

Chief Executive Performance Review Panel

17 March 2021

Attendees:

Cllr Paul Harries (Chair)

Cllr Di Clements (Deputy Chair)

Dr Rachel Heath-Davies (Deputy Chair, Audit and Corporate Services Review Committee) (Note taker)

Mr Tegryn Jones (Chief Executive)

Notes of meeting:

1. Apologies

All Members were present and there were no apologies.

2. Disclosures of interest

There were no disclosures of interest by Members.

3. Exemption of the public

It was agreed that the public would be excluded due to the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 12 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

4. CEO review

The Members reviewed the CEO's performance against the objectives set. He had presented his written report in advance of the meeting and all Members had read and prepared in advance. The CEO went through each of the objectives in turn and the Members asked questions on each.

4.1. Objective A – Financial

- 4.1.1. The CEO reported that the financial situation had turned out to be far better than expected in the circumstances. He was grateful to the Welsh Government for their support for the Authority through Covid pandemic with various grants. The Chair outlined the ongoing pressures that are likely on public finances and for the CEO to plan for the inevitable drop in public funding. RHD suggested a budget profiling approach to planning for various scenarios. Members also reiterated the importance of efficient working and resilience and for seeking opportunities from the pandemic to identify potential savings for

the medium and longer term now that new ways of working had been tried. The Panel agreed that some budget profiling would be useful to plan for the medium to long term.

- 4.1.2. The CEO also linked this to objectives B and C on priorities. He foresaw that decarbonisation by 2030 needed to be prioritised in terms of spending and talked of potential changes in roles or additional expertise to take this work forward in future.
- 4.1.3. The Chair shared insights from the Child Poverty conference held at Pembrokeshire County Council that morning and the panel agreed that there were concerning statistics in Pembrokeshire and the CEO talked of a poverty of aspiration where the Park could contribute but not be the sole driver for change in this regard. DC cautioned to take care as the role the Authority could play was limited.
- 4.1.4. The CEO explained that the grant applications to the Welsh Government had been last minute and there had been limited opportunity to involve Members in generating ideas for bids. Having workshops with Members and staff to discuss ideas were useful so that key stakeholders are involved in decision making and this to continue in advance of any future opportunities arising.

4.2. Objective B – Scale of ambition

- 4.2.1. The CEO said that currently the focus of some funding bids was too small scale and that this created a number of issues around capacity of staff to deliver projects. In future he hoped that the Authority could identify fewer projects that made a more significant impact. He agreed that there was potential for Members to be involved in this process.
- 4.2.2. Looking ahead, the CEO had 4 key processes in mind: Plan on a page (high level Park strategy); this strategy would drive the Corporate Plan (that needed to be shorter and clearer); and that these two would lead to a review of structure and roles; and from this a review of salary scales.
- 4.2.3. The Chair asked about the recent Audit Wales report and the CEO agreed to circulate that report to panel members.
- 4.2.4. RHD asked for more information regarding the narrative included in the written report on the impact of furlough on staff. The CEO explained that some staff had found it challenging to be furloughed. The CEO also explained that there had been an impact on managers also.
- 4.2.5. DC asked about the opportunities emanating from the pandemic and whether some of the savings that had been made could be retained. While there was a decrease in

income, there had also been a decrease in costs and there was an opportunity to invest for the future.

- 4.2.6. The CEO took on board the feedback and identified procurement changes as one area to improve.

4.3. Objective C – Future priorities

- 4.3.1. The CEO hoped to table priorities at the May NPA and that this would be followed by a consultation and then a paper would come back to the Board in June / July.

4.4. Objective D – Tackling climate change

- 4.4.1. The CEO talked about the National Parks Partnership that had secured a pro bono agreement with Palladium and also a study of carbon based on the 8 Welsh Designated Landscapes.

4.5. Objective E – Destination Management structure

- 4.5.1. Now that the entity was up and running, it was more about the operations and seeking the benefits from it. The CEO said that £91k of grant funding had been received by Visit Pembrokeshire for marketing for Pembrokeshire County Council. DC outlined how she would envisage this gradually being funded by private companies with Park funding decreasing over time.
- 4.5.2. DC queried the linkages between brands and marketing campaigns and RHD raised the links too with Celtic Routes and the panel agreed that these would need to be directed to ensure they deliver and do not duplicate effort or resources or potentially confuse.
- 4.5.3. The CEO agreed with the need to align these and to also avoid duplication.

4.6. Objective F – Staff health and wellbeing

- 4.6.1. The health and wellbeing of staff had especially been a priority during the last period and the CEO believed that it would continue so for some time.
- 4.6.2. The application for the Corporate Health Standard had been delayed due to the need to focus time on the health and wellbeing of staff.

4.7. Objective G – Efficient ways of working

4.8. Objective H – WLGA Advanced Member Charter

- 4.8.1. The application for the Advanced Members Charter was ready and Members were due to agree submitting the application at the next NPA meeting.

4.9. Objective I – Work with partners and influence policy

- 4.9.1. The CEO explained that the National Park Wales Manifesto had been distributed to the main political parties and while there had been little feedback to date, he hoped that a number

of the recommendations would be adopted by political parties in their manifestos.

4.9.2. [Due to signal problems, the CEO left the meeting a few times during this item].

4.9.3. The Chair described the WLGA Rural Manifesto and the CEO concurred that the Chair's participation on the WLGA Rural Forum had proved useful.

4.10. Objective J – Involve the Chair

4.10.1. Members had submitted Notices of Motion recently which showed that Members were engaging well. The recent workshop on priorities had also engaged Members. The committee structures do not lend themselves to open discussion necessarily whereas workshops were welcomed as a way to discuss themes and issues i.e. the strategic direction, budgeting and how the organisation is run.

5. Setting future objectives

The following objectives were agreed for the next reporting period:

- i. Ensure that the resources of the Authority are managed effectively with consideration given to mid to long term financial planning, taking account of the impact and lessons from Covid19, including Members in the process, raising staff ambition, building efficiency and resilience through new ways of working and seeking opportunities and innovation through new sources of funding;
- ii. Complete the corporate review, to develop the Authority's long-term strategy, revise the Corporate and Resources Plan, review the structure of the Authority and revise the Salary Scales;
- iii. Develop and implement initiatives on land and within the marine to enable the Authority to assist with tackling climate change and the loss of biodiversity;
- iv. Support the health and wellbeing of staff through supporting the HR Manager to complete a revision of policies and complete the Welsh Government Corporate Health Standard; and
- v. Work with partners and engage external stakeholders to continue to raise the profile of the Authority and influence policies post Brexit as well as leading up to and after the 2021 Senedd elections.