

NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

17th June 2015

Present: Councillor M James (Chair)
Mr D Ellis, Councillor ML Evans, Ms C Gwyther, Councillor P Harries, Mrs G Hayward, Councillor ST Hudson, Councillor Mrs L Jenkins, Councillor RM Lewis, Councillor PJ Morgan, Councillor R Owens, Councillor D Rees, Mr AE Sangster, Mrs M Thomas and Councillor M Williams.

(NPA Offices, Llanion Park, Pembroke Dock: 10.30am – 12.30pm)

1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Mr A Archer, Councillor R Kilmister and Councillor A Wilcox.

2. Disclosures of Interest

Mrs G Hayward disclosed a personal and prejudicial interest in Report No. 27/15 – Proposed sale of the Lime Keepers Cottage, The Parrog, Newport (*Minute 7 below refers*).

Councillor P Harries disclosed a personal and prejudicial interest in Report No. 27/15 – Proposed sale of the Lime Keepers Cottage, The Parrog, Newport (*Minute 7 below refers*).

Councillor ML Evans disclosed a personal and prejudicial interest in Report No. 28/15 – Article 4 Directions to reduce specific permitted development rights which impact on the quality of the Conservation Areas of Newport and Tenby (*Minute 8 below refers*).

Councillor P Harries disclosed a personal and prejudicial interest in Report No. 28/15 – Article 4 Directions to reduce specific permitted development rights which impact on the quality of the Conservation Areas of Newport and Tenby (*Minute 8 below refers*).

Councillor M Williams disclosed a personal and prejudicial interest in Report No. 28/15 – Article 4 Directions to reduce specific permitted development rights which impact on the quality of the Conservation Areas of Newport and Tenby (*Minute 8 below refers*).

Councillor PJ Morgan disclosed a personal and prejudicial interest in Report No. 29/15 – Conservation Areas review and the consideration of Article 4 Direction in Little Haven to reduce specific permitted development rights which impact on the quality of the Conservation Area (*Minute 9 below refers*).



Councillor P Harries disclosed a personal interest in Report No. 35/15 – Review of Destination Pembrokeshire (*Minute 15 below refers*).

NOTED.

3. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on the 6th May 2015 were presented for confirmation and signature.

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 6th May 2015 be confirmed and signed.

4. Matters arising

Minute 12 – Review of Designated Landscapes

The Chief Executive reported that National Parks Wales had met with the Designated Landscapes Review Panel in a formal setting on the 28th May 2015. It had been a very positive session where the Panel Members had been very supportive and had requested further information. The Panel was currently involved in two days of evidence-gathering sessions. The Panel's report was expected during July/August.

NOTED.

5. Reports of meetings of various of the Authority's Committees

The following reports of meetings of a number of the Authority's Committees were presented to Members for consideration/information:

- (i) Development Management Committee held on the 15th April 2015;
- (ii) Operational Review Committee held on the 22nd April 2015;
- (iii) National Parks Joint Scrutiny Group on the economy held on the 17th April 2015;
- (iv) Audit and Corporate Services Review Committee held on the 20th May 2015, and
- (v) Chief Executive Performance Review Panel held on the 1st June 2015.

It was **RESOLVED**:

- (a) that the report of the Development Management Committee held on the 15th April 2015 be received, and
- (b) that the reports of the Operational Review Committee, National Parks Joint Scrutiny Group on the economy, Audit and Corporate Services Committee and Chief Executive Performance Review Panel held on the dates referred to above be adopted.



6. The Wales Charter for Member support and development

The Chair welcomed Ms Sarah Titcombe, Organisational and Personal Development Advisor with the Welsh Local Government Association, to the meeting.

Ms Titcombe stated that it was a pleasure to be at the meeting that day to award the Authority with the Wales Charter for Member support and development. She wished to congratulate everyone on achieving the award, particularly those who had put in the Charter submission. The evidence provided with the submission showed excellent and quite pragmatic practice, with productive joint working between Members and officers to develop a support and development programme that covered what Members needed.

She went on to say that all local authorities were heading towards a turbulent period, where Members would need support. Nevertheless, the Authority showed evidence of best practice that other authorities could learn from and she believed that the current support and development programme provided a solid foundation for aspiring towards the Advanced Award.

