

OPERATIONAL REVIEW COMMITTEE

22nd April 2015

Present: Councillor R Kilmister (Chairman)
Ms C Gwyther; Councillors P Harries, S T Hudson, O James and P J Morgan, Mr A E Sangster and Mrs M Thomas

(NPA Offices, Llanion Park, Pembroke Dock: 10:00am – 12:40pm)

1. Apologies

An apology for absence was received from Councillor A Wilcox.

2. Disclosures of interest

Councillor R Kilmister informed the Committee that he had amended his register of interests to the effect that he longer had an interest to declare in relation to Cilrhedyn.

Councillor P Harries disclosed an interest in Item 07/15 Review of Destination Pembrokeshire as he is presently on the Board of PLANED, however he remained in the meeting while the item was discussed.

3. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on the 28th January 2015 were presented for confirmation and signature.

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 28th January 2015 be confirmed and signed.

4. Marketing of Pembrokeshire and the National Park as a Key Tourism Destination

The Chairman welcomed Mr Alan Turner, the Tourism Marketing and Development Manager with Pembrokeshire County Council to the meeting. The Director of Delivery and Discovery gave the apologies of Marie Edwards, the Authority's Communications and Marketing Manager who was not able to be present and circulated a diagram which illustrated the National Park Authority's tourism and marketing activities.

Mr Turner began by outlining the destination marketing remit for Pembrokeshire County Council which was essentially to support the tourism industry thus providing economic and social benefits. He provided information on numbers and types of visitors, spend and employment generation using the STEAM economic activity model, as well as a breakdown of the numbers and types of visitor accommodation within the County. He explained that the destination marketing approach focused on introducing Pembrokeshire to those who did not currently visit, mainly through digital marketing, rather than marketing within the County; the Visit Pembrokeshire publication was now produced by a commercial



company. There was therefore no conflict with the Park Authority's Coast to Coast publication.

Core to the strategy was the visitpembrokeshire.com website and this had been built with search engine optimisation at its centre. He explained that this was responsive and would display on a mobile phone and that had been the reason for PCC not developing a bespoke mobile phone app. Content was constantly being developed with 3-4 new articles being produced each month by commissioned writers – often journalists with different perspectives and styles to engage with a variety of people. There was also a strong presence on social network sites. There was no charge for advertising on the website and there was no minimum quality level as it was intended to be inclusive of the many good, ungraded products available. Mr Turner noted that there was plenty of information available regarding quality for people to make informed choices.

Members asked questions on various aspects of the presentation and asked for a copy of it to be circulated to them. They also asked about the degree of integration with other organisations, such as Visit Wales and also whether Mr Turner felt that Coast to Coast could play a role in marketing outside of Pembrokeshire, for example in Paddington railway station. He replied that PCC worked closely with Visit Wales. With regard to the role of Coast to Coast, he believed that there could be opportunities for its distribution along the M4 corridor, however the Director of Delivery and Discovery pointed out that there was a cost to storage and distribution, and the quantities that that would be needed for somewhere like Paddington would make the expansion of Coast to Coast economically unviable.

The Chairman thanked Mr Turner for an interesting and informative presentation.

NOTED.

5. Performance report for the period ending 28th February 2015

The Business and Performance Manager presented the performance to date for the Park Direction, Delivery and Discovery Teams against the strategic outcomes in the Improvement Plan Part 1 for the first nine months of the financial year 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.

It was reported that a number of projects had already been completed and most others were underway. Overall, most performance was on target with only a few items where other priorities had meant a delay in commencing.



The first measure in the report which was marked in red related to the Authority's total emissions, which was above target as it included the gas used at Oriel y Parc café. Once the 'actual' figure had been corrected it was anticipated that the figure for emissions would level off following a reduction in recent years.

Within the section on performance in the Direction Team, it was reported that the INNS Invasive Species project coordinator had resigned but it was hoped to re-appoint soon. Members questioned the red indicator against the number of landowners assisted in the year to date and suggested that this was something that should be investigated further. Officers agreed that a report on this work would be brought to a future meeting of the Committee by the Direction Team. Questions were also asked regarding the two amber indicators and officers explained that there had been a change in the way enforcement cases were being recorded and this had led to an apparent drop in the number of cases closed within 12 weeks. It was believed that the lower figure for the number of people at cultural events was due to the recent work at Castell Henllys.

Finally the officer provided visitor numbers and merchandise sales figures to the end of March. These had both increased slightly overall, although there was some variation between the centres. One Member asked about the financial situation at Oriel y Parc and officers replied that leasing the café there had reduced both the cost and the risk to the Authority. Staffing levels had also been reduced, however a profit was being made on merchandise sales and the exhibitions in the gallery continued to improve - there was great excitement at the prospect of a Constable painting being displayed in the gallery next year.

It was **RESOLVED** that the performance report be received.

