

NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

16 May 2018

Present: Mr AE Sangster (Deputy Chair in the Chair)

Mr A Archer, Councillor Mrs D Clements, Councillor M Evans, Councillor P Harries, Dr R Heath-Davies, Mrs J James, Councillor M James, Councillor PJ Morgan, Councillor R Owens, Councillor A Wilcox, Councillor M Williams and Councillor S Yelland

(NPA Offices, Llanion Park, Pembroke Dock: 10.00am – 12.05pm)

1. Personal

Members expressed their sorrow, support and sympathy to the Chair, Mrs Hayward, whose husband had died the previous day. They asked that a letter of condolence be sent to her on behalf of the Authority.

NOTED.

2. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor P Baker, Councillor K Doolin, Mrs G Hayward, Councillor P Kidney and Dr RM Plummer.

3. Disclosures

Councillor P Harries disclosed a prejudicial interest in report 21/18 – Update on the disposal of the Authority's premises at Long Street in Newport, but advised that he had been granted a dispensation by the Standards Committee to speak and vote on the matter. Mrs J James disclosed a personal but not prejudicial interest in report 23/18 – Appointment of a Data Protection Officer.

4. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on the 28 March 2018 were presented for confirmation and signature.

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 28 March 2018 be confirmed and signed.

5. Matters arising

(a) Carew Castle Café (Minute 14)

Councillor R Owens noted that he and Councillor P Baker, together with Alan Hunt, Pembrokeshire County Council's Access Officer, had met with officers at Carew Castle earlier in the week to discuss the lack of disabled toilet facilities at the proposed new café. He believed that this lack of disabled provision was unacceptable and not really in compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act, even though disabled facilities were



available nearby. He reported that officers were looking at options, however as Building Regulations approval had been obtained, little could now be done. The Chief Executive added that he hoped lessons would be learned for the future, and opportunities taken to provide additional facilities if the situation arose.

NOTED.

6. Chair's Announcements

The Chair noted that among the events attended by Mrs Hayward recently was a meeting with the Minister for Environment. The Chief Executive reported that the meeting in mid-April was the second in six months which he felt was a helpful pattern of engagement. Outcomes of the meeting included an update on the Policy Statement on Designated Landscapes announced as part of her statement to the Senedd. She had advised that this would now be a priority statement which would be issued by the summer, and that it would therefore not be a document which would be subject to consultation; officers hoped that it would bring some clarity regarding Welsh Government's expectations for Protected Landscapes.

The Minister had also stated that there was unlikely to be any improvement in the projected 5% reduction in funding for next year, but no additional information was available in this regard. The final point to note was regarding commercialisation, with the Authorities being invited to learn from the experience of Visit Wales and Cadw. It was intended to meet Welsh Government's new Director of Culture, Tourism and Sport in order to benefit from his experience, and in view of Members' comments previously, it was also intended to have a workshop regarding commercialisation to establish the way forward for the Authority. One Member suggested that the Director be invited to the workshop and the Chief Executive agreed to try to arrange that. He added that one of the Deputy Directors of Visit Wales would be present at the workshop regarding the showcase architectural intervention for North Pembrokeshire which would take place after the meeting and hoped that Members would be able to stay for that.

NOTED.

7. 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 Committees held on 14 March and 26 March 2018;
- (ii) Chief Executive Performance Review Panel held on 28 March 2018;



- (iii) Personnel Committees held on 28 March and 18 April 2018.

NOTED.

8. Appointment of Monitoring Officer

It was reported that following an interview by the Personnel Committee (*Minute 7(iii) refers*), it was recommended that Mr Rhys Stephens be appointed as Monitoring Officer to the Authority with effect from 21 May 2018.

Members wished to record their thanks to the temporary Deputy Monitoring Officer for her work in the interim.

It was **RESOLVED** that Mr Rhys Stephens be appointed as Monitoring Officer to the Authority with effect from 21 May 2018.

[Due to the presence of members of the public interested in this item, the Chair agreed to bring the following matter forward in the agenda.]

9. Variation of the pre-existing Car Park Order in readiness for the start of the 2019 Car Park charging season

The Estates Officer reported that at the Authority meeting in November 2017, Members resolved to introduce a number of provisions in readiness for the start of the 2019 car park charging season. These related to the introduction of charges at West Angle, Penally, Amroth and Nolton Haven car parks, extending the charging period from 5pm to 7pm and increasing the daily rate for coach parking from £3 to £8.

In order to give legal effect to the resolution, a variation of the Car Park Order current in force was required. A draft of this, which had been prepared by officers working in consultation with Pembrokeshire County Council in their capacity as the relevant Highway Authority, was appended to the report. Approval of the Variation Order was therefore sought in order that Pembrokeshire County Council could undertake the necessary statutory process, which included a public consultation exercise.

Several Members asked about provisions for residents, and the officer explained that the Authority made no distinction between residents and visitors, however a number of season tickets were available and there had been a good uptake of these. Many people had also taken advantage of the 30 minute free parking tickets and there had been no detrimental impact on overall revenue as a result of this. A report on the performance of car parks over the season would be made in November. Members wished to ensure that those who lived in the communities where charging car parks were to be introduced were made aware of the



availability of season tickets and the officer reassured them that the subject had been raised in his discussions with the relevant Community Councils.

Finally one Member noted that he had received a number of emails regarding the car park at West Angle which claimed that the car park had been given with a covenant which prevented charging. The officer clarified that the Authority had acquired the car park in 1967, with a restriction on the use of the land written into the conveyance, however it was silent on the terms of use of the car park. He added that concerns had been raised some years ago when a plaque referring to car parking being free in perpetuity had been removed as this was misleading. The Authority was happy to re-erect an appropriately worded plaque, however no further correspondence had been received from the agent on this matter.

It was **RESOLVED** that the (PEMBROKESHIRE COAST NATIONAL PARK) (OFF-STREET PARKING PLACES) ORDER 2015 – VARIATION ORDER NO. 1 (2017) be approved and officers be authorised to instruct Pembrokeshire County Council to commence the necessary statutory process to give legal effect to that Order in readiness for the commencement of the Authority's 2019 car park charging season.

10. Planning Policy Wales Edition 10 Consultation

It was reported that Planning Policy Wales had been revised in light of the 7 Well-being goals introduced by the Well Being of Future Generations Act. The intention was to show conformity with the Well Being of Future Generations Act, provide leadership in this area and change practice on the ground for Local Planning Authorities. In addition Welsh Government had taken the opportunity to update sections of Planning Policy Wales, introduce new policy and streamline the document. Because of the significant nature of the changes to the document, the Welsh Government had produced a draft for public consultation. A recommended 3 Welsh National Parks response was appended to the report and Members were asked to approve this for submission to the Welsh Government.

The Head of Park Direction advised Members that their comments were welcome, however as the submission deadline was Friday those which could not be incorporated within the joint response would be included on a separate sheet as having been made by the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority (PCNPA).

Members were supportive of the response, agreeing that the document was over complicated, difficult to use and introduced more uncertainty and ambiguity. Members made several additional comments, regarding light pollution, the effect of outdoor green spaces on mental health and



wellbeing; car charging points and location of development in settlements accessible by non-car modes. The detail of some of these comments would be supplied by the relevant Member and included as a collective response from PCNPA. Members also suggested that a letter accompany the response asking that the document be reorganised and be subject to a further consultation.

It was **RESOLVED** that the three Welsh National Park Authorities' response to the Welsh government consultation on the draft Planning Policy Wales Edition 10 and that additional points raised at the meeting be submitted as a separate Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority response.

[Councillor M Evans left the meeting during the course of the discussion on the following item.]

11. Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Trust

Members were reminded that at the meeting of the Authority in February, it was resolved that a local Charitable Trust be set up, subject to the relevant documentation being presented to and approved by Members prior to submission to the Charity Commission for registration. Draft versions of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Authority and the Trust and the Trust's Constitution were appended to the report for Members' approval. The report also sought the appointment of two Authority Members to become Trustees. The remaining Trustees would then be appointed by the Member Trustees, subject to an interview process.

One Member sought reassurance on the controls the Authority would have over the Trust if, as was recommended, a majority of Trustees were not Members of the Authority. The External Funding Manager explained that a proportion of her time would be seconded to the Trust and if the Authority removed that, and other resources it would be providing, the Trust would be unable to deliver its work. In addition, the purposes of the trust as set out in the constitution were aligned with those of the Authority and the projects put forward to the Trust for funding would be ones supported by the Authority. She noted that the Charity Commission was unlikely to look favourably on creation of a Trust which did not have a high degree of independence from the Authority.

Other Members were concerned that the Objects set out in the constitution would not allow fundraising for all the projects that the Authority desired, however the Officer reassured Members that the documents had been scrutinised by Geldards, the Authority's Solicitors, and that they had advised that the Objects were broad enough to allow funding of a wide range of projects expressly mentioned to them. A



question was also asked regarding