

# National Park Authority

15 June 2022

## Present (In Person)

Councillor Mrs D Clements (Chair)

Councillor Steve Alderman, Mrs J James, Councillor M James, Councillor R Jordan, Mr GA Jones, Councillor P Kidney, Councillor PJ Morgan, Councillor R Owens, Councillor Mrs S Skyrme-Blackhall, Councillor Mrs M Wiggins, Councillor A Wilcox and Councillor C Williams.

## Present (Remotely)

Dr M Havard, Dr R Heath-Davies, Mrs S Hoss and Dr RM Plummer.

[Llanion Park, Pembroke Dock and Remotely 11.00am –  
1.05pm]

### 1. **Apologies**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Dr SL Hancock.

### 2. **Disclosures of Interest**

There were no disclosures of interest.

### 3. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on the 30 March 2022 were presented for confirmation and signature.

It was **resolved** that the minutes of the meeting held on the 30 March 2022 be confirmed and signed.

### 4. **Matters arising**

#### Notice of Motion regarding a Freshwater East Play Area (Minute 7)

The Chief Executive advised that a report on this matter would be presented to the Operational Review Committee later in the month.

#### **Noted.**

#### Land Purchase as part of the Sustainable Landscapes Sustainable Places Funding for National Park Carbon Sequestration (Minute 10)

The Chief Executive advised that purchase of the land was slowly making progress.

#### **Noted.**



## 5. Chair's Announcements

The Chair noted that she had attended the recent visit to Saundersfoot by the Minister, Julie James, at which she had opened the Authority's Electric Vehicle Charging point network and had also viewed the regeneration of the harbour and biodiversity improvements at nearby Trevayne. On that day also the Welsh Local Government Association had presented the Authority with its Advanced Charter for Member Support and Development. The Chair had also attended the re-opening of Picton Castle Walled Garden. The Authority's condolences were passed to Councillor M James on the passing of his mother and congratulations were given to Steve Drinkwater, Chair of the Friends of PCNPA who had recently been awarded an MBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours list.

One Member asked how many fast chargers the Authority had installed as part of the network and were advised that there were 20, and that this would allow 120 cars to be charged at sites across the county. Members asked for a map of charging points and it was agreed to circulate this.

**Noted.**

## 6. Reports of meetings of various Authority 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 9 March 2022;
- (ii) Operational Review Committee held on 16 March 2022;
- (iii) Chief Executive Performance Review Panel held on 16 March 2022;
- (iv) Youth Committees held on 8 March 2022 and 26 April 2022;
- (v) Sustainable Development Fund Committee held on 23 March 2022; and
- (vi) Audit and Corporate Services Review Committee held on 11 May 2022.

Noting that Councillor K Doolin had ceased to be a Member of the National Park Authority, it was requested that the minutes of the Operational Review Committee express Members' thanks to him for chairing that Committee.

Referring to the Audit and Corporate Services Review Committee's consideration of Audit Wales' report on Sustainable Tourism, the Chief Executive agreed to circulate this to Members.

It was **resolved** that the minutes of the above mentioned Committees be adopted/received.



## **7. Term of Government Remit Letter for Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority**

Members were reminded that the Authority received the majority of its funding from the Welsh Government, which outlined its priorities in a Remit Letter. The Authority had recently received a Remit letter that covered the Term of Government (until 2026) and a copy of this was appended to the report. The Authority had a long-established relationship with the Welsh Government and was well placed to deliver the majority of the requirements listed in the Remit Letter. A longer-term Remit Letter enabled the Authority to plan its work over the longer term and would be incorporated in its corporate planning and work programmes.

Members welcomed the longer term approach, but felt it was a shame that the budget would still be provided annually. They were interested in the creation of the three Strategic Lead posts to work across protected landscapes in Wales, and for which additional funding would be available. However some concern was expressed regarding Welsh Government's proposals to create of a National Forest for Wales, as this could take up good quality agricultural land which was needed for food production. It was felt that better management of existing woodland would be more beneficial.

**Noted.**

## **8. Nutrient Management Board**

Members were reminded that in January 2021, Natural Resources Wales (NRW) had published a report which assessed compliance with revised phosphorus targets for Welsh Riverine Special Areas of Conservation (SACs). Of the 107 water bodies assessed, 61% had failed. This included the River Cleddau SAC, which had a failure rate of 88%.

In light of the above, NRW had issued interim planning guidance advising competent authorities to undertake a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) prior to determining any planning application that would generate an increased volume or concentration of wastewater to ensure that the design would not contribute to increased phosphate levels in the SAC. Therefore, any development that increased phosphate levels in the SAC was not acceptable under the Habitats Regulations Assessments.

