

NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

27 April 2016

Present: Councillor M James (Chair)

Mr A Archer, Mr D Ellis, Councillor P Harries, Councillor S Hudson, Mrs G Hayward, Councillor L Jenkins, Councillor RM Lewis, Councillor PJ Morgan, Councillor R Owens, Councillor D Rees Mr AE Sangster and Councillor M Williams.

Mrs E Williams who was taking part in the Authority's Mentoring scheme was also present.

[Ms C Gwyther arrived during consideration of the report regarding Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Guidance (Minute 6 refers)]

(NPA Offices, Llanion Park, Pembroke Dock: 10.00am – 11.30am)

1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor ML Evans, Mrs M Thomas and Councillor A Wilcox

2. Disclosures of Interest

A personal but not prejudicial disclosure of interest was received from Mr AE Sangster in respect of the discussion regarding the St Brides Scout Lease Renewal (*Minute 4 refers*) for which he remained in the meeting but took no part in the discussion.

3. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on the 16 March 2016 were presented for confirmation and signature.

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 16 March 2016 be confirmed and signed.

[Mr AE Sangster disclosed an interest in the following matter and took no part in the discussion.]

4. Matters arising from the minutes:

a) St Brides Scouts Lease Renewal (Minute 11)

A further letter had been received from the Pembrokeshire Scout Council in response to the resolution made at the previous meeting of the Authority and this had been circulated to Members. The Chief Executive asked whether they wanted the matter to be put on the agenda for the next meeting of the Authority to discuss it further. Members welcomed the opportunity to negotiate a resolution with the Scouts, however, they



were of the view that this could be achieved as part of the legal process agreed to by the decision taken on 16th March. Therefore they decided to continue with the process agreed previously to ask officers to continue to negotiate with the Scouts and to report to a future meeting on any agreement.

It was **RESOLVED** that an update on the St Brides Scouts lease renewal be provided to a future meeting of the Authority,

5. Development Management Committee – Report of Meeting

It was **RESOLVED** that the report of the meeting of the Development Management Committee held on 9th March 2016 be received.

6. Local Development Plan: Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG)

It was reported that Joint Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) had been prepared with Pembrokeshire County Council to secure developer contributions through legal obligations in order to ensure that local services and infrastructure had adequate capacity to meet the additional demands arising from new development. Once adopted following public consultation, the SPG would replace that previously adopted by each Authority respectively.

The draft SPG raised the threshold for development from which certain contributions would be sought and waste and recycling contributions were not included in the document. The draft SPG set out maximum contributions for development allowing for negotiation on individual proposals, however it was noted that viability testing of individual sites would continue, to ensure that the requirements of a Planning Obligation did not unreasonably stifle or prevent development.

Approval was sought for consultation on the draft SPG for a period of 8 weeks. Any responses would be reported to a future meeting of the Authority for consideration.

Members generally welcomed the draft SPG, particularly that it had been produced jointly with Pembrokeshire County Council which gave a degree of consistency across the County, and agreed that not adopting a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) schedule at this time was the right decision. They asked that officers ensure that those with an economic interest had an opportunity to comment on the draft SPG and also asked about its relationship with the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act. Officers agreed to check the mailing list to ensure appropriate organisations were being consulted, and to include a reference in the covering letter circulated with the SPG referencing its compatibility with the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act.



Members also raised questions regarding the ability of sports clubs to access open space contributions; the allocation of sustainable transport facilities' contributions which they were concerned were not being spent in ways which were in-keeping with the character of the National Park; and the possible establishment of a tree fund to enable planting of copses rather than individual trees. Officers agreed to look into these points during the consultation period and to report back.

It was **RESOLVED** that the draft Supplementary Planning Guidance on Planning Obligations be approved for consultation.

7. Local Development Plan: Regionally Important Geodiversity Sites Supplementary Planning Guidance

It was reported that the Regionally Important Geodiversity Sites (RIGS) were a non-statutory geodiversity designation. The Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) helped to identify whether development had an adverse effect on the main features of interest within a RIGS. This report sought approval to add a site at Rhosyfelin to the above guidance which had been adopted by the Authority in October 2011.

One Member noted that while the geology at Rhosyfelin was interesting, its interest in historical terms was greater and was concerned that designation of the site as a RIGS would impact on future archaeological investigation of the site. The Head of Direction replied that she did not believe the designation would jeopardise such investigations in future, but agreed to check as part of the consultation process.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- a) The statement of interest for Rhosyfelin be approved for insertion in an updated Supplementary Planning Guidance on Regionally Important Geodiversity Sites and be subject to consultation
- b) The Head of Park Direction be authorised to include the map which formally designated the site prior to carrying out consultation on the updated guidance.

8. Virements over £20,000 in Financial Year 2015/16

The Finance Manager reported that approval of virements over £20,000 required specific approval of the Chief Financial Officer and Audit and Corporate Services Review Committee or National Park Authority in accordance with Paragraph 42 of the Authority's Financial Standards. Accordingly a list of such virements undertaken in 2015/16 were appended to the report for approval.

