

NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

5th February 2014

Present: Councillor M James (Chair)
Mr A Archer, Mr D Ellis, Councillor P Harries, Councillors S Hudson,
O James, Mrs L Jenkins, Mrs A Lee, PJ Morgan, R Owens and
DWM Rees, Mr AE Sangster and Councillor M Williams.

(NPA Offices, Llanion Park, Pembroke Dock: 10.00am – 12.20pm)

1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Ms C Gwyther, Mrs G Hayward, Councillor B Kilmister, Councillor RM Lewis and Mrs M Thomas.

2. Disclosures of Interest

Councillor P Harries disclosed an interest in report 09/14 Re-gearing of the Newport Harbour Foreshore Sub Lease and withdrew from the meeting while it was being considered (*Minute 16 refers*).

3. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on the 11th December 2013 were presented for confirmation and signature.

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 11th December 2013 be confirmed and signed.

4. Development Management Committee – Report of Meeting

It was **RESOLVED** that the report of the meetings of the Development Management Committees held on 20th November 2013 and 18th December 2013 be received.

5. Audit and Corporate Services Review Committee – Report of meeting

The minutes of the meeting of the Audit and Corporate Services Review Committee held on 20th November 2013 were presented for consideration. It was noted that on pages 2 and 3 the figures regarding the capital programme had been transposed.

It was **RESOLVED** that the report of the meeting of the Audit and Corporate Services Review Committee held on the 20th November 2013 be adopted subject to the above amendment. The correction would be raised at the next meeting of the Audit and Corporate Services Review Committee when the minutes would be amended.



- 6. Chief Executive Performance Review Panel – Report of meeting**
It was **RESOLVED** that the report of the meeting of the Chief Executive Performance Review Panel held on the 27th November 2013 be adopted.
- 7. Member Development Strategy Working Group – Report of meeting**
It was **RESOLVED** that the report of the meeting of Member Development Strategy Working Group held on the 18th December 2013 be adopted.
- 8. Update on the Mosaic Cymru Project**
The Chairman began by welcoming Pat Gregory, Mosaic Project Officer and Shamim Azam, Community Champion, to the meeting.

The Project Officer began by outlining the background to the project, which aimed to “cement long-term sustainable engagement between black and minority ethnic (BME) communities and National Parks in Wales” through the recruitment of Community Champions from ethnic minority communities in urban areas located near to the National Parks. The Champions are trained in a range of skills that will equip them to promote the National Parks within their communities and are encouraged to form groups such as the Diversity Outdoors Group, to develop and sustain their activities beyond the Mosaic project period.

Shamim Azam, a Community Champion and member of Diversity Outdoor, went on to outline some of the activities in which she had been involved, including organisation of several trips to Pembrokeshire Coast National Park, and the benefits of participating in the project.

Members were pleased to learn more about the project and the good work that was taking place. They were also reassured that succession was being looked at to ensure that the initiative could be sustained in the long term and become mainstreamed into the Authority’s activities. They considered that the use of volunteers, strong networks and communication were key to success. Thanking them for their presentation, the Chairman hoped that Members would be able to show support at future events that were organised.

NOTED.

- 9. Draft Budget Planning 2014/15**
The report of the Chief Executive and Chief Financial Officer set out the draft Revenue and Capital budgets for 2014/15 and implications on reserves, the draft 2014/15 levy on Pembrokeshire County Council, Prudential Indicators for the capital programme and an Investment Strategy & Treasury Management Policy Statement for 2014/15.



In October 2013 the Welsh Government had published its draft budget and as anticipated it showed an unprecedented reduction in the funding of the National Park Grant (NPG) for the three Welsh National Park Authorities. The budget identified a funding cut of 8.76% for 2014/15 followed a further cut of 4.32% for 2015/16. However the Welsh Government confirmed that the capital grant for 2014/15 would remain at the same level as 2013/14. At the meeting it was reported that the Authority had still not received official confirmation of the N.P.A. grant but it was expected shortly in order that the levy deadline of February 15th 2014 could be met.