Ms Titcombe then presented the Chair with a Certificate for achieving the Wales Charter for Member support and development.

The Chair thanked Ms Titcombe for attending the meeting to present the Award in person. He also wished to thank the Democratic Services team and his fellow Members on the Member Development Strategy Working Group for their hard work in making the Award possible.

NOTED.

(Councillor P Harries and Mrs G Hayward withdrew from the meeting when the following item was being considered.)

7. Proposed sale of The Lime Keepers Cottage, The Parrog, Newport

Members considered a detailed report submitted on behalf of the Authority's Property and Projects Group, which sought approval for the freehold sale of the Lime Keepers Cottage at The Parrog, Newport to Cymdeithas Cychod Afon Nyfer ac Harbwr Trefdraeth (the 'Association').

It was reported that the property in question had been leased by the Association since 2008 and was being used as a storage facility. The Association had now submitted an offer of £21,000 to purchase the freehold of the property. The sum proffered was £9,000 lower than the price at which the building had recently been valued by an external firm of Chartered Surveyors; however, the Property and Projects Group was of the opinion that there were a number of advantages to be gained from



selling the building to the Association, and these were set out in detail in the report before Members that day. It was also recognised that any decision to sell the property at less than market value would require the prior approval of Welsh Government.

Members supported the proposed sale in principle, but were concerned that the property could, in the future, be sold on for a profit and that the building could be put to a use that did not comply with the Authority's purposes or planning policies. Members requested assurances on the matters raised, together with an assurance that the building would be maintained in good order and that Authority would have first refusal to repurchase the property at the price bought by the Association. In addition, they requested that the Association provide some interpretation of what was quite a rare specimen of listed building.

It was **RESOLVED** that the freehold of the Lime Keepers Cottage at The Parrog, Newport be offered for sale to Cymdeithas Cychod Afon Nyfer ac Harbwr Trefdraeth at a price of £21,000, subject to:

- (a) restrictions on its future use;
- (b) a right of refusal to repurchase the property for the sum paid by the Association, i.e. £21,000;
- (c) appropriate maintenance of the building;
- (d) the provision of interpretation of the building's history, and
- (e) the prior approval of Welsh Government for the sale.

(Councillors ML Evans, P Harries and M Williams withdrew from the meeting when the following item was being considered.)

8. Article 4 Directions to reduce specific permitted development rights which impact on the quality of the Conservation Areas of Newport and Tenby

The Buildings Conservation Officer reminded Members that, at the meeting of the National Park Authority on the 25th March 2015, it was resolved that Directions be made pursuant to Article 4(2) of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 as amended in relation to the Conservation Areas of Newport and Tenby. The decision had been taken in an effort to halt the decline in the Conservation Areas due to owners changing the external appearance of their properties.

A consultation process on the proposed introduction of the Article 4 Directions was initiated on the 27th March 2015, which resulted in four responses being received in support in the Tenby area and five responses being received for the Newport proposal. Most responses for Newport requested further information, whilst one letter from a private individual supported the Authority's stance. It was also reported that,



since writing the report, a meeting had been held with Newport Town Council, which was fully in support of the proposal.

In view of the support received, it was **RESOLVED**:

- (a) that the Directions in pursuant to Article 4(2) of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 as amended be confirmed in relation to the land within Newport and Tenby Conservation Areas, and as highlighted on the maps annexed to the report before Members that day, and
- (b) that Members note the formal sealed Article 4(2) Directions reproduced and also annexed to the report before Members that day.

(Councillor PJ Morgan withdrew from the meeting when the following item was being considered.)

9. Conservation Areas review and the consideration of Article 4 Direction in Little Haven to reduce specific permitted development rights which impact on the quality of the Conservation Area

Members were reminded that there were 14 Conservation Areas in the National Park. These Areas focused on unlisted buildings and represented the settlements of greatest architectural and historic importance within the National Park, and were a key and finite resource. To establish the extent of any threat to their character and appearance (e.g. through the loss of small but significant details such as historic windows, garden walls, chimneys, etc. or the introduction of new features such as satellite dishes), baseline surveys were undertaken on a regular basis to look at both the general character of the Areas and the condition of the unlisted buildings within them.

