

NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

20 June 2018

Present: Mrs G Hayward (Chair)
Councillor P Baker, Councillor Mrs D Clements, Councillor M Evans, Dr R Heath-Davies, Mrs J James, Councillor M James, Councillor PJ Morgan, Dr R Plummer, Councillor R Owens, Mr AE Sangster, Councillor A Wilcox and Councillor M Williams.

(NPA Offices, Llanion Park, Pembroke Dock: 10.30a.m. – 12noon)

1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Mr A Archer, Councillor K Doolin, Councillor P Harries, Councillor P Kidney and Councillor S Yelland.

2. Disclosures of interest

No disclosures of interest were received.

3. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 May 2018 were presented for confirmation and signature.

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

4. Matters arising from the minutes of 16 May 2018

(a) Carew Castle Café (Minute 5(a))

The Chief Executive reported that, following concerns raised by Councillor R Owens at previous meetings concerning the lack of a disabled toilet provision in the revised scheme for the new café, the decision had now been taken to revert to the original proposal. This meant that all café customers would have to use the existing toilet facilities within the Castle compound.

Councillor Owens welcomed the change to the scheme.

NOTED.

(b) Variation of the pre-existing Car Park Order in readiness for the start of the 2019 car park charging season (Minute 9)

Referring to the above-mentioned Minute, Councillor P Baker informed Members that the Car Park Order was to be considered by the Cabinet of Pembrokeshire County Council on 02 July 2018. He added that, in his capacity as the Cabinet Member responsible for planning and infrastructure, he had been invited to meet with representatives of Angle Community Council later that day to hear their views on the introduction of charges at Angle car park.

In response to a question from Councillor A Wilcox, the Chief Executive stated that, if the Car Park Order was amended as requested, the Authority would be



concentrating its energy on the introduction of pay and display machines at West Angle, Penally, Amroth and Nolton Haven for the duration.

NOTED.

(c) Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Trust (*Minute 11*)

The Chief Executive informed Members that the remaining four independent Trustees had been provisionally appointed and written confirmation of their acceptance to the position was awaited. In the meantime, the External Funding Manager was progressing matters with regard to the application to the Charity Commission.

Councillor R Owens stated that concerns had been raised externally about the name of the Trust as it could cause confusion with existing bodies. He had been requested to enquire whether a different title could be found. The Chief Executive reminded Members that the Trust name had been agreed at the May meeting; he did not consider that the new Trust would be confused with other bodies, such as the National Trust.

NOTED.

(d) Update on the disposal of the Authority's premises at Long Street in Newport (*Minute 13*)

In response to a question from Members, the Chief Executive stated that the opening of the premises was in the hands of Newport Town Council. However, as previously mentioned at a number of meetings, the Authority would be represented in the area by a National Park Summer Ranger. Ewan Rees had been appointed to the post and a number of events were planned to take place over the summer period which would provide more opportunities for engaging with the local community and visitors alike.

NOTED.

5. Chair's announcements

Mrs G Hayward informed Members that, due to personal circumstances, she had only attended the Mayor of St Davids' Civic Service at St Davids Cathedral since the last meeting of the Authority.

NOTED.

6. Reports of meetings of various of the Authority's Committees

The following reports of meetings of a number of the Authority's Committees were presented to Members for consideration/information:

- (i) Development Management Committee held on 25 April 2018;
- (ii) Standards Committee held on 15 May 2018, and
- (iii) Audit and Corporate Services Review Committee held on 23 May 2018.



Referring to Minute 7 (Internal Audit Report 2017/18) of the report of the meeting of the Audit and Corporate Services Review Committee, the Chief Executive stated that the Annual Report presented by the Internal Auditors had been factually incorrect in that their overall opinion relating to the Human Resources team should have been 'substantial' and not 'adequate' as had been reported at the meeting. In fact the original draft report, which had been forwarded to the Chief Executive for factual corroboration, returned a 'substantial' opinion but, for some reason this had been amended by the time the final report had been received. An amended report would be presented to Members in due course.

In response to a concern raised by Dr R Heath-Davies, the Chief Executive assured her that the matter had been raised with the Internal Auditors and that officers within the Authority would monitor the situation to ensure that such an occurrence did not happen again. Councillor M Williams expressed his disappointment at the mistake; he considered the company to have performed well since their appointment and had brought a different perspective to the audit process.

It was **RESOLVED**:

- (a) that the report of the meeting of the Development Management Committee held on 25 April 2018 be noted, and
- (b) that the reports of the meetings of the Standards Committee held on 15 May 2018 and the Audit and Corporate Services Review Committee held on 23 May 2018 be adopted.

7. National Park Management Plan 2020 – 2024

The Head of Park Direction reminded Members that the National Park Authority was required to prepare a five-yearly Management Plan for the National Park; the current Plan covered the period 2015 – 2019.