The Authority intended to balance the budget for 2014/15 by a combination of budget tightening across a range of service areas, prudent use of the capital grant and making more focused strategic cost reduction in specific budget areas. As a way of mitigating the severity of the cuts the Welsh Government had allowed the Authority, for 2014/15 only, to divert £100k of funds previously assigned to the Sustainable Development program to support general revenue activities. The combination of the above would provide the Authority the necessary time to make more considered and fundamental decisions as to how it would balance the budget in 2015/16 and the years beyond.

The Chief Finance Officer went on to say that the draft budgets had been prepared in accordance with the Annual Budget Strategy previously discussed by Members at the workshop in December, and in calculating the net cost of continuing existing services, account had been taken of a number of factors, which were set out in the report.

It was reported the National Park Grant and Levy for 2014/15 would be £4,307,108, a reduction of £413,469 from 2013/14 with a further reduction of £186,061 in 2015/16. The report also highlighted the impact of the inflation adjusted funding and the challenge to balance the budget

The baseline revenue budgets for 2014/15 – 2015/16 were set out in the report, accounting for the factors referred to earlier at the meeting. The Net Budget was compared with the anticipated level of NPG/Levy funding to identify the sum remaining, i.e. an increase or reduction in the General Reserve balance.

The Authority's draft Capital Programme was presented and this amounted to of £574,900 with the major expenditure being on the Origins project. The programme would be funded by Heritage Lottery Funding and European Targeted Match funding, Earmarked Reserves, staff time as match funds and the Capital Receipts Reserve.

The impact of the rolling 3 year budget on the Financial Reserves of the Authority was also reported. The predicted available reserves at the end



of the 2013/14 financial year were set out, comprising of forecasted General Reserves, Capital Receipts and Earmarked Reserves. The levels of reserves were reported to be relatively high but in light of the current funding position were not considered excessive.

It was reported that at the end of each financial year the revenue surplus or deficit was added to or deducted from the General Reserve balance. While the revenue budget for 2014/15 was a small surplus the position with regard 2015/16 was as yet unknown. The report showed the full impact of the £460k deficit in 2015/16 but there would be significant budget and organisational restructuring to address the deficit. This would be achieved by adhering to Wales Audit Office budget reduction guidance, a period of extensive consultation and significant member involvement. As a result of this remedial action it was expected that the General Reserve balance at the end of 2015/16 will be higher than that currently shown.

Members asked whether sufficient use was being made of external funding such as Convergence Funding and if any successful bids would require match funding. Officers replied that while applications were made for such funding, particularly in partnership with other agencies as in the Carew and Origins projects, more applications could always be made. However the 50% intervention rate was the stumbling block.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- the draft budget 2014/15 be approved in principle subject to noting that the NPG/Levy estimate had yet to be confirmed.
- the forward planning budgets for 2015/16 and 2014/15 be noted

(a) Levy on Pembrokeshire County Council

The Chief Finance Officer reminded Members that Section 71 of the Environment Act 1995, sub-section 3, determined the way in which the levy which was to be raised on Pembrokeshire County Council, should be issued. The following statement complied with this requirement.

Levy on Pembrokeshire County Council



Parc Cenedlaethol
Arfordir Penfro
Pembrokeshire Coast
National Park

The Authority must authorise the making of a levy of £1,076,777 from Pembrokeshire County Council, in accordance with Section 71 of the Environment Act 1995 and the National Park Authorities



(Levies)(Wales)(Regulations) 1995 SI 1995 No.3019 as amended by the National Park Authorities (Levies)(Wales)(Amendment) Regulations 1996:

•	the sum required to meet expenditure for the Authority which will fall to be charged for that year in the Revenue account is		
			£5,987,443
•	making such provision as is appropriate for meeting contingencies, the expenditure on which would fall to be charged in the Revenue Account		£Nil
•	the sum required to secure the availability to the authority of adequate working balances on its Revenue Account		£Nil
•	the sum required to provide the Authority with other requirements for covering any deficit brought forward from the previous financial year		£Nil