It was **RESOLVED** that virements in excess of £20,000 undertaken in respect of the financial years 2015/16, the list of which was appended to the report, be approved.



9. Grant Approvals in Accordance with Section 78 of the Financial Standards (Revised 2012)

The Finance Manager reported that authorisation was required from the National Park Authority in accordance with Section 78 of the Financial Standards (2012) for a payment of total value grant and sponsorships under any one agreement over £10,000. In the current financial year there were two payments which fell into that category: payment of £18,026 to Pembrokeshire Coastal Forum to help integrate and manage coastal activity and secondly a payment of circa £72,400 to Pembrokeshire County Council as a contribution towards the Pembrokeshire Greenways Partnership. Further details of both of these projects were included in the report.

One Member asked that a report on the outcomes delivered under these projects be presented to a future meeting of the Authority or its Committees, and officers agreed to provide this when they had been completed.

It was **RESOLVED** that the payments to Pembrokeshire Coastal Forum and Pembrokeshire County Council be approved.

10. PCNPA and Progress on Renewable Energy Installations

The Building Projects Officer reported that in view of the Authority's responsibility to deliver energy efficient buildings and to meet targets, the 'Greening up of Park Buildings' programme had been launched c 4 years ago, and this followed a three stage approach: 1) Efficiency First - to establish a sound monitoring system of energy usage to establish baseline data, carry out Environmental Audits on each building to highlight areas of high energy use and investigate improvements/reduction measures. 2) Quick wins – lamp replacement, controls adjustment, staff awareness, etc. 3) Installation of renewable energy technologies where feasible.

The report showed that since comprehensive monitoring began in 2012, measures introduced to the buildings had led to an electricity reduction of c21% over the four year period. In particular the Llanion Park building held a Display Energy Certificate rating of B (where A was very efficient and G the least efficient) which was remarkable for a property built in the early 1900's.

The Authority had also looked at the feasibility of installing sustainable technologies in its buildings. Biomass boilers had been installed at Llanion Park and Castell Henllys and there were PV panels at Llanion Park and Oriel y Parc. The installation of a large number of ground mounted PV panels on St Davids Airfield had also been investigated, however officers had considered that the negative impacts of such a proposal would be detrimental to the Park's objectives and counter to its



primary duties and the scheme was not therefore progressed. Similarly following a review of potential sites for the siting of wind turbines, this technology had not been fully explored due to the impact and sensitivity of siting turbines within the National Park. However an electric vehicle charging point had been installed at Oriel y Parc and it was planned to install a further charging point at Llanion Park in the near future.

Members were pleased with the progress made, particularly with regard to the Llanion Park building. They were equally pleased that the decision had been taken not to install PV arrays on St Davids Airfield agreeing that the impact would have been too great. With regard to the electric vehicle charging point, a question was asked regarding charging for use. The officer replied that to charge a car cost only a nominal sum and the Authority therefore sought donations only. Members suggested that the energy efficiency achievements would be a good news story that should be advertised and Officers agreed to arrange a press release.

It was **RESOLVED** that the report be noted and agreement with the approach to date be confirmed.

11. Planning Annual Performance Report 2014-15

The Director of Planning reported that in March 2016 the Welsh Government had produced a cumulative report of all the statistical data collected from all 25 local planning authorities in Wales. The intention of the report was to provide a clear picture of the state of planning in Wales, to identify where service standards were falling below acceptable levels, to identify areas of good practice and promote sharing of good ideas and to encourage local planning authorities to improve their performance.

The report had been provided for Members, and annotated to clearly show the National Park Authority's performance. Overall the rating was above average in most target areas. The Authority had performed consistently with 85.7% of all applications being dealt with within the required timescale. Where applications were refused and went to appeal, 76.9% of appeals were being dismissed.

With regard to customer service, the ability of members of the public to address the Development Management Committee and the provision of a duty officer were valued.

Officers considered that there were two areas to address: the limited housing land supply, which was below the 5 year target – this was being monitored and would be recalculated as part of the Local Plan review process. Secondly the website had only partial online access to all elements of the planning process. The limitations of the website were well recognised and the Authority was currently reviewing all the options for updating this.



Members wished to congratulate officers on the impressive results and acknowledged how much hard work went into achieving them. It was hoped that good practice could be shared among Authorities. They also suggested that this was another story which should receive greater publicity, particularly among Community Councils which often criticised the Authority.

The Director added that as part of her work with the Planning Officers Society for Wales she would be looking at report writing across local authorities in Wales to see if there were ways to save officer time in this respect, and she therefore sought Members' opinions on the reports presented to the Authority's Development Management Committee. Members replied that they were happy with the level of detail contained within the reports presented to them but they stated that there was no need for the content of reports to be read out at the meetings.

NOTED.