Following on from these surveys a report had been presented to a meeting of the Authority on the 24th September 2014 that the Conservation Areas of St Davids, Newport, Tenby, Little Haven and Saundersfoot were the ones most vulnerable to change. As a result, an Article 4(2) Direction had already been confirmed for St Davids, while Directions for Newport and Tenby had been confirmed earlier that day (*Minute 8 above refers*).

The report now before Members detailed the condition of all 14 Conservation Areas as at 2015, where 8 remained static, 1 (Solva) had improved and 2 (Little Haven and Saundersfoot) had declined slightly. The remaining three (St Davids, Newport and Tenby) had already been referred to.

With regard to Saundersfoot, a survey undertaken in May 2015 indicated a small improvement in character after a period of decline. It was



therefore considered that there was no “real and specific” threat at the moment and that the Conservation Area be kept under biennial review, as would the 8 Conservation Areas whose character remained predominantly “static”. However, it was considered that there was a “real and specific” threat to the character and appearance of the unlisted houses of Little Haven therefore approval was sought for the making of Article 4(2) Directions in relation to this Conservation Area. It was emphasised that this power was limited to certain types of development and only applied where such development would front a public highway, a waterway or open space. Details of the legal process to be undertaken were set out in the report.

It was **RESOLVED**:

- (a) that Directions be made and executed pursuant to Article 4(2) of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 to prevent the development permitted by Classes A and F of Part 1, Class A of Part 2 and Class B of Part 31 of the Order from being carried out in relation to the land within Little Haven Conservation Area as shown on the draft Direction appended to the report presented to Members that day, and
- (b) that a report on representations be made to Members, seeking confirmation of the Direction within the statutory six-month period.

10. National Park Authority priorities 2015-2016

Members were appraised of a letter received from the Minister for Natural Resources, which outlined the priorities the Welsh Government wished National Park Authorities to focus on during 2015/16. These included contributing towards the Welsh Government’s green growth and tackling poverty agendas; continuing to secure improvements in planning services; contributing towards the Well Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act and being involved in the proposed Year of Adventure which the Deputy Minister for Culture, Sport and Tourism would be announcing for 2016.

It was **RESOLVED** that the letter from the Minister for Natural Resources outlining National Park Authority priorities for 2015/16 be noted.

11. Risk Register

The Business and Performance Manager reminded Members that they had requested a review of the way in which the Authority’s risk register was managed/monitored – and specifically in regard to the current approach of allocating the monitoring of risks to individual Members. Members were of the opinion that this particular approach had not proved to be effective due to a number of different factors and they believed that it would be more beneficial to be kept fully and frequently informed, particularly with regard to any changes in risk that may occur.



It was, therefore, proposed that:

- (a) in future, the risk register be reported as a standing item for both of the Authority's Review Committees;
- (b) any changes to the level of risk be reported so that any trend could be identified;
- (c) progress on actions associated with mitigating a risk be reported;
- (d) risks would no longer be allocated to individual Members for monitoring, and
- (e) the updated risk register be reported annually to the Authority.

Mrs M Thomas welcomed the change in approach to risk reporting, but suggested that officers should consider introducing a series of "early warning indicators" for key risks; if certain trigger points were passed, then it should be brought to Members' attention, either via one of the Review Committees or to a meeting of the Authority. The Business and Performance Manager replied that any issues/problems would be raised either at the officer Health and Safety or Property and Projects Groups. The Chief Executive added that the Authority's Internal Auditors would be looking at the Authority's risk management processes in due course, when this matter could be raised.

It was **RESOLVED** that the revised approach, as set out in the report of the Business and Performance Manager, for reporting on the Authority's risk register be confirmed.

12. Welsh Language Scheme: Annual Monitoring Report

Members were reminded that the Authority had adopted a Welsh Language Scheme, which set out how the Authority would give effect to the principle that in the conduct of public business in Wales, it would treat the English and Welsh languages on a basis of equality.

The Authority was required to present an Annual Monitoring Report on its performance against this Scheme, and to submit this to the Welsh Language Commissioner's Office. Members were therefore asked to endorse the report, which had been circulated to them prior to the meeting, as the Authority's submission to the Welsh Language Commissioner.