	Sub-total		£5,987,443
	LESS		
•	Section 72, Grant (NPG)	£3,230,331	
•	Income credited to the Revenue Account	£1,585,443	
•	other sums not covered above which are likely to be available in the year	£94,892	
		-----	£4,910,666
	Levy requirement		<u>£1,076,777</u>

Members were advised that the official levy requirement must be notified to Pembrokeshire County Council by 15th February. It was recommended that the National Park Authority continue with the current arrangement of 12 equal monthly instalments receivable on or before the 12th of each calendar month, such payments to be received by bank transfer.

It was **RESOLVED** that a levy of £1,076,777 (or other appropriate amount as determined on receipt of confirmation of the approved net funding from the WG) from Pembrokeshire County Council for the year 2014/15 be authorised.

(b) Prudential Code Indicators

The Local Authorities (Capital Finance & Accounting)(Wales) Regulations 2003 required the National Park Authority to have regard to the Chartered



Institute of Public Finance & Accountancy's (CIPFA) Prudential Code in setting annual budgets. The Prudential Code required the Authority to consider Prudential Indicators encompassing estimated and actual expenditure and financing, and limits on both.

These indicators were intended to support and record local decision making, and were not designed to be comparative indicators across local authorities. However, as the Authority was now debt free and there were no proposals at this time to undertake further borrowing, due to the capital expenditure plans being financed either by revenue funds, external grant aid or capital receipts, then many of the indicators were not relevant. The report therefore set out only those indicators that were relevant at the current time, and Members were asked to adopt the Prudential Indicators as presented.

The Chief Finance Officer also presented an Investment Strategy for 2014/15 in compliance with statutory guidance and in support of the prudential borrowing system. The Strategy also supported CIPFA's "Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice and Cross-Sectoral Guidance Notes".

It was **RESOLVED** that Members

- a) Adopt the Prudential Indicators as presented.
- b) Approve the Investment Strategy & Treasury Management Policy Statement for 2014/15.

10. Ministerial Letter Regarding Community Renewable Energy Projects

The Director of Park Direction and Planning brought to Members' attention a letter written by Carl Sargeant, Minister for Housing and Regeneration which set out the Welsh Government's objective of seeking to promote community renewable energy projects. The letter suggested ways in which local planning authorities could help such groups, which may be unfamiliar with the planning system as well as reminding Authorities that in assessing planning applications for renewable energy projects, the economic and job creation benefits associated with any development should be fully factored in the decision making.

The Director reminded Members that the Authority currently offered a free pre-application service, which all potential applicants were encouraged to use. It was suggested that community renewable energy proposals could be given a priority, aiming to respond within the shortest possible time and include a site visit and discussions to explain the development management process, timescales, etc. It was also proposed that Community Councils be advised of the Ministers letter on such projects and the Authority's proactive approach to the matter which would enable them to signpost local groups and organisations.



One Member was concerned with the definition of a 'Community Group' and believed that this needed to be looked at. Officers were not aware that any definition had yet been provided

It was **RESOLVED** that the content of the Minister's letter be noted, and the Authority's proactive approach set out in the report with regard to community renewable energy projects, be endorsed. This was subject to any definition of 'Community Group' provided by the Minister.

11. Positive Planning – Proposals to Reform the Planning System in Wales: A Welsh Government Consultation

The Director of Park Direction and Planning reported that Welsh Government had issued a consultation document on changes to the planning process in Wales, with responses required by 26th February. It was recommended that the Authority responded to the consultation, however because of timing, the matter be delegated to the Development Management Committee on 19th February for full consideration of the proposed response.

As the Planning Bill could have a significant impact on all three Welsh National Parks, it was considered appropriate that National Parks Wales also submitted a response to this consultation, and the Planning Teams of the three Authorities were currently working on a joint submission. However the timing to bring such a joint response to Committee for approval was proving difficult and Members were asked to delegate authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Chairman, to agree this submission with the other two National Park Authorities.

