

National Park Authority
20 May 2026

Present (In-person)

Dr M Havard (Chair)

Miss F Day, Councillor T Evans, Councillor C George, Councillor SL Hancock MBE, Mr J Hogg MBE, Councillor M James and Mr GA Jones.

Present (Online)

Councillor M Bowen, Councillor D Clements, Ms H Gwenllian, Councillor B Price, Councillor S Skyrme-Blackhall, Councillor V Thomas and Councillor C Williams BEM.

Also in attendance:

Joy Arkley (Head of People Services), Catrin Evans (Head of Finance & Fundraising), Georgia Jones (Democratic Services Officer), Llinos Jones (Simultaneous Interpreter), Tegryn Jones (Chief Executive), Michael Kent (Monitoring Officer), Caroline Llewellyn (Democratic Services Manager) and Sara Morris (Director of Place and Engagement).

[Preseli Suite, Llanion Park Offices and Online, 10.00am – 11:50am]

1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs S Hoss, Councillor A Tinley and Councillor M Williams.

2. Disclosures of Interest

No disclosures of interest were received.

3. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on the 25 March 2026 were presented for confirmation.

The Chair highlighted that in the previous meeting, Members had been informed that Councillor S Alderman had left the Authority and had been thanked for his contributions.

On the proposal of Dr M Havard, seconded by Councillor S Hancock, it was **resolved** that, subject to the above addition, the minutes of the meeting held on the 25 March 2026 be confirmed and signed.

4. Action Log and Matters Arising

Although not featured on the action log, the Chair requested an update with regards to the Authority's Coasteering Licensing Scheme as it had formed an important part of discussions in the previous meeting. The Officer responded that work in relation to the Coasteering Licensing



scheme had been progressing however the process had taken longer than anticipated as a result of the environmental assessments that were required and the time taken to ensure the appropriate provision for consultation with relevant bodies was in place. It was confirmed that all coasteering providers that were signed up to the concordat had been informed that the concordat would remain in effect until the new scheme was in place. The Officer added that meetings were being scheduled with operators to discuss the draft license proposals for each site.

Noted.

[Councillor V Thomas joined the meeting during consideration of the following item].

5. Chair's Announcements

The Chair reported that she had attended the following events/meetings in the past month:

- An event at Carew Castle with Councillors C George and V Thomas to plant a descendent sapling of the felled Sycamore Gap tree with a group of local children as part of the 'Trees of Hope' project.
- A meeting with the Friends of the Pembrokeshire Coast at the St Brides Pump House to see the engine which had been restored by Members of the Friends of the Pembrokeshire Coast. The Chair congratulated the Friends for their work in repairing and maintaining the historical feature.
- The Campaign for National Parks Marine Park Steering Group with Tegryn Jones.
- A meeting of the Pembrokeshire Nature Partnership with Miss Fiona Day.
- A Ffermio Bro Local Assessment Panel meeting where they discussed the work that had been completed to date and the next steps for the scheme. The Chair highlighted that applications for the scheme would open the following week and Members were asked to share the information once available.
- A meeting with Officers of Eryri National Park Authority to hand over the Chairing responsibilities for the National Park Wales meetings.

The Chair reported that although she had not been able to attend, the Walk the Path for Wellbeing event had taken place with groups from Pembrokeshire, Cardigan and Carmarthenshire involved. The Chair congratulated the team for the successful event and thanked Officers for their hard work.



The Deputy Chair of the Authority reported that she had attended a WLGA meeting on behalf of the Authority however no topics pertinent to the National Park had been discussed.

The Chair informed Members of the recent passing of Jill Simpson, who had retired in the Autumn of 2025 after two decades of working for the Authority. Her great service and significant contributions to the Authority and National Park were acknowledged and Members expressed their condolences to the family.

Noted.

6. Reports of other Authority Committee meetings

The following minutes of several of the Authority's Committee meetings were presented to Members for consideration:

- Development Management Committee held on the 11/03/2026
- Grants Committee held on 21/01/2026
- Audit & Corporate Services Review Committee held on 25/02/2026
- Operational Review Committee held on 04/03/2026
- Standards Committee held on 15/04/2026

It was **resolved** that the minutes of the above-mentioned committees be received.

Noted.

[Councillor D Clements joined the meeting during consideration of the next item].

7. Updated Financial Standards 2026

The Head of Finance and Fundraising presented a report that sought Members approval for the adoption of a suite of Financial Standards that set out the Authority's required approach to key areas of financial management and control. It was reported that the Financial Standards had previously been updated in 2020 and had therefore been rewritten to reflect current operational practices. It was highlighted that the updated Financial Standards proposed an increase in delegation limits.