The Administration and Democratic Services Manager informed Members that this would be the last Monitoring Report to be submitted in its current format, as the reporting process was due to change in light of the implementation of the Welsh Language Standards Regulations (No. 1) 2015, which came into force on the 31st March 2015. She stated that the Welsh Language Commissioner was due to issue each National Park Authority, all local authorities and the Welsh Ministers with a draft Compliance Notice which would set out the Welsh Language Standards



to be complied with in the conduct of their business, and a report would be presented to Members on this matter in due course.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Annual Monitoring Report be endorsed as the Authority's submission to the Welsh Language Commissioner.

13. Member local resolution protocol

It was reported that the Authority, at its meeting held on the 11th December 2013, adopted a Member Local Resolution Protocol which was based upon guidance from the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales and which detailed a process on how the Authority would deal with any low level complaint made by a Member against a fellow Member.

The Monitoring Officer was pleased to report that no complaints had been received which required the initiation of the Protocol and he put this down to the fact that Members regularly attended training events and adhered to the Members' Code of Conduct.

It was **RESOLVED** that the report of the Monitoring Officer be noted.

14. Grant approvals in accordance with Section 78 of the Financial Standards (Revised 2012)

The Finance Manager reported that, in accordance with Section 78 of the Financial Standards 2012, authorisation was required from the National Park Authority where a grant/sponsorship payment of more than £10,000 was made under any one agreement.

In the current financial year, two payments fell into this category; a payment of £14,033 to the Pembrokeshire Coastal Forum to help integrate and manage coastal activity, and a payment of circa £72,000 to Pembrokeshire County Council as a contribution towards the Pembrokeshire Greenways Partnership. The details of the payments made were set out in the report before Members that day, where it was also pointed out that both payments had been made over a number of years but now required Member authorisation due to a revision in the Financial Standards in 2012.

Members were extremely supportive of the Greenways Partnership, but queried the sum paid for 'backroom expenditure' and asked for a breakdown of what was involved. The Chief Executive stated that he would arrange for a presentation to be made to Members on the work involved with the Pembrokeshire Greenways Partnership.

It was **RESOLVED** that the payments set out in the report of the Finance Manager to the Pembrokeshire Coastal Forum and Pembrokeshire County Council be approved.



15. Review of Destination Pembrokeshire

It was reported that Destination Pembrokeshire was an informal local partnership comprising representatives from Pembrokeshire County Council, the National Park Authority, Pembrokeshire Tourism and PLANED. The partnership was responsible for setting the vision and strategy for tourism development locally and for liaising with local stakeholders and Visit Wales to create and deliver the Destination Management Plan for Pembrokeshire. The work of the partnership also formed a cornerstone of the Local Service Board's commitment to foster a "competitive, productive and sustainable economy" locally, as set out in the Pembrokeshire Single Integrated Plan.

However, in recent months, the partnership had become concerned that the impact on budget cuts across a wide range of public sector organisations could, potentially, have a negative impact on both tourism services locally and the wider economy of Pembrokeshire. In addition, it was keen to ensure that the county had the best delivery mechanism possible to ensure the long-term success and growth of the tourism economy.

To this end, consultants had been commissioned to look at the future funding and governance arrangements for destination delivery in tourism, a summary of the findings of which were appended to the report before Members that day.

Members welcomed the report; they were firmly of the opinion that tourism was an important element of Pembrokeshire's economy and there was a need for a formal structure/group to develop what they considered to be an important piece of the jigsaw in the sustainability of Pembrokeshire's communities.

It was **RESOLVED** that the report of the Director of Delivery and Discovery on the review of Destination Pembrokeshire be noted.

16. Display of Constable painting at Oriel y Parc

Members received a presentation on the fact that one of John Constable's most famous paintings, *Salisbury Cathedral from the meadows*, was to be displayed at Oriel y Parc during 2016.

NOTED.

(Councillor M Williams tendered his apologies and left the meeting at this juncture.)



17. Wales Audit Office Annual Improvement Plan and Delivering with less (planning services) reports

The Chief Executive informed Members that the Annual Improvement Plan and the Delivering with less (planning services) reports were still awaited from the Wales Audit Office.

NOTED.