NRW had requested that impacted Authorities establish a Nutrient Management Plan Board for the River Cleddau SAC whose role was to identify and deliver actions to achieve the conservation targets of the SAC. The primary mechanism for achieving this would be through the delivery of the Nutrient Management Plan. Terms of Reference for the Board were appended to the report.



The first meeting of the Board, at which the Authority was represented by the Director of Planning and Park Direction, had recently taken place, and approval was sought for the delegation of decisions relating to the Nutrient Management Board to the Chief Executive and Director of Planning and Park Direction.

Noting that the guidance that had been issued had serious implications for the provision of housing in the County, Members asked to be kept regularly informed of the work of the Board. The Chief Executive added that the Authority was not currently significantly impacted by the River Cleddau SAC in terms of its impact upon planning decisions, however if the report was extended to include Marine SACs it was likely there would be significant effects and if this occurred a further report would be made to Members.

It was **resolved** that decisions relation to the Cleddau SAC Nutrient Management Board be delegated to the Chief Executive Officer and Director of Planning and Park Direction.

#### **9. CCTV Policy**

It was reported that this policy replaced and updated the Authority's site-specific CCTV policies, and that it would support a more co-ordinated approach to the management of CCTV systems across Authority sites by having one policy. Approval of the policy was sought.

Members considered the policy to be comprehensive and well written. Noting that the policy allowed for the use of CCTV for disciplinary purposes (Para 10) a question was asked whether other covert uses should be covered in the policy. The Monitoring Officer advised that the Authority was not permitted to undertake covert surveillance under the Regulatory Powers Act.

It was **resolved** that the CCTV Policy be approved.

#### **10. Public Convenience Funding**

It was reported that a letter had been received from the Chief Executive of Pembrokeshire County Council (PCC) asking the Authority to provide a contribution to the management of public conveniences near National Park Authority run car parks through increasing car parking charges and ring fencing the additional income and transferring that income to Pembrokeshire County Council. Members were reminded that a previous request for a financial contribution in February 2020 had been turned down by Authority Members.

It was also noted that the management and funding of public conveniences in Pembrokeshire was undertaken by PCC. While there



were 13 toilets located on or near land owned by PCNPA the Authority did not manage these facilities and while the Authority owned three of these buildings they were leased to PCC. The provision of public conveniences was a non-statutory service for PCC, although it was one that was valued by the public.

The Chief Executive added that the Authority had not previously adopted the approach of ringfencing money from an activity and passing this on to another organisation, and questioned whether this could set a precedent. He also noted that the Authority had not yet sought advice from Solicitors as to whether this action was possible and advised that if Members were minded to support the principle, the earliest such a scheme could be introduced would be 2023 due to the 12 week statutory consultation period required for amendments to the Car Parking Order. The other consideration was the potential introduction of a tourism levy in future, which could provide funding for toilet provision.

While all Members agreed that the provision of public toilets was important, some felt that this was something that could and should be funded by PCC, if they were to make different decisions regarding the money that they raised. It was also noted that the Authority paid £800k for the maintenance of public rights of way within the PCC area and that this should be used as a bargaining chip in any discussions.

However other Members felt that it was important for the Authority to pay its share for the provision of these important facilities, including improved disabled facilities, and it was proposed and seconded that the principle of ringfencing money for this purpose be agreed. It was considered that the issue of car parking charges and seasonal permits was something that needed to be looked at again, and the Chief Executive agreed that a report on this would be presented to a future meeting of the Authority.

An amendment to the motion was proposed, that rather than committing to providing funding, the Authority open preliminary talks with PCC at officer level or as an officer/Member working group and use those as an opportunity to negotiate on issues to the benefit of the Authority including the provision of 'changing places' toilets which provided improved facilities for disabled users. This was seconded, and the vote was won. This became the substantive motion and following a second vote, the motion was carried.

It was **resolved** that the Authority open preliminary talks with PCC at officer level or as an officer/Member working group and use those as an opportunity to negotiate on issues to the benefit of the Authority including the provision of 'changing places' toilets which provided improved facilities for disabled users.



## 11. Recruitment Panel for Director Post

Members were reminded that the Authority had a delegation scheme for appointing staff that delegated responsibility to the Chief Executive, with the exception of Statutory roles such as Section 151 Officer, and Directors. Responsibility for these appointments rested with Members and was included in the Terms of Reference of the HR Committee.