[Councillor O James was not present when the following item was discussed]

6. Risk Register

The Business and Performance Manager reported that the risk register had recently been reviewed by senior managers and team leaders and the register consolidated where several similar risks had been documented in the light of recent and proposed changes in legislation and the present funding situation. He explained that where appropriate, suitable action and regular monitoring was in place to mitigate each risk, with the result that only two of the 37 were considered to be high risk – a significant reduction of funding and that of major IT failure. It was noted that many of the risks would always be present as it might be impossible to totally control or remove the factors creating the risk.



The Manager reported that, as previously, Members had been allocated risks, however this practice had not really been effective, however it was acknowledged that it was important that Members continued to be informed. Members felt that the current arrangements were not working and that the risk register needed to be reported to them more frequently. They asked that the register be reported to the National Park Authority when further discussion on the way forward could take place.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Risk Register be presented to the National Park Authority for further discussion regarding reporting arrangements and allocation of risks to Members.

7. Review of Destination Pembrokeshire

The Director of Delivery and Discovery explained that Destination Pembrokeshire was the destination management organisation for Pembrokeshire. The partnership consisted of the National Park Authority, Pembrokeshire County Council, PLANED and Pembrokeshire Tourism who worked closely with the trade and a wide variety of additional stakeholders to deliver the destination strategy and action plan for the county.

Destination Pembrokeshire currently operated successfully as an informal partnership, however the dual impact of budget reductions and new models of service delivery for tourism funding in Wales necessitated a potential change in its structure, constitution and future priorities. Consequently an independent review was being undertaken, with the final report available in May 2015. The report before the Committee provided a brief oversight of the current thoughts on future delivery models for Destination Pembrokeshire to allow Members the opportunity to shape the final report. Three options, together with their strengths and weaknesses, were outlined and these were the establishment of a new social enterprise, establishment of a Tourism Business Improvement District (TBID) or transfer of responsibility to Pembrokeshire Tourism.

Members asked questions about how the models would work in practice, particularly the TBID which it was anticipated would raise money through an additional levy on business rate. It was felt that the success of the TBID option would depend on the consultation process and how this was carried out. Members were unable to recommend any option as the way forward and hoped that the final report would contain more detailed information on the financial implications of the options, which were felt to be central to the decision. The views of other partners were also considered to be important.

NOTED.



8. Community Engagement Strategy

The Director of Delivery and Discovery reported that this strategy had originally been considered by the National Park Authority at its meeting in June 2014, when the feedback from Members was that the document should be 'more focused on the people the Authority wished to engage with, rather than how the consultation process would be undertaken' and the strategy was therefore not endorsed. The Strategy was therefore presented to the Committee to canvass views on how it might be adapted to reflect the needs of local communities throughout the National Park with the intention that a revised version be endorsed by the National Park Authority later in 2015.

The Director explained that the strategy was essentially an internal document setting out the circumstances under which the Authority would formally consult communities and what methods of consultation would be used. Members replied that they had not previously understood its nature, and that what they were looking for was a short document aimed at customers setting out who the Authority's stakeholders are and how the Authority presently engages and consults with them. There followed a discussion on the necessity of engaging with different groups within the National Park in a way that listened to their views, rather than 'talking at them'.

As part of the recently undertaken scrutiny exercise, Snowdonia NPA had described how they communicated with their communities and Members felt that lessons could be learned from their approach. Communities also required information on the Authority's policies and what it was doing, but in response to their questions, rather than in a 'bureaucratic manner'. Meetings needed to be on an area basis to make them as relevant as possible, however the resource implications of many small meetings was acknowledged.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Director of Delivery and Discovery produce a new document highlighting how local residents, communities, business and organisations could engage with and directly influence the work of the Authority for presentation to a future meeting of the National Park Authority.

9. Cilrhedyn Woodland Centre

The Estates Officer reminded Members of the background of the site and the discussions that had taken place regarding it in recent months. He explained that a meeting would take place in the next week at which officers would consider the Authority's future options for the site.

Members agreed that a clear vision for the future of Cilrhedyn was a pre-requisite for any further action and also asked about Coed Cymru's future



involvement with the Centre. Officers replied that they understood Coed Cymru were awaiting confirmation of grant funding for a large project that could potentially be based at the Centre. It was suggested that David Jenkins, Director of Coed Cymru should be invited to the next meeting of the Committee in order to share their aspirations for the site

It was **RESOLVED** that representatives of Coed Cymru be invited to give a presentation to the next meeting of the Committee.

[Mrs M Thomas tendered her apologies and left the meeting at this juncture]

10. Forward Work Programme

As discussed previously, a number of topics had been identified by Members and officers for future consideration by the Committee and these had been arranged into a suggested two-year forward programme. This proposed that the next meeting would consider working with landowners, mechanisms for community engagement and performance of the Public Rights of Way network. However it was noted that the Committee had now considered the community engagement strategy.

It was **RESOLVED** that Coed Cymru be invited to give a presentation to the next meeting of the Committee on their vision for Cilrhedyn and also that there would be a report on the Authority's work with landowners and the use of conservation grants.

11. Continuous Improvement Group: delegation of issues

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