Some Members were concerned that there would be insufficient time at the Development Management Committee to properly consider such an important document and an amendment was proposed and seconded that the Authority's response to the Consultation be considered at an Extraordinary Meeting. When put to the vote, the amendment was lost and it was agreed that the Consultation Document be considered at the Development Management Committee Meeting on 19th February.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- a) A response be submitted to the Positive Planning consultation
- b) Consideration of the Authority's response be delegated to the Development Management Committee on 19th February 2014
- c) Authority be delegated to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Chairman of the Authority, to agree a National Parks Wales response to the consultation in collaboration with the Brecon Beacons and Snowdonia National Park Authorities.



12. Pembrokeshire County Council's Draft Supplementary Planning Guidance - Biodiversity

Members were advised that following adoption of its Local Development Plan on 28th February 2013, Pembrokeshire County Council had published draft Supplementary Planning Guidance entitled "Biodiversity: How biodiversity can be protected and enhanced in the development process" for public consultation.

The consultation period commenced on the 15th January 2014 and ends on 26th February 2014. Due to the timing of the National Park Authority, officers sought delegated powers to provide comments, if deemed necessary, after having fully considered the content of the draft Supplementary Planning Guidance.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Head of Park Direction, in consultation with the Chairs of the National Park Authority and Development Management Committee be authorised to agree the National Park Authority's response to Pembrokeshire County Council's draft Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Guidance.

13. Endorsement of the First Review of the Regional Technical Statement for Aggregates

Members were reminded that at the National Park Authority on 11th December 2013, delegated powers were provided to the Development Management Committee to agree the National Park Authority's consultation response to the Regional Technical Statement (RTS) document. A response was subsequently approved by the Committee on 18th December 2013.

The consultation period ended on 23rd December 2013 and the consultation responses received were being considered; a final version of the RTS 1st Review would be completed and made available by the 28th February 2014. Once available, officers would consider the final version of the RTS 1st Review and it was recommended that this be reported to the Development Management Committee scheduled for 19th March 2014 to seek final endorsement. Final approval of the document would be sought from the Regional Working Party Member Forum on 1st April 2014.

It was **RESOLVED** that agreement of the National Park Authority response and endorsement of the 1st Review of the Regional Technical Statement for Aggregates be delegated to the Development Management Committee on 19th March 2014.



14. Delegation of Matters Relating to the Discharge of Planning (and other) Conditions in Relation to Officer/Member/Authority Applications

Members were reminded that under the Authority's current scheme of delegation, the discharging of conditions was, in most cases, delegated to officers. However due to recent changes in practice by which the discharging of conditions was formally logged, it had become apparent that where an officer or Member had an interest, there was no express delegation to officers to discharge related conditions and they should be reported to Members for resolution. This was considered to be unduly onerous as each application could involve a number of conditions requiring discharge, and if each needed to be reported to Committee this would lead to delay and significant resources on the planning team.

It was therefore recommended that the scheme of delegation be amended to enable the discharge of conditions in relation to applications including planning, listed building applications and advertisement applications:

- (a) submitted by Members or officers or their immediate family;
- (b) where officers or Members were declared as the owners on the ownership certificates;
- (c) where officers had an interest in the application
- (d) submitted by Members who had been Members of the Authority less than 12 months prior to the application, or
- (e) the application was made on behalf of the Authority

be delegated to the Chief Executive and/or Director of Park Direction and Planning and/or Head of Development Management.

The Head of Development Management clarified for Members that any applications submitted by officers, Members or the Authority would still come before the Development Management Committee for decision, the above amendment referred only to the discharge of any conditions imposed on a consent.

It was **RESOLVED** that the amendments to the Scheme of Delegation as set out in Appendix 1 to the report be endorsed and that these changes take immediate effect.

15. Improvement Plan 2014/15 – Part 1

The Business and Performance Manager reported that under the Local Government Measure, the National Park Authority was required to publish its Improvement Plan as soon as practical for the new financial year. The draft plan presented the main activities planned for next year and summarised progress in the current year to date.