Following the resignation of the current Director of Planning and Park Direction a decision had been taken to commence the recruitment of a new Director as soon as possible in order to seek to minimise the period without a Director. Therefore, the HR Committee met on 18th May to commence the process. At this meeting Members discussed the key criteria for appointing a new Director and guidance was provided to the HR Manager to undertake this process.

However, due to a change of Membership of the Authority following Local Government elections and possible changes following the National Park Authority Annual General Meeting, the HR Committee, at its 18th May meeting, suggested that to ensure continuity for the recruitment process that the recruitment panel for the duration of this appointment process should only comprise those Members who attended that initial meeting. It was proposed that this should apply to this particular recruitment process only.

Members were happy with this suggestion, and the motion was moved and seconded.

One Member noted that when the current Director was appointed, the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Development Management Committee also sat on the interview panel, and it was proposed that those Members be similarly co-opted onto the panel on this occasion. This was also seconded, and a vote on this amendment was won.

A vote was then taken on the substantive motion that the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Development Management Committee be included on the Recruitment Panel for the Director of Planning and Park Direction, in addition to the Members outlined, and this was won.

It was **resolved** that the following Members Comprise the Recruitment Panel for the Director of Planning and Park Direction:

|  |                   |
|--|-------------------|
| Cllr M James (Chair of HR Committee)       | Cllr D Clements   |
| Mrs J James (Deputy Chair of HR Committee) | Dr R Heath Davies |
| Dr M Havard (Chair of DM Committee)        | Cllr P Morgan     |
| Mr G Jones (Deputy Chair of DM Committee)  |                   |



## 12. Corporate Events

The report set out those events to which Members of the Authority had been invited during the forthcoming year and Members were asked to agree attendance at these.

At the meeting, the date and location of the Welsh Local Government Association Conference were provided, as these had now become available. As not all Members were present that day, details of the events would be circulated to all Members to give all those who were interested the opportunity to respond.

It was **resolved** that Members be authorised to attend the events as follows:

- (a) Wales Planning Conference: Planning for Health and Well-being – 23 June 2022 at Mercure Holland House Hotel, Cardiff (Chair/Deputy Chair DM Committee)
- (b) UK National Parks conference hosted by Exmoor National Park between 27 and 29 September 2022 (*4-6 Members*)
- (c) WLGA Annual Conference, in Llandudno on 22 September 2022 (*Up to 2 Members*)
- (d) Europarc Conference at Argelès-sur-Mer, France from 3 – 7 October 2022. The Focus would be “Climate is changing! How can Protected Areas adapt?” (*Up to 2 Members*)
- (e) Members’ National Induction Course date and venue to be confirmed (*usually new Members, or those who have not yet had the opportunity to attend an Induction Course*)

[Councillor P Kidney tendered his apologies and left the meeting during consideration of the following item]

## 13. Welsh Language Standards Annual Report

Members were reminded that the Authority was required to comply with the Welsh Language Standards Compliance Notice issued to it under Section 44 of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011. Standards 158, 164 and 170 of the Compliance Notice required an Annual Report to be produced by 30 June every year and the report for 2021/22 was presented for Members’ consideration.

It was noted that the statistics for the number of website views per year had not been provided (para 2.6.1). The officer apologised for this omission and advised that there had been 5,583 hits on the Welsh site,



and 1096,366 on the English. Also the figures relating to the Welsh language skills of Members (para 4.6.4) were questioned. The officer advised that the figures related to the previous Membership of the Authority and that she would update these.

Members considered that the report showed progress overall, however they were concerned by the low numbers using the Welsh website and considered that greater analysis of the reasons for this was needed. Also, it was suggested that an action plan was needed for the replacement of signage (2.8.1) to give an indication of timing. While sympathising with the technological difficulties, concern was expressed regarding the difficulty of offering speakers, particularly at the Development Management Committee, the opportunity to address the Committee through the medium of Welsh (2.4), and it was hoped that this could be addressed; it was suggested that the bracketed words relating to the provision of a simultaneous translation service should read 'if requested', rather than 'if required'. It was felt that the report should give a better sense of how the Authority was engaging with Welsh speakers through its consultations (3.2) rather than focussing on the activity. It was suggested that the section on recruitment (4.9.1) did not adequately reflect the discussions that took place in respect of the language requirements for each vacant post within the Authority. Finally, it was requested that a progress report was made in respect of the Authority's 5 year strategy.

The officer agreed to amend the report accordingly. She advised that a review of the Authority's 5 year strategy would be undertaken shortly, and a report on this would be presented to the Authority.

It was **resolved** that the Annual Report be endorsed as the Authority's submission to the Welsh Language Commissioner, subject to the above amendments.

