

**REPORT OF THE FINANCE MANAGER**

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**SUBJECT: GRANT APPROVALS IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 78 OF THE FINANCIAL STANDARDS (REVISED 2012)**

**Purpose of Report**

Authorisation is required in accordance with Section 78 of the Financial Standards (2012) which states that where there is a payment of 'Total value Grant and Sponsorships under any one agreement over £10,000', approval must be obtained from the National Park Authority.

In the current financial year there are two payments which fall into this category: payment of £20k to Pembrokeshire Coastal Forum to help integrate and manage coastal activity and secondly a payment of circa £73k to Pembrokeshire County Council as a contribution towards the Pembrokeshire Greenways Partnership.

**Pembrokeshire Coastal Forum**

Pembrokeshire Coastal Forum has for more than a decade brought stakeholders together - including government, statutory agencies, industry, local business and communities – in order to identify coastal management issues and broker solutions. The Forum is a highly cost-effective vehicle for delivery of work essential to achieving National Park purposes and the NPA's duty.

The expenditure will be used to maintain and develop the following areas of work:

- The Marine Code and Outdoor Charter initiatives. These projects help deliver the sustainable development and management of outdoor recreation in Pembrokeshire using agreed codes of conduct, best practice and conflict resolution. They are viewed as best practice in the UK.
- The Recreation Audit (now Wales Activity Mapping). This project is used by the NPA as a tool to assist in recreation management and an evidenced-based approach underpinning NPA recreation planning ('Enjoying the Pembrokeshire Coast') and the NPA's 'Enjoy Pembrokeshire' website. It is part of a national recreation management toolkit developed in collaboration with Pembrokeshire Coastal Forum for Visit Wales
- Agreeing and promoting good practice recreation guidelines. Previous examples include the kayaking and coasteering code and DVDs. These stakeholder-agreed guidelines are being used to promote best practice and are used nationally.
- Brokering recreation management solutions and influencing behaviour. Previous and on-going examples include paragliding, coasteering, personal watercraft, access, wildlife boat tours and kayaking.
- Valuing the economic benefits of recreation to Pembrokeshire Coast. An evidenced-based approach using the Wales Activity Mapping project to value marine and coastal recreation in Pembrokeshire and quantify the direct local benefit.
- Supporting the Marine Energy Pembrokeshire group. This is a unique public/private sector partnership was formed to promote the sustainable development of marine energy in Pembrokeshire. This workstream includes the annual Marine Renewable Energy seminar, a fully-booked event which has attracted hundreds of delegates from across the world to Pembrokeshire.

- Supporting the Wildlife Sightings Event. An annual, fully-booked event raising awareness and celebrating the diversity of wildlife and habitats found in the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park.

### **Pembrokeshire Greenways Partnership**

The payment to the Pembrokeshire Greenways Partnership includes funding 50% of the Greenways Officer Post (the other 50% is funded by Pembrokeshire County Council), this amounts to £16,000. A further £56,000 of the budget is used as the Authority's contribution to the Coastal bus services. Of this amount £22,000 is used to fund the Coastal Bus Services three-days a week through the winter; £25,000 is used to fund the Celtic Coaster service through the summer. This service has been the most patronised service of all the Coastal Bus Services for the last two years. In total the services carried over 83,000 passengers in the period October 2011 to September 2012. The National Park Authority contributes approximately 15% of the overall cost of the Coastal Bus Services. The remainder is funded by Pembrokeshire County Council through its Local Transport Services Grant.

The services operate almost entirely within the National Park and as well as providing access to the majority of the coast for visitors also provide a service for residents which would not otherwise be sustainable. A further £10,000 is used to fund the long-running Tenby Park and Ride service, alongside a second service operated by Pembrokeshire County Council. This service helps to reduce congestion in the town centre of Tenby and provides easy access for those using the car parks furthest away from the town centre.

The remainder of the sustainable transport budget (£7,700) is used for publicity (Coastal Bus Services advertisement in Coast to Coast) and supporting other Greenways Projects with the other Partners such as Bikemobility

### **Recommendation.**

Both the above payments have been made over a number of years and as a result of the revised financial standards in 2012 members are asked to approve these payments for the first time.