

# RECREATION AND TOURISM REVIEW COMMITTEE

21<sup>st</sup> November 2012

Present: Mr EA Sangster (Chairman)  
Councillors P Harries, Mrs L Jenkins, M James and R Owens, and Mrs M Thomas.

(NPA Offices, Llanion Park, Pembroke Dock: 12noon – 1.55pm)

## 1. Disclosures of interest

No disclosures of interest were received.

## 2. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on the 18<sup>th</sup> July 2012 were presented for confirmation and signature.

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on the 18<sup>th</sup> July 2012 be confirmed and signed, subject to the second sentence of the second paragraph of Minute 8 (Castell Henllys) being amended to read:

“A question was also asked about wider marketing of the site, and Members were told that currently the majority of schools in an area south of Machynlleth and **west** of Cardiff made use of Castell Henllys, promoted mainly through word of mouth.”

## 3. Welcome

The Director of Delivery and Discovery introduced Ms Hannah Buck to the Committee. Ms Buck had recently been appointed as the Authority's Health and Tourism Policy Officer and had initially focused on consolidating what had already been done by colleagues in terms of health, well-being and tourism. She was now in the process of developing links with partners and exploring potential areas where the Authority could influence and/or have a role to play in these spheres. She would also be the lead officer on the 'enjoy' theme of the National Park Management Plan and had already secured £10,000 to refresh the 'enjoy' pages of the Authority's website. Ms Buck was also working closely with Mr Graham Peake, the Authority's Discovery Team Leader, on social inclusion, together with officers of Pembrokeshire County Council, Pembrokeshire Tourism and the Destination Pembrokeshire Partnership on the topic of tourism.

The Chairman welcomed Ms Buck to the Authority, stating that he looked forward to hearing more about her work as she settled in to her role.

## 4. Performance report for the period April – October 2012

The Business and Performance Manager presented progress during the previous quarter on the key actions and success measures set out in those outcomes of the Authority's Corporate Strategy that were relevant to the work of the Committee using the Ffynnon Performance Reporting System. The system also showed the RAG (Red-Amber-Green) status for each action and/or measure.



It was reported that most actions/measures were on target, although some (development of website and other media; investigation of further use of new technology/social networking) had not been progressed due to long-term sickness in the Communications team. It was hoped that the staff concerned would be able to return to work in the near future and the Chief Executive assured Members that measures had been put in place to prioritise the key tasks for the team in the interim period.

Turning to the measures referred to in the report, it was reported that the Authority had signed up to a media monitoring system, which provided data on – amongst other things – where key words relating to the Authority appeared on social media. It could be seen from the data provided that the Authority's reach, and certainly Pembrokeshire's, had extended widely. In response to a question from the Chairman, the Chief Executive stated that the data could be used to inform the Authority's future work programme and that this area would be looked at in more detail.

Mrs M Thomas referred to the risk register appended to the performance report and asked whether a more detailed format could be provided at the next meeting, giving the actual risks that were relevant to the Committee, what actions were being taken to mitigate against them and who was responsible for ensuring that – to the best of their ability – nothing untoward would happen. The Business and Performance Manager stated that a revised format would be provided for the next Committee meeting.

It was **RESOLVED** that the performance report for the period April to October 2012 be received.

## **5. Coastal Tourism and Green Seas projects update**

The Building Projects Officer reported in detail on three enhancement projects that were currently ongoing on the following sites:

- (a) Solva car park;
- (b) Porthgain, and
- (c) Poppit car park.

The first two projects were being partly funded under the European Regional Development Fund's Coastal Tourism initiative, while the third was partly funded under the Green Seas initiative. It was hoped that all three projects would make a significant impact on key community and visitor facilities in their respective areas, while safeguarding important infrastructure for tourism businesses.

Work had already commenced at Solva and Porthgain, and work was scheduled to commence at Poppit in January 2013. Members referred to concerns raised at the planning application stage for the Solva project and congratulated officers on the way they dealt with the issues and the flexibility demonstrated in implementing the programme of work. The Building Projects Officer responded by saying that he hoped the concerns raised had been addressed and that he was liaising continually with the groups concerned. The question was then raised as to whether the car park attendant at Solva would



be removed, and it was reported that he would remain in post (at both Solva and Porthgain) while works were being carried out. Officers had also been led to understand that Solva Community Council were exploring options to manage the Solva car park in the future, although further details were awaited on this matter.

