

Operational Review Committee

15 March 2023

Present: Dr R Plummer (Deputy Chair in the Chair)
Councillor R Jordan, Dr M Havard, Mrs J James, Councillor PJ Morgan, Councillor M Wiggins, Councillor A Wilcox and Councillor C Williams.

(Virtual Meeting: 10.00am – 11.20am; 11.30am - 12.00pm)

1. Apologies

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Dr S Hancock

2. Disclosures

Dr R Plummer made a general declaration as a Board Member of Natural Resources Wales and a Trustee of Plantlife however she remained in the meeting and played a full part in the discussions.

3. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on the 30 November 2022 were presented for confirmation and authentication.

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 30 November 2022 be confirmed and authenticated.

4. Action Log

The Chair asked that in future, actions be numbered and that those which had been completed be shaded. It was noted that tree planting had taken place in Saundersfoot the previous week. An update was sought regarding replacement of the Green Room, and the Chief Executive explained that a further two-stage tender process would be commencing shortly.

Noted.

5. Pembrokeshire Nature Partnership

The Chair welcomed Ant Rogers, Biodiversity Implementation Officer at the Pembrokeshire Nature Partnership, to the meeting. His report outlined the work of the Partnership, set within the context of the Nature Emergency declared by the Senedd in June 2021 and the social and economic impacts of biodiversity loss. It was noted that the long term financial support provided by the National Park Authority and Pembrokeshire County Council over the previous 23 years had been key to the Partnership's success.



The Partnership had published a Nature Recovery Action Plan for Pembrokeshire to guide action on the ground in line with strategic priorities. It employed 2 officers (1.6 FTE) who drew down and delivered large grant funded projects and undertook wider work with partners across the sector which benefited the people of Pembrokeshire, and the report went on to highlight some recent projects.

Members thanked the officer for his presentation, which they asked to be circulated, and commended the commitment, achievements and performance of everyone involved - staff, partners and volunteers. The Chief Executive added that this was an area of priority for the Authority and as part of an expansion of staffing, had recently appointed a Head of Nature Recovery and were in the process of recruiting an additional Conservation Officer.

In response to a question regarding the biggest challenge to tackling loss of biodiversity, officers replied that defining what was meant by protected sites and determining the effectiveness of that protection was critical. One Member noted that there was a current Welsh Government consultation on “Targeted policy changes to Planning Policy Wales on net benefit for biodiversity and ecosystems resilience”, and the Director of Placemaking, Decarbonisation and Engagement advised that the Authority’s draft response could be brought to Members, which they agreed would be helpful.

Noted.

6. Managing Recreation in the National Park

The report of the Health, Wellbeing, Recreation and Tourism Policy Officer provided an overview of the Authority’s work in relation to the World Coastal Rowing and Beach Sprints Championships held in Saundersfoot in October 2022 and the certification of Sustainability in Events Management awarded to it (ISO 201221). It noted that this was the first event of its kind to achieve the certification, and went on to outline the learning from it that could be applied to other events and the legacy it had left. The Officer was joined by Rachel Dulai, the Event Producer for British Rowing, who gave a presentation outlining why the event had been held in Pembrokeshire and why ISO accreditation had been sought. Evaluation of the event had been based on a number of Key Performance Indicators, over 90% of which had been achieved or partly achieved, and these were also outlined.

Members noted that the event had been good for Pembrokeshire and particularly for the local Saundersfoot community. They were pleased that certification had been achieved and noted the importance of working together to do this. It was hoped that the learning could be applied to other events in future.



Noted.

[The meeting was adjourned between 11.20am and 11.30am]

7. Performance Report for the Period Ending 31 January 2023

The report followed the structure of the Corporate and Resources Plan for 2022/23. As the Authority was going through a period of change, a transitional performance measurement framework had been put in place for 2022/23.

The report presented the performance up to 31 January and included Q1 – Q3 statistics for some data sets recorded quarterly; it highlighted those areas where targets were in red or amber or where positive progress had been made since the previous report. It was noted that planning statistics had been reviewed and updated from those reported to the recent Audit and Corporate Services Review Committee.

Members expressed some concern regarding progress of the pay and grading review, completion by employees of workforce equality monitoring information, completion of Member Personal Development Reviews, sickness statistics and data protection and cyber security compliance. The Chief Executive reassured the Committee that these areas were being monitored and action taken to address the issues. With regard to planning performance, the Director of Placemaking, Decarbonisation and Engagement noted that the team was still not at full complement and a recruitment exercise was currently being carried out; she was hopeful that the posts would be filled. However she was pleased that the percentage of all planning applications determined within time periods ytd had improved since the previous quarter.

Noted.

