

# National Park Authority

27 July 2022

## Present (In Person)

Councillor Mrs D Clements (Chair)

Councillor Steve Alderman, Councillor Dr SL Hancock, Councillor M James, Councillor R Jordan, Mr GA Jones, Councillor PJ Morgan, Councillor R Owens, Councillor V Thomas, Councillor Mrs M Wiggins, Councillor A Wilcox and Councillor C Williams.

## Present (Remotely)

Dr M Havard, Dr R Heath-Davies, Mrs S Hoss and Mrs J James.

[Llanion Park, Pembroke Dock and Remotely 10.00am – 11.20am]

### 1. **Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mrs S Skyrme-Blackhall and Dr RM Plummer.

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

There were no disclosures of interest.

### 3. **Minutes**

The minutes of the AGM and Ordinary meetings held on the 15 June 2022 were presented for confirmation and signature.

It was **resolved** that the minutes of the AGM and Ordinary meetings held on the 15 June 2022 be confirmed and signed.

### 4. **Matters arising**

#### a) Representation on External Organisations (Minute 6b), AGM 15 June 2022)

It was reported that the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Trust had confirmed Councillor M Wiggins appointment to the Trust at its meeting the previous day.

**Noted.**

#### b) Welsh Language Standards Annual Report (Minute 13, Ordinary Meeting 15 June 2022)

An indication was sought of when a report on the Authority's Five-Year Strategy would come before the Authority. The officer advised that a report reviewing progress on the previous report and looking forward to the next five years would be presented in the Autumn.



**Noted.**

- c) Notice of Motion regarding a Freshwater East Play Area (Minute 4a), Ordinary meeting 15 June 2022)

The Chief Executive advised that this Notice of Motion had been delegated to the Operational Review Committee which had requested that officers engage further with Lamphey Community Council to try to take the matter forward. Although contact had been made, no response had been received and the matter would be considered at the next meeting of the Committee when a recommendation would be made to the Authority on whether any further action was required. Councillor Kidney would be kept informed.

**Noted.**

## **5. Chair's Announcements**

The Chair noted that she, alongside Dr M Havard, had attended a visit by Dawn Bowden MS, Deputy Minister for Arts and Sport, to Oriel y Parc, when she had viewed the 'On your Doorstep' exhibition. The Chair had also been privileged to meet HRH Prince Charles on his recent visit to St Govans when he had been presented with a 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary print of the Chapel; following this a meeting had been held with Friends of the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park. The Chair and Chief Executive had also attended the first day of the Royal Welsh Show, where they had attended the President's lunch.

A welcome was extended to Councillor Vanessa Thomas who had been appointed to the Authority by Pembrokeshire County Council following Councillor P Kidney's resignation. Also congratulations were given to Councillor M James on the birth of his Grandson.

**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 Committees held on 18 May 2022, 13 June 2022, 15 June 2022, 22 June 2022 and 4 July 2022; and
- (ii) Member Support and Development Committee held on 11 May 2022.

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



## 7. **Member Appointments**

It was reported that there were a number of vacancies on the Authority's Committees and groups following the resignation of Councillor P Kidney.

It was **resolved** that Councillor V Thomas be appointed to the Audit and Corporate Services Review Committee and the Employee Forum and that Councillor R Jordan be appointed to the Member Support and Development Committee.

## 8. **ISA260 Report to those Charged with Governance**

The Finance Manager (who was also the Authority's Chief Financial Officer) presented the Authority's Statement of Accounts for 2021/22 and explained that these had been provided to the Auditors on 13 June 2022 and had also been reviewed by the Audit and Corporate Services Review Committee on 13 July 2022. The Chair then welcomed Jason Blewitt from Audit Wales to the meeting. He explained that it was intended to issue an unqualified audit opinion on the accounts and that there were no uncorrected misstatements, the corrections being mainly presentational in nature. He thanked the Finance Manager for his help with the Audit, noting that it was easy to forget what a mammoth task it was to prepare the accounts and have them audited.