Councillor P Harries stated that localised flooding was being experienced at Newport Parrog and enquired whether anything was being done to address the problem. The Building Projects Officer replied that he would pass the details on to colleagues to look at.

It was **RESOLVED** that the report of the Building Projects Officer on enhancement works at Solva, Porthgain and Poppit be noted.

**6. Progress report on the implementation of recommendations arising from the joint Scrutiny Project with the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority on management of public rights of way**

The Access and Rights of Way Manager reminded Members that they had, at their last meeting, received a progress report on the implementation of the recommendations arising from the joint Scrutiny Project undertaken with the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority on management of public rights of way (PRoW). It had also been reported at that meeting that an action plan would be brought before the next meeting of the Committee for approval.

The report before Members that day included such an action plan, with the recommendations contained therein being prioritised in accordance with the findings of the joint Scrutiny Project. In general, it was reported that good progress was being made on implementing the action plan programme.

The Access and Rights of Way Manager went on to say that a meeting had taken place with colleagues in the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority to agree implementation of some of the joint recommendations, to ensure that both Authorities were accounting for the same expenditure on PRoW, and to share knowledge and experience in PRoW management. The meeting had highlighted the differences between each Authority's approach to PRoW management regimes, in that the different terrain/vegetation and the materials used in installing/replacing access furniture both had a bearing on the methodologies used in calculating labour costs/expenditure. Nevertheless, the discussions had been extremely productive for both Authorities, and a commonality for comparing expenditure on PRoW management and access furniture were agreed. Other useful information to arise from the meeting related to the organisation of PRoW surveys and inspections, and the use of IT applications for databases and surveys.

Referring to installation/replacement costs of access furniture, the Chairman enquired whether any changes needed to be made to how the Authority operated. The Access and Rights of Way Manager replied that he would be discussing with colleagues in the Delivery team whether savings could be made in the way the Authority worked, although this had to be balanced against the quality of the visitor experience and the sustainable use of local timber.



Finally, it was reported that, despite repeated requests to Pembrokeshire County Council to formally resume discussions on the review of the PRoW Delegation Agreement, no reply or acknowledgement had been received. This response was unfortunate, as officers considered that such a review could achieve efficiencies and savings to the Authority.

It was **RESOLVED** that the action plan appended to the report of the Access and Rights of Way Manager be approved and that progress made to date in implementing the recommendations arising from the joint Scrutiny Project be noted.

## 7. Review of Access Land Maps

Members were reminded that the right of access on foot to common land and open country (known collectively as Access Land) commenced in May 2005. Prior to the commencement of the right of access, the Countryside Council for Wales (CCW) had undertaken a lengthy and widespread consultation process to identify, designate and subsequently map all Access Land. The Conclusive Map for Pembrokeshire was issued by CCW in September 2004 and identified some 6,600ha of Access Land, 5,712ha of which was to be found in the National Park area.

It was reported that the Regulations appertaining to Access Land required CCW to review Access Land Maps every 10 years, commencing from the date the Draft Maps were issued. As the Draft Map for Pembrokeshire was issued in July 2012, the consultation process had already commenced and CCW were again consulting widely. Under the current review, the Draft Map for Pembrokeshire included an additional 54.5ha of Access Land (22ha of which was land at Freshwater East that had been dedicated by the National Park Authority in 2010), with 2.4ha being deleted from the original Conclusive Map.

Officers were satisfied that there were no additional candidate sites in the National Park area that merited addition to or deletion from the Draft Map and it was reported that the Pembrokeshire Local Access Forum was also of the opinion that no further amendments were required. The Committee was informed that the Draft Map would be followed by a Provisional Map, an appeals stage and, finally, the publication of a Conclusive Map in September 2014 that would replace the current Conclusive Map.

It was **RESOLVED** that the report of the Access and Rights of Way Manager on the review of Access Land Maps be noted.

