-1439 Improve vital late night public transport infrastructure in South and South West Wales - Correspondence from the Petitioner to the Committee, 09 September 2024

Thank you very much for the below and attached – we appreciate that this petition will be considered.

We appreciate the thoughtful response in the letter attached, and the engagement in the live music sector through Creative Wales – however the urgency needed to address this issue has not been addressed and the response mirrors feedback received by these venues for the many years this has been an issue.

As the Venue Director for Swansea Arena – I am acutely aware that the Arena was funded in order to improve the economy of the local area.

I am incredibly passionate about live music and the impact that this Arena can have on Swansea – however we will not be successful if we do not continue to develop new local talent that can work their way through the local grassroots music venues up to an Arena tour.

Live music tours in 2024 are predominantly heritage acts who themselves started their careers in the 70s/80s/90s in their local music venues – but these venues are facing their most challenging times – with Music Venue Trust reporting that in 2023 one grassroots music venue closed per week due to a lack of financial stability. So in 10-20 years' time, who will be the artists playing Swansea Arena?

All the local independent music venues in Swansea – Bunkhouse, Sin City, Hippos, Elysium – can provide evidence of customers actively deciding not to buy tickets to their gigs due to the lack of available transport. This has resulted in national promoters choosing not to have Swansea on their tour routing as they cannot guarantee the return. All of this puts strain on an already tight financial model which faces the challenges of increasing rents, business rates and utilities.

It also means – frustratingly – that although the Arena can attract 2000-3500 to the area for an event, people are not remaining in the locale to continue their evening in these venues as they have to run from the event to get the last train home. A large % of our audience actively choose to miss the encore in order to be able to get home safely.

It is imperative to everyone's idea of a successful and thriving city that we do not lose any of the venues mentioned above – and a focus on transport to the area during our late night economy is one of the key factors in supporting this

We appreciate that the logistics of improving the current transport model are not simple, due to the number of stakeholders involved – but we are confident that a solution can be found

Please do reach out if you need any further information