Her report to Members that day outlined the proposed informal engagement process that would be undertaken in preparation for the formal consultation on the new National Park Management Plan for 2020 – 2024. It set out the timetable to be followed, the impact assessments to be undertaken, and provided an indicative list of stakeholders/partners that would be involved in the whole process. She added that the indicative list could be developed further as the engagement process progressed. It was hoped that this approach would build new relationships, foster commitment to National Park purposes and add value in programme delivery through the Plan cycle.

In response to a question from Councillor Mrs D Clements, the Head of Park Direction stated that this proposed approach would, hopefully, increase the level of engagement in the process; there would be six months preparatory work/informal engagement leading up to a 12-week formal consultation process. It was intended to utilise colleagues in the Countryside, Community and Visitor Services team to help spread the word and encourage more participation this time.



Dr RM Plummer asked, given that Natural Resources Wales (NRW) were statutory advisers in the Management Plan process, whether representations had been made to the new Chief Executive of NRW? The Chief Executive replied that he had recently met with the new Chief Executive and they had talked briefly about the matter. Unfortunately, updated official Management Plan guidance was still awaited from NRW, but they were currently busy developing area plans. The Head of Park Direction stated that she and her team were in close liaison with the relevant colleagues in NRW and Welsh Government and were receiving informal guidance from them. She added that the current Management Plan guidance still held true in many instances.

Dr R Heath-Davies suggested that officers liaise with Menter Iaith Sir Benfro as their officers could help with identifying groups with which to engage on the Welsh language element of the Impact Assessment and other issues. The Head of Park Direction replied that the list of stakeholders set out in the report was not a complete list, but gave Members a flavour of what officers were doing.

It was **RESOLVED** that the proposed approach to the preparation of the National Park Management Plan, as set out in the report of the Head of Park Direction, be endorsed.

8. Rights of Way Improvement Plan for Pembrokeshire

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 placed a duty on local highway authorities to publish a Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) for their area and that, if part of that area fell within a National Park, the highway authority should work jointly with the relevant National Park Authority to develop such a Plan.

The Access & Rights of Way Officer presented to Members the draft ROWIP for 2018 – 2028, which had been developed jointly by officers of both Pembrokeshire County Council and the Authority, and which was currently out to wider consultation until the 3rd August 2018. The draft Plan identified six objectives that would guide the long-term management and development of the Public Rights of Way (PRoW) network. The objectives also represented aspirational aims for the PRoW network and were dependent upon funding, not only from existing budgets but upon external funding as well. The six objectives were further divided into actions that could be monitored and assessed and this process would, in turn, inform the new delivery plan. This would take the form of an annual report and was a change in approach to the previous Plan.

The Access & Rights of Way Officer added that the figures referred to in Section 1.2 of the draft Plan needed to be amended to include an additional 260km of footpath and this would be corrected when the Plan was finalised.

Members endorsed the draft Plan on the whole, but Dr R Heath-Davies highlighted the fact that – under Objective F, which aimed to promote website



walks, etc – there was a need to acknowledge that maps could sometimes be difficult to download, in particular onto a mobile phone. She also referred to the need to ensure that an integrated transport plan was needed to enable walkers to access some routes. Councillor M Evans welcomed the promotion of multi-user trails as they were a way of engaging the younger generation. He appreciated that such paths were not suitable everywhere, but there were a number of areas within the National Park that could be developed. The Access & Rights of Way Officer replied that, where appropriate – and with the landowner’s permission and necessary funding – such paths would be developed.

Following a lengthy discussion, it was **RESOLVED** that the draft Rights of Way Improvement Plan for Pembrokeshire 2018 – 2018 be approved, subject to the comments raised by Members at the meeting.

9. Grant approvals in accordance with Section 78 of the Financial Standards

The Finance Manager reported that, in accordance with Section 78 of the Financial Standards 2012, any grant or sponsorship payment totalling over £10,000 under one agreement, had to be approved by the Authority.

His report detailed two such payments, in the sum of £12,500 to the Pembrokeshire Coastal Forum to help integrate and manage coastal activity, and a payment of circa £72,400 to Pembrokeshire County Council as a contribution towards the Pembrokeshire Greenways Partnership.

It was **RESOLVED** that the payments, as set out in the report of the Finance Manager, be approved.

10. Welsh Language Standards: Annual Report

Members were reminded that the Authority was required to comply with the Welsh Language Standards Compliance Notice issued to it under Section 44 of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011. Standards 158, 164 and 170 of the Notice required an Annual Report to be produced by the 30th June every year and the report for 2017/18 was presented for Members’ consideration.

The report was generally agreed, although Members suggested certain minor amendments, including detailing the number of Welsh speakers among the Members as well as staff.

It was **RESOLVED** that, subject to the amendments raised at the meeting being incorporated, the Annual Report be agreed as the Authority’s submission to the Welsh Language Commissioner.

