

CONSERVATION AND PLANNING REVIEW COMMITTEE

17th October 2012

Present: Mr D Ellis(Chairman)
Councillors JA Brinsden, B Kilmister, Mrs A Lee

(NPA Offices, Llanion Park, Pembroke Dock: 10.00am – 11.35am)

1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Ms C Gwyther, Councillors PJ Morgan and AW Wilcox

2. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on the 20th June 2012 were presented for confirmation and signature.

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 20th June 2012 be confirmed and signed.

3. Matters arising

(a) Supplementary Planning Guidance on Traditional Buildings – Minute 5 (Matters arising)

The Chairman reported that since the last meeting he had spoken to the Authority's Building Conservation Officer with regard to possible amendments to the Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) on Sustainable Design. As a result of that meeting the following amendments were suggested:

- On page 19 clause 6.6: Title to read "Place and Local/Historic Distinctiveness"
- On page 19 under paragraph headed "The problem defined...." insert after "...must respond to their landscape settings and their visual, aesthetic, historical, cultural and ecological aspects." the following:

"Pre 1900 buildings which represent over 30% of the existing built structures will be treated with respect for their traditional form and vernacular details."
- On page 19 under paragraph headed "Measures" insert the following bullet point:
 - "Modifications to pre 1900 buildings will need to reflect the local character and historic context. Traditional vernacular design and materials would be required for applications affecting windows, door, porches, chimney stacks, roofs and curtilage buildings. All proposed schemes should be checked with the Planning Authority's Conservation Officer"



The Chief Executive suggested that the next stage in the process would be to seek the views of the Head of Development Plans to see how the proposed amendments would interlink with other documents. He noted that any amendments to the SPG would have to be agreed by the National Park Authority and published for consultation. The results of the consultation exercise would then have to be reported back to the National Park Authority before the final revised SPG was adopted.

Some Members expressed reservations on the use of a cut-off date, and the Director of Park Direction and Planning agreed, stating that the term 'traditional' had been used in the past. The use of a date gave less weight to more modern buildings whereas she believed alterations to all buildings should be sympathetic to their origins. She was also concerned that the proposals would involve extra work for the Building Conservation Officer.

NOTED.

b) Delegated Power on Listed Buildings - Minute 5

The Director of Park Direction and Planning reported that delegated powers to process most Listed Building Applications had been received.

NOTED.

c) Appeal Issues – Minute 8

Officers had taken legal advice regarding the energy efficiency decision, and Geldards had replied that they considered the Authority's policy to be unenforceable. The principle of requiring people to carry out energy efficiency measures to all parts of their homes had, however, been transferred to Building Regulations departments. The Chief Executive asked Members' views on that opinion, considering that the principle behind the policy was sound. Members felt that there was a danger that the state of the economy would make it less likely that people would carry out work, and for the sake of consistency across Authorities it was better left to Building Regulations. However it was suggested that it may be better if officers wrote to the Minister saying that they were disappointed that the policy had not found favour and asking for a clear steer that the issue would be taken up by Building Regulations Departments.

It was **AGREED** that officers write to the Minister expressing their concerns.

4. Performance Report for the Period Ending September 2012

The report of the Business and Performance Manager presented progress during the quarter for the measures set out in the Corporate Strategy for Outcomes 1, 3, 4, 5 and 8 that were relevant to the Committee. The report also listed actions which measured progress in achievement of the outcomes and this was illustrated by their 'RAG' status, which was Red, Amber or Green depending on progress made.

With regard to enforcement (Measures i and j of Outcome 1) the figures as at the end of September were 92 cases outstanding for more than 12 weeks, with 62 being from 2011 or earlier. 82 enforcement cases had been received since



April, with 45 closed within 12 weeks. This was a significant improvement on the situation 12 months previously. Officers advised that although comparator information for other authorities was not currently available, it was anticipated that the Authority's statistics would be better than most.

In updating the Committee on the planning statistics, currently 64% of applications had been determined within 8 weeks for the year to date. However fewer applications had been determined during September and a number of these were older applications that had gone over their 8 weeks. Although it was noted that some information on pre-applications was given elsewhere in the report, one Member asked that additional information be provided on these in future.

One of the actions taken towards achieving Outcome 1 was mapping of invasive species. One of the Members was concerned that the incidence of invasive species, particularly Japanese Knotweed, was getting worse and agreed that occurrences on both private and public land needed to be mapped. Officers replied that mapping was the first step in dealing with the problem in a systematic manner and that the Local Records Centre was collating the information. However the problem of mapping invasive species on private land, whilst important, would be difficult. The Chief Executive added that unfortunately there was no national plan, and that other agencies should be doing more to tackle the problem.

Finally the report set out those risks on the Risk Register which were monitored by the Committee. It was noted that risks always existed, and little could be done about most of them as the factors were outside of the Authority's control.

NOTED.

5. Conservation Area Grants

The Building Conservation Officer reported that the Conservation Area Grants for 2012-13 had been allocated in accordance with existing protocol and a schedule of applications was annexed to the report. This showed that a variety of factors were scored to give a priority weighting to some applications. It was noted that this year, due to the lateness in receiving the grant allocation from Cadw, projects that could be undertaken over the winter months such as joinery, had been favoured.

At the meeting a revised schedule was circulated, listing the properties which had been awarded a grant and the amount it had been possible to offer. This demonstrated that, as in previous years, the amount of grant sought was far greater than the money available. The Building Conservation Officer then proceeded to show photographs of the successful schemes.

With regard to future funding, the Committee was advised that no indication had been received from Cadw as to whether funding would be received again next year. Other funding streams were always considered, however it was difficult to meet their criteria. Should Cadw funding cease, a report setting out the options would be brought to the National Park Authority.



It was **RESOLVED** that the 2012-13 grant allocation be endorsed.

6. Other urgent business

The Chairman raised the issue of a threat to Ash trees from a fungus, noting that the implications of the disease could be devastating for the Pembrokeshire landscape. He urged officers to write to the UK Government asking them to prevent imports of Ash trees from Denmark.

NOTED.

