

OPERATIONAL REVIEW COMMITTEE

9 September 2015

Present: Councillor R Kilmister (Chairman)
Councillors P Harries, S T Hudson and P J Morgan, Mr A E Sangster, Mrs M Thomas and Councillor A Wilcox

[Councillor ML Evans arrived during consideration of Report 13/15 - Performance Report]

(NPA Offices, Llanion Park, Pembroke Dock: 10:00am – 11.25am)

1. Apologies

An apology for absence was received from Ms C Gwyther.

2. Disclosures of interest

There were no disclosures of interest

3. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on the 1st July 2015 were presented for confirmation and signature.

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 1st July 2015 be confirmed and signed.

4. Matters Arising

a) Appointment of Deputy Chair (Item 9)

Mrs M Thomas confirmed her agreement to being appointed Deputy Chair for the ensuing year.

b) Cilrhedyn (Item 11)

The Chief Executive reported that Coed Cymru were currently developing a proposal which it had been hoped would have been presented to the September meeting of the Authority. However due to the death of Coed Cymru's Chief Executive it had been agreed that consideration of the proposal could be deferred until the November meeting.

b) Forward Work Programme (Item 14)

Unfortunately it had not been possible to report that day on the management of special events due to the unavailability of the officer. Also the planned meeting with Natural Resources Wales, which would have fed into an item on the Authority's work with that organisation, had had to be postponed. It was hoped that reports on these two areas would be provided at the next meeting of the Committee.



5. Performance report for the period ending 31 July 2015

The Business and Performance Manager presented the performance to date for the Park Direction, Delivery and Discovery Teams against the strategic outcomes in the Improvement Plan Part 1 for the first four months of the new financial year using the Ffynnon performance management system. This showed the percentage of work completed, together with the associated RAG (Red-Amber-Green) status for each action. Progress on each action was set out in the report.

At this stage of the year, most activities had only recently commenced and some data was not yet available. The weather also had an impact with a reduction of visitor numbers compared to last year and an increase of vegetation growth on the footpaths.

The action regarding capital works to the Coast Path under Outcome 2 Enjoying the Park (Delivery) noted that no capital grant had yet been received and therefore no work had been carried out. Officers clarified that the budget assumed that some grant would be forthcoming, however a budget was in place to undertake some capital works irrespective of grant received.

Turning to the measures reported for Direction/Development Management, the Business and Performance Manager reported that the applications determined within 8 weeks had returned to 75%, having been lower in the previous month.

Finally for the Discovery Team, it was reported that visitor numbers were down by 7-8% on the same period last year and that this was reflected in both the centres and car parks. In relation to the traineeship programme, one Member asked whether the Authority monitored whether those employed on traineeships found employment once the programme had finished. The Head of Discovery replied that this was built into the project and an external consultant had been employed to track their employment status, however participation by the former trainees in this respect was voluntary.

It was **RESOLVED** that the performance report be received.

6. Risk Register

It was reported that following the decision at the recent Authority meeting, the current risk register would be presented to both the Operational Review and Audit & Corporate Services Review Committees. The current register was attached for Members' information. There had been no changes to the levels of risk or new risks added; any relevant progress was included in the comments column.



Members asked questions about management of some of the risks that were amber in colour and responses were provided. Other points raised were that one Member felt that risk 26 – failure to meet affordable housing targets was both more likely and of a greater impact, making this a higher risk; the mitigation for 13 risk of significant damage due to bad weather needed to refer to the monitoring and realignment work that took place on a regular basis; it was questioned whether day to day incidents were included in risk 17 and also whether data security issues such as Data Protection and Freedom of Information concerns were covered in the register.

NOTED, subject to the above comments.

7. Review of Social Inclusion

The Chairman welcomed the Discovery Team Leader and Ranger Services Manager who provided an overview of the social inclusion work undertaken in their teams. The Discovery Team Leader explained that the Discovery Team delivered a wide range of work that had inclusion as its focus, the majority of which was project/externally funded. This included the 'Your Park', Mosaic, Walkability and Skills in Action projects. There was a small amount of core funded activity that might also be considered as addressing social inclusion priorities such as the environmental education programme, volunteer programme and the activities and event programmes which increasingly took account of the need to be more inclusive and to provide opportunities of new audiences.

The grant funded project work undertaken by the Discovery Team was informed by the priorities and policies of the Authority, particularly the Welsh National Parks Social Inclusion Strategy and the Action Plan which tailored that Strategy for Pembrokeshire. This included four key actions – embedding Social Inclusion in the work of the whole Authority, achieving good outcomes for people mainly those living in Pembrokeshire, ensuring that the Authorities own services were accessible and appropriate and trying to contribute to the Child Poverty Action Plan. A working group had been established to ensure the action plan was delivered on and to engage people within the Authority. The report also provided an overview of the impacts of the Team's social inclusion work to date.

The Ranger Services Manager went on to explain that the rangers were area based, having strong links with their communities and had increasingly prioritised social inclusion work over the last ten years. Typical examples of this were work with youth workers in comprehensive schools delivering tailored programmes of outdoor activity for pupils requiring extra support; activities for groups and organisations such as Pembrokeshire Blind Society, the Point Youth Centre and the Disabled Ramblers Association; and volunteering opportunities for groups and individuals such as St Davids Care in the Community, Drug Rehabilitation



volunteers and young people participating in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme.

Thanking officers for their report and presentations, Members were pleased to learn about the excellent work being undertaken. They highlighted the challenge to measure in some way the difference that the projects were making to individuals and asked whether any work was currently being undertaken with young single mothers. The Ranger Service Manager replied that reaching out to young women was a challenge in outdoor work and pointed out that work with hard to reach groups was costly and thus most pioneering work was through project funding. Members considered that the National Park was an attractive recreational space and that the work of supporting community groups to increase their confidence and knowledge in order to sustain their use of the Park was an investment worth making.

NOTED.

8. Forward Work Programme

As discussed previously, a number of topics had been identified by Members and officers for future consideration by the Committee and these had been arranged into a suggested two-year forward programme. This proposed that the next meeting would consider Tourism – the impact of marketing activities on the number of visits to the National Park and/or the quality of people's holiday experience(s); and the management of special events in the National Park.

It was **RESOLVED** that reports on tourism, the management of special events and Management of our natural resources would be presented to the next meeting of the Committee.

9. Continuous Improvement Group: delegation of issues

It was **RESOLVED** that there were no issues that needed to be delegated to the Continuous Improvement Group for consideration.

10. Oriol y Parc Café Franchise

Members were reminded that the café at Oriol y Parc had originally been run in-house, but that since 2011 a franchise had been granted to a local company, subsequently extended to 31 October 2016, and this arrangement had proven to be successful. However while privately negotiating a further franchise extension would be quick, simple and provide service quality continuity, it would not be open, transparent or inclusive. Officers therefore were of the opinion that the next café franchise should be offered by way of a competitive tendering process commencing during the early part of 2016. This approach had been discussed with the existing franchisee.

NOTED.

