

RECREATION AND TOURISM REVIEW COMMITTEE

17th July, 2013

Present: Mr EA Sangster (Chairman)
Councillors P Harries, L Jenkins and R Owens, and Mrs M Thomas

(NPA Offices, Llanion Park, Pembroke Dock: 12:50pm – 14:35pm)

1. Apology

An apology for absence was received from Cllr M James

2. Disclosures of interest

No disclosures of interest were received.

3. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on the 13th March, 2013 were presented for confirmation and signature.

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on the 13th March, 2013 be confirmed and signed.

4. Matters arising

(a) Winter work carried out on the Coast Path – Minute 5

Members enquired if any progress had been made on researching the materials used for Coast Path furniture. The Access and Rights of Way Manager informed Members that a meeting had been held with the manager of Cilrhedyn Woodland Centre and the Area Warden Managers. A range of different materials are being considered for key rights of way furniture and officers are confident that some savings can be made. He confirmed that once discussions were finalised a report would be provided to Members.

5. The Culture and Heritage Manger provided a presentation to Members updating them on archaeological work carried out in the National Park.

6. Performance report for the period April 2013 – May 2013

The Business and Performance Manager presented progress on the outcomes of the Authority's Corporate Strategy that were relevant to the work of the Committee using the Ffynnon performance management system. This showed the percentage of work completed, together with the associated RAG (Red-Amber-Green) status, for each action. Progress on each action was set out in the report.

He went on to present the figures for visitor numbers and spend at the Authority's Visitor Centres and Attractions which showed that overall the numbers were slightly up compared to the same period last year.

Progress was on-going on a number of other projects including Walkability, a joint bid with Brecon Beacons National Park for Heritage Lottery Funding to develop a new apprenticeship scheme across the two Park Authorities. In



addition, the Mosaic Cymru project was highlighted as doing well against targets.

Following a Member's enquiry the Business and Performance Manager confirmed that figures were an indication of progress made against the Corporate Plan.

The Director of Delivery and Discovery advised Members that a work programme needed to be compiled for the 2014-15 financial year and that he would provide Members with an overview of key proposed targets and key priorities for 2014-15 at the next Recreation and Tourism Review Committee meeting.

It was **RESOLVED** that the performance report for the period April 2013 to May 2013 be received.

7. Future Management and Prioritisation of Public Rights of Way (PROW) in the National Park

The Access & Rights of Way Manager advised Members that the report had two related objectives which were to seek approval to adopt a prioritisation approach to the future management of public rights of way and also to delegate authority to officers to take enforcement action where necessary.

The National Park Authority has a longstanding Delegation Agreement for Public Rights of Way (PROW) management with Pembrokeshire County Council as the local Highway Authority. This Delegation Agreement formally transfers a wide range of duties, powers and functions to the Authority and delegates all duties and powers relating to the maintenance and improvement of PROW as well as powers relating to the enforcement of the right to use and enjoy the National Park's PROW network.

The powers delegated by Pembrokeshire County Council enable the National Park Authority to adopt a pro-active approach to managing PROW. When the National Park Authority took over responsibility for the PROW network 58% of the network was considered passable. As of June 2013, 88% (916km) of the network was available for use. The remaining 12% is considered to be challenging and, as a result, costly to open and consists of 232 routes (127km).

A recent joint scrutiny exercise undertaken with Brecon Beacons National Park Authority gave consideration as to whether the National Park Authority should continue to pursue the improvement of 100% of the network or focus resources on the improvement of selected routes that deliver the most in terms of recreation targets and the Authority's statutory purposes. The Review concluded that the continued liability for the entire network would be more costly in terms of the outcomes that would be generated and could have the potential to distract the Authority from accessing improvements that could generate the greatest range of benefits.

On that basis 32 routes were considered to be strategically important and a priority for improvement based on connectivity to the Coast Path, connectivity to



other public rights of way, links to communities including schools, routes with a proven and sustained record of demand, routes which provided easy access for those with mobility problems or visual impairments and bridleways which provided multi-use opportunities for horse riders and cyclists as well as walkers.

Once these key PROW have been improved, approximately 90% (937km) of the PROW in the National Park will be available for use and the priority will then be to maintain this key network.

The Access & Rights of Way Manager then advised Members that closely linked to the implementation of this approach was a request to delegate authority to chief officers to sanction enforcement action if and when needed.

In the process of improving these 32 routes it was felt that there may be a need to use such powers or at the very least demonstrate that the Authority were swiftly capable of mounting such action if ever required.

Members enquired as to whether there would be funds available to provide specialist wheelchairs to enable the less able bodied to access rights of way etc. Officers advised that there are already a number of wheelchairs and mobility scooters available to hire at the National Park's Visitor Centres.

It was **RESOLVED** that the National Park Authority be recommended to:

- a) authorise officers to prepare a plan for the prioritisation of public rights of Way improvements and
- b) authorise the Chief Executive (National Park Officer) together with the Director of Park Direction and Planning and Director of Delivery and Discovery delegated authority to exercise enforcement powers for the purposes of public rights of way maintenance (in accord with the functions, powers and duties contained in the existing PROW Delegation Agreement with Pembrokeshire County Council).

8. Wales Coast Path Marketing

The Marketing and Communications Manager reported that since 2007 the Welsh Government (WG) had invested in improving public access to the Welsh coast through its Coastal Access Improvement Programme (CAIP). The Wales Coast Path was officially launched in 2012 and had been developed by the Welsh Government in partnership with Natural Resources Wales, sixteen Local Authorities and two National Parks. The path was developed out of a desire to build on the economic success of the Pembrokeshire Coast Path National Trail and the Isle of Anglesey Coastal Path both of which were major contributors to the visitor economy of Wales.

In 2011 the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority was awarded a two year contract to market the Wales Coast Path on behalf of Welsh Government. This enabled the Authority to appoint a Marketing Officer to deliver both the Wales Coast Path marketing work and to develop the Authority's marketing programme. Since the original contract was awarded Natural Resources Wales (NRW) had extended both the scope and duration of the contract and a further temporary extension of three months was currently being explored.



The Authority was contracted to deliver five key elements of a marketing programme to include website, social networking, PR, publications and events. Funding was used to support the Marketing Officer post and invest in various marketing initiatives including the successful 60th anniversary retro poster campaign.

Members were advised that delivering the Wales Coast Path marketing programme had provided a range of benefits to the Authority. Working at a national level on a government priority project had not only enhanced the Authority's reputation and political profile at an all Wales level, but had also presented an opportunity to directly shape and influence the marketing of Wales' leading visitor attraction.

Securing the contract, and subsequent extension, demonstrated a national confidence in the Authority's ability and commitment to deliver on this important area of work.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Wales Coast Path Marketing Report be **NOTED**

11. Continuous Improvement Group: delegation of issues of concern

It was **RESOLVED** that there were no issues of concern that needed to be delegated to the Continuous Improvement Group for consideration.