*(The Chairman presented his apologies and left the meeting at this juncture. The Deputy Chair, Mrs Melinda Thomas, presided over the remainder of the meeting.)*

## 8. Carew Castle holdings: capital project proposals

The Head of Discovery reminded the Committee of the major capital project works that were currently being undertaken at Carew Castle. He reported that the works to the Lesser Hall had now been completed, while the portakabins that currently housed the reception/shop area and office had been advertised for sale with a view to their removal by the 28<sup>th</sup> November 2012. The extension



and refurbishment of the existing workshop would, subject to a successful tendering procedure, commence by December 2012 with completion by March 2013. In addition, works to the car park would be carried out in late February/early March 2013 with a view to all work being completed and ready for opening by Easter 2013. He added that the project remained on programme and on budget with good ongoing support from Cadw, the Countryside Council for Wales and Carew Community Council. The next phase would be the development and implementation of an interpretation package for the walled garden.

It was **RESOLVED** that the progress report on the capital project works at Carew Castle be noted.

#### **9. Castell Henllys: capital project proposals**

Members were reminded that an opportunity for a major capital investment programme had arisen for Castell Henllys, which would be funded by the National Park Authority with financial support from Cadw, the European Union and Welsh Government Target Match Funding. The works would include the development and implementation of an improved interpretation, accommodation, marketing and visitor package, the details of which were reported orally at the meeting.

Officers were currently working on the inception phase of the programme, with the second (development) phase following in the New Year. It was hoped that the implementation stage would be completed by July 2014. In response to a question from Members it was hoped that the major construction works would take place in the off season period.

It was **RESOLVED** that the report on the capital investment programme at Castell Henllys be noted.

#### **10. Tenby Centre and associated functions**

The Committee received a detailed report on the work undertaken at the National Park Visitor Centre in Tenby, which was currently in its sixth year of operation. Not only did the Centre provide general, local and National Park information, promote National Park messages and accommodate an interactive exhibition and small shop, it also encompassed satellite offices and meeting rooms for Park staff and acted as the IT 'disaster recovery' site should the Authority's headquarters at Llanion Park suffer major failure.

It was reported that visitor numbers had been fairly consistent over the years, although 2012 had experienced a decrease in throughput, which was consistent with the general trend across the County. In response to a question from Members, officers replied that – according to the Pembrokeshire Visitor Survey and anecdotal evidence from Tenby Centre staff – the visitor profile had changed slightly over previous years. Nevertheless, visitor spend was still 4% higher than the same period in 2011. It was also noted that, according to the recent Pembrokeshire Visitor Survey, the overall visitor (non accommodation) spend in the County was down 25% on 2008.



The Centre Manager concluded his report by reminding Members that a strategic review of all the Authority's Centres was being undertaken, with a draft plan expected to be in place by April 2013. All Centre Managers, the Discovery Team Leader and the Head of Discovery were involved and it was envisaged that this fresh look at what the Centres did would undoubtedly bring positive changes, with possible action taken on previous ideas for improvement as well as new innovations.

It was **RESOLVED** that the report on the work of the National Park Centre, Tenby be noted.

#### **11. Review of Activities and Events Programme for 2012**

The Discovery Team Leader reported that his team was responsible for designing, planning and delivering the Authority's Activities and Events Programme every year. The programme had a well defined 'main season', usually commencing at the end of March/beginning of April and running until the end of October each year. Outside this period, Oriel y Parc, Castell Henllys and Carew Castle might deliver a series of independent events.

The Discovery team also undertook a thorough analysis of each activity/event each year, which provided an assessment of how successful the programme was against previous years whilst also being a useful tool for designing future programmes.

It could be seen from the report before Members that day that fewer people had attended activities/events in 2012, although the average spend per person had increased by £1.01. In addition, it was noted that an increased number of local people (within a 20mile radius) had attended this year's programme. It was also evident that events promoted locally at the Authority's Centres were better attended, although the internet was also proving to be an increasing point of access. The Director of Delivery and Discovery added that there appeared to be a definite shift away from print, with social media and promotional slots on Radio Pembrokeshire proving extremely beneficial.

It was **RESOLVED** that the report on the review of the 2012 Activities and Events Programme be noted.

#### **12. Pembrokeshire Coast National Park 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary posters**

The Director of Delivery and Discovery reported that the Committee was to have received a presentation on the Authority's successful poster campaign to promote the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the designation of the National Park. Unfortunately, the officer concerned was on sick leave and so the presentation would have to be postponed.

**NOTED.**

#### **13. Continuous Improvement Group: delegation of issues of concern**

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