Members agreed that such a task was not to be underestimated and were pleased with the unqualified nature of the audit opinion. A couple of typographical errors were noted in the accounts and the Auditor was happy that these could be amended before the accounts were signed. The Chief Executive added his thanks to the Finance Team, and to all staff across the Authority for their contributions which had resulted in the positive financial position in what had been a challenging year. The Chair asked that Members' thanks were also passed on to staff, and thanked the Audit Team for their work.

Members noted that car park income had increased, and officers advised that this was due in part to the introduction of charging at four additional car parks. The Chief Executive added that the issue of car park charging was likely to be the subject of further reports during the coming months.

It was **resolved** that:

- a) The ISA260 Report from Audit Wales be accepted; and
- b) The Statement of Accounts 2021/22 be approved.

## 9. **Award of Funding in relation to the Sustainable Landscapes, Sustainable Places Programme for the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority**

It was reported that in recent years, the Authority had received capital funding from Welsh Government through the Sustainable Landscapes, Sustainable Places Programme. The Authority had been successful



again this year, and the report detailed in year funding of up to £2,500,000 during the period 2022-2025, a proportion of which could be used for administration and other revenue costs.

While officers acknowledged that the timing of the process had not been ideal, the three year funding was welcomed, and it was noted that the themes of the projects accorded with the Authority's priority strategy areas of Nature Recovery, Sustainable Tourism and Decarbonisation. The funding would allow for three additional members of staff to be employed on fixed term contracts to undertake the work, but nevertheless there would be additional demands on officers.

Members were pleased with the award of funding and commended officers for their work in preparing the successful proposals, despite the fact that the timing had prevented Member involvement. It was suggested that further details on each of the projects could be provided through a Member workshop later in the year. Officers reassured Members that some forethought had been given to administration of the funding through the proposed organisational restructure and that management of the financial risk, for what was a substantial grant, would be undertaken through the regular reports to the Audit and Corporate Services Review Committee.

It was **resolved** that the expenditure associated with Sustainable Landscapes, Sustainable Places grant award, and the ensuing amendment to the Authority's 2022/25 revenue and capital budgets be approved

## **10. Membership of Committees**

Members were reminded that at the Annual General Meeting on 15 June 2022, it had been reported that consideration of the membership of the Investigating and Disciplinary Committee, Grievance Committee and Appeals Committee would be confirmed once the Chairs and Deputy Chairs of the Authority and other relevant Committees had been appointed. This had now taken place and suggested compositions of the Committees were set out in the report.

Members were also reminded that a Green Room Development Group had been established in September 2021 to help manage the risks associated with the project to replace the current meeting (Green) room. This group was chaired by the Director of Countryside, Community and Visitor Services with assistance from relevant officers, and Councillors P Baker and PJ Morgan were appointed as Member representatives. Following Councillor Baker's retirement from the Authority, it was now necessary to appoint a Member to replace him on the Group.



It was **resolved** that:

- a) Membership of the Investigating and Disciplinary Committee, Grievance Committee and Appeals Committee be confirmed as set out in the report.
- b) Councillor R Jordan be appointed to serve on the Green Room Development Group, alongside Councillor P Morgan.

## 11. Hand Arm Vibration Syndrome (HAVS) Policy

It was reported that Hand Arm Vibration Syndrome (HAVS) represented one of the more prominent risks to the health and safety of Authority employees. To ensure continued compliance with the Control of Vibration at Work Regulations 2005, the Authority's three-yearly policy review programme and a more rigorous approach to 'risk assessment' for staff using vibrating equipment, the Human Resources (HR) team had consulted staff and managers across the Authority to develop an overarching policy and approach on HAVS. As part of the wider consultation process, Members of both the Audit and Corporate Services Review and HR Committees had commented on the policy, which was now before the Authority for approval.

A number of comments had been provided to the HR Manager prior to the meeting, moreover it was suggested that the risk controls set out in section 6 of the policy should be reworded so that consideration 'must' (rather than 'should') be given to them. The HR Manager agreed to amend the policy and reassured Members that reports monitoring its delivery would be made to the Audit and Corporate Services Review Committee.

It was **resolved** that the Hand Arm Vibration Policy be adopted subject to the amendments set out above and prior to the meeting.

## 12. Thanks

Noting that this was the last meeting to be attended by the Director of Planning and Park Direction, the Chair thanked her for her work and wished her well for the future.