A Member queried whether staff training would be conducted in relation to the updated Financial Standards. It was confirmed that should the revised Standards be approved, staff would be informed of the updates, and staff training would be undertaken where required.

With regards to risk, a Member requested further details regarding the long-term implications with liabilities for the organisation such as the reserves required for any worst-case scenarios. The Chief Executive



confirmed that a financial reserves policy had been approved by Members in March of 2026 and it highlighted that the general reserves should be maintained at no less than £1,400k (the minimum level had been determined following consideration of the full range of strategic, operational and financial risks facing the Authority). The Chief Executive added that the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority had been identified as the Public Body with the biggest reserves in the country and he confirmed that the organisation's liabilities were considered to be manageable at present. The Head of Finance and Fundraising confirmed that the financial reserves policy would be reviewed annually to ensure the reserves level remained sufficient.

A discussion ensued as a Member raised concern regarding the level of sensitive information available to the public and whether the level of transparency was excessive in this instance. The Chief Executive agreed to discuss the matter further with the Authority's Senior Leadership Team.

On the proposal of Dr M Havard, seconded by Councillor D Clements, it was **resolved** that;

- i. the Financial Standards as set out in Appendix A to this report be approved
- ii. the approved Financial Standards take immediate effect
- iii. It be noted that compliance with the Financial Standards will be mandatory and monitored through existing financial governance and internal control arrangements.
- iv. the financial operational procedures attached (Appendix B) which support the Financial Standards be noted.
- v. the Head of Finance & fundraising be authorised to make minor, non-material amendments to the Financial Standards where required to reflect legislative change, audit recommendation, or operational improvement, with any material changes reported back to Committee for approval

8. Health & Safety Policy

The Head of People Services presented an updated version of the Health & Safety Policy for Members approval. It was reported that the policy was reviewed annually however minimal changes had been made since the last review. The policy set out the framework by which the Authority managed Health & Safety at every level of the organisation, clearly defining roles and responsibilities of the Health & Safety Group, all staff and volunteers.

The Head of People Services highlighted that the policy had been subject to an annual review however as there had been limited changes to the



policy since the last review, it was suggested that the review be amended to every three years, with any fundamental changes reported to Members when required. Members agreed that this was a pragmatic approach to reviewing the policy. The Chair highlighted that the Health & Safety Annual Report was reported to the Audit Committee and so it was suggested for clarity that a statement be featured in that report to confirm that there had been no changes to the policy.

On the proposal of Councillor D Clements, seconded by Councillor M James, it was **resolved** that the Health & Safety Policy be approved.

9. Standards Annual Review

The Monitoring Officer presented a report that provided an overview of how the Standards Committee's functions had been discharged, and of conduct matters generally within the Authority. The report featured details regarding the Committee's terms of reference, Members training, complaints, trends, local resolution protocol, dispensations, unacceptable actions by complainants' policy, annual report of the ombudsman and consultations.

With regards to trends, it was reported that there had been an increase in complaints, including FOI, EIR and Subject Access Requests under Data Protection Legislation that had clearly been prepared using artificial intelligence (AI). A Member queried whether the Authority had a plan in place to deal with the ever-increasing volume of requests received, should the trend continue. The Chief Executive highlighted the challenge of balancing the need to be transparent as an organisation with limited resources available. It was recognised that these challenges were not unique to the Authority, and it was confirmed that Officers liaised with colleagues in other National Parks to share best practice to ensure the team were working as efficiently as possible.

The Chair highlighted that following recent recruitment to the Standards Committee, the gender balance was no longer equal. Officers agreed that this would be a consideration when recruiting to the Standards Committee in future.

Noted.

10. Pay & Grading Review

The Head of People Services presented a report that provided a review of the Pay and Grading Review and featured details regarding the process, staff engagement, the main outcomes, the financial impacts, the timescale, the appeals, and the lessons learnt from the process.



It was noted that as part of the review, 9 posts had been evaluated at a lower grade and so in these instances, the Pay Protection policy applied. In response to a Member's query, it was confirmed that the pay protection policy offered 3 years of protection on a sliding scale however at the end of the appeal process, no posts were on protected pay.

Members commended the Head of People Services and the team for their hard work in delivering the Pay and Grading Review which was considered to be a fair and transparent process that had delivered a resilient and robust outcome for the Authority and its staff.

The Chair took the opportunity to thank UNISON for supporting the Authority and individual staff throughout the review process.

Noted.

The Minutes of this meeting were confirmed at the meeting of the National Park Authority held on 24 June 2026 without amendment