Members were asked to consider and comment on the draft Improvement Plan Part 1 for 2014/15, sending any comments to the Business and Performance Manager by the end of February. The officer noted that the document was also subject to consultation with staff and key stakeholders and the final plan would be presented for approval to the National Park Authority in April.

NOTED.

[Councillor P Harries disclosed an interest in the following item and withdrew from the meeting while it was considered]

16. Re-gearing of the Newport Harbour Foreshore Sub Lease

It was reported that the Foreshore at Newport was held by the Authority under a lease from the Crown Estate and was subject to a sub-lease granted in favour of the Cymdeithas Cychod Afon Nyfer AC Harbwr Trefdraeth who managed and regulated the mooring activity within the harbour. The Harbour Association's current sub lease expired in 2016, however an opportunity had arisen to take an early surrender of that sub lease simultaneous with the granting of a new sub lease that would extend the Association's management of the moorings until 2027 and provide for pre agreed stepped annual rental increases over the first three years. Future rent reviews would be RPI linked and the review dates would be co-terminus with the existing Solva and Porthclais sub leases and National Park head lease rent review dates.

Officers considered that this was an opportunity to provide long term stability for the Association, reduced management costs for the Authority and a common date for the collection or payment of rent across the moorings at Newport, Solva and Porthclais.

It was **RESOLVED** that a simultaneous surrender of the existing lease and grant of new lease with Cymdeithas Cychod Afon Nyfer AC Harbwr Trefdraeth be completed on the terms summarised in the report.

17. Welsh Government Consultation on Regional Engagement Partnership Structures in the Tourism Sector

It was reported that the Welsh Government had published the above mentioned consultation to review the role and functions of regional tourism partnerships across Wales to facilitate partnership working and support more effective delivery of programmes and projects.

It was the intention of 'Destination Pembrokeshire', the local partnership body responsible for delivering tourism in Pembrokeshire, to submit a joint response signed by the key partner agencies, (Pembrokeshire County Council, Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority,



Pembrokeshire Tourism and PLANED) to the Welsh Government. Authority was therefore sought for the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chairman, to agree the draft of the consultation response that would be compiled by 'Destination Pembrokeshire' prior to its submission to the Welsh Government at the end of February.

The Member who represents the Authority on the South West Wales Regional Tourism Partnership asked for sight of the agreed response, so that he could better represent the views of the Authority when the Partnership considered their response.

It was **RESOLVED** that authorisation be given to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Chairman of the Authority, to submit any representations arising from the Welsh Government consultation on regional engagement partnership structures in the tourism sector.

18. Commission for Public Service Governance and Delivery

The Chief Executive reported that in April 2013, the First Minister had set up the Commission on Public Service Governance and Delivery under the leadership of Sir Paul Williams with the aims of gathering and providing an objective, authoritative assessment of the extent to which current arrangements for public service governance and delivery in Wales met the needs and aspirations of people today and provided a sustainable basis for the future; proposing an optimal model of public service governance and delivery for Wales, that would ensure that efficient, effective and accessible services were provided to the citizen; and supported continuous improvement in those services against the background of financial and demand pressures; and as part of this, to engage with those who provided and used public services.

The Commission's report was published on Monday, 20th January 2014 and the report before Members set out the main recommendations that related specifically to National Park Authorities. It was reported that there were other recommendations that might impact on the work of the Authority, however there was little detail on these or what impact, if any, they would have.

The Chairman wished to thank the Chief Executives of the three National Parks for their hard work in preparing the submission to the Commission.

NOTED.

19. Standards Committee – Re-appointment of Independent Member

Members were reminded that the Authority's Standards Committee comprised 3 Members of the Authority, together with 3 Independent Members. The report set out the Regulations with regard to the term of office of those Independent Members which included a provision for the



re-appointment of an Independent Member for one further consecutive term of four years without the need for advertising a vacancy. Approval was sought for the re-appointment of Mr Roger Barrett-Evans as an Independent member of the Authority's Standards Committee under this provision.

Some Members were concerned that non-advertisement of the post would not reflect well on the Authority in terms of public perception, however the Monitoring Officer reassured them that the rules allowed the Authority to re-appoint an Independent Member, and there was nothing in that Member's performance to indicate that he should not be reappointed.

It was **RESOLVED** that Mr Roger Barrett-Evans be re-appointed Independent Member of the Standards Committee for a period of four years until the 16th December 2017.

20. Review of Review Committees

The Chief Executive explained that in June 2011 the Authority changed its Committee structure by replacing one Performance Review Committee with the Audit and Corporate Services Review Committee, Recreation and Tourism Review Committee and Conservation and Planning Review Committee. On agreeing the new structure, Members resolved to review the effectiveness of the Committees within 12 months, however the elections of May 2012 saw a significant change in the Membership of the Authority and it was therefore decided to wait until the new Membership had had an opportunity to experience the operation/effectiveness of the Committees before such a review was carried out.

The current role of the Committees was set out in the report, which went on to outline the options, which were to retain the existing structure, retain the Audit and Corporate Services Review Committee and merge the other two Committees to create an Operational Review Committee, and to abolish the Review Committees and replace them with some other mechanism for reviewing performance.

Should the Review Committees be retained in some way, Members had previously indicated that they wished to see a change in their Terms of Reference and some issues for consideration in this regard were also set out.

Members from both the Recreation and Tourism and Conservation and Planning Review Committees agreed that there was a degree of overlap between the areas covered by the two Committees and could see the merit of them being merged. They also agreed that a change in the terms of reference should allow the Committees to have a greater role in setting their own agenda. It was agreed that the Audit and Corporate Services Review Committee was working quite well and that the Scrutiny



role should be retained by a separate Scrutiny Committee which could look in greater depth at a subject over a sequence of meetings.

It was **RESOLVED** that Option 2 as set out in the report be adopted whereby the Audit and Corporate Services Review Committee be retained and an Operational Review Committee established to replace the Recreation and Tourism/Conservation and Planning Review Committees which would be disbanded. Each Committee would be composed of nine Members and would meet four times a year. A report on the Terms of Reference for the Operational Review Committee would be brought to the next meeting of the Authority.

21. Member Development – Role Descriptions and Future Training Programme

Members were firstly reminded that the current Member Development Strategy and supporting Members Support and Development Programme had been adopted by the Authority at its Ordinary Meeting held on 26th June 2013. It was reported at that time that the final element, the Training Plan, would be finalised once Members had completed their Personal Support Plans. Six of these Plans had now been received and a Training Plan, based upon the comments/needs expressed by the six Members concerned, had been drafted. This had been considered by the Member Development Strategy Working Group and was appended to the report with a recommendation that it be adopted.

The second element of the report related to a suite of Member Role Descriptions previously adopted by the Authority in 2008. The Administration and Democratic Services Manager reminded Members that the role description and person specification for a Member of the Authority had been reviewed and adopted in August 2013. The remaining Role Descriptions had now been reviewed and were appended to the report with the recommendation that they be adopted by the Authority.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- a) The Member Support and Development Training Plan 2014/15 be adopted.
- b) The Member Role Descriptions and Person Specifications appended to the report be adopted.

22. Proposed Standards Relating to the Welsh Language

Members were reminded that the Welsh Language Act 1993 required public bodies to adopt the principle that in the conduct of public business in Wales, they would treat the English and Welsh Languages on a basis of equality. In giving effect to this, the then Welsh Language Board approved the Authority's Welsh language Scheme in 1997 and the Revised Version was approved in 2008.



The Administration and Democratic Services Manager reported that the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 modernised the legal framework regarding the use of the Welsh language in the delivery of public services, in that it enabled the Welsh Ministers to specify standards of conduct relating to the Welsh Language. These standards would gradually replace the existing system of Welsh language schemes provided for by the Welsh Language Act 1993. The report then went on to describe the five types of standard that would be applicable to Local Authorities, the Welsh National Park Authorities and the Welsh Ministers as well as the timetable for implementation of the process.

NOTED.

23. Storm Damage to Public Rights of Way and National Park Authority Properties, January 2014

The report of the Access and Rights of Way Manager outlined for Members the effects of the high tides, heavy rainfall and gale force winds experienced between 3rd and 6th January 2014 which combined to result in tidal surges and flooding which caused a great deal of erosion and damage to the coast of Pembrokeshire.

The report detailed the damage experienced at 35 locations and outlined the action taken by officers to inspect and as a result to advise the public of those sites and paths considered to be dangerous or out of repair for their intended use, eg wheelchair suitable paths. It also highlighted the way forward in repairing the storm damage and the financial considerations in this respect.

At the meeting, the Access and Rights of Way Manager updated Members that while the continued stormy weather had caused some setbacks, such as damaging again areas that had been repaired following the initial storms, the recent storms had not been as severe as those in early January. Repairs had been carried out at the majority of sites, however challenges remained at Caerfai and Penally where longer term solutions were required.

Members were concerned to hear about the damage but were also keen that the work of students at Coleg Ceredigion, Cardigan Secondary School and other groups around the County in helping to clear affected areas of accumulated sand and litter be recognised. They asked that a press release be issued expressing their gratitude for all the work undertaken; officers advised that this was in hand.

NOTED.



24. Urgent business

It was **RESOLVED** that by reason of special circumstances, the following items be raised as a matter of urgency, pursuant to Section 100(B)(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972.

25. Conservation Area Grants

The Building Conservation Officer reminded Members that for the financial year 2013/14 there was a Conservation Area Grant Scheme budget of £100,000, jointly (50:50) funded by the Authority and Cadw. Three applications for grants over £10,000 had been approved by the Authority in August 2013 and grants were offered to 18 other properties. Since that date, 4 applicants had confirmed that they were unable to proceed and their grant officers were duly withdrawn. Despite a number of interim approaches from prospective new applicants, only one extra grant had been allocated and thus there was a surplus of up to a maximum of £35,000. The latest schedule was appended to the report.

It was reported that the Authority had been approached by the Dean of St Davids Cathedral who had recently launched an appeal for the restoration of the tower and clocks of the cathedral, the latter now in very poor repair and not working. The total estimated costs were around £150,000. Cadw had advised that they were content to offer their contribution of this year's budget towards the cathedral scheme, subject to eligible works being completed by the end of the financial year. As works had not yet been commenced, Cadw had confirmed that fees incurred to date were eligible. It was therefore proposed that Cadw's contribution be used for assisting with fees incurred up to the end of the financial year.

The Building Conservation Officer added that it was likely that after 26 years this would be the last year of the Conservation Area Grant Scheme. The restoration of the tower clocks was urgently required and once completed would be of public benefit to residents and visitors to St Davids.

Members were happy to support the recommendation and hoped that the Authority would be able to publicise the support being given.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- a) Members approve that the surplus funding arising from this year's Conservation Area Grant Scheme be allocated to the tower appeal at St Davids Cathedral with Cadw's share allocated to costs incurred up to the end of this financial year, and the Authority's share allocated to the appeal, conditional on the works being completed within 3 years.
- b) The general information on the allocation of grants for 2013-14 be noted.



26. Pembrokeshire College Advisory Forum

The Chief Executive advised Members that he had recently received a letter from Pembrokeshire College inviting the Authority to nominate a representative to become a member of a new consultative body to be known as the Pembrokeshire College Advisory Forum which would allow stakeholders to voice their views about how further and higher education should be delivered in Pembrokeshire in addressing the needs of learners and employers.

In the first instance he wished to provide Members with the opportunity to be nominated. Councillor R Owens advised that he had an interest, having worked in community education.

It was **RESOLVED** that Councillor R Owens be nominated at the Authority's representative on the Pembrokeshire College Advisory Forum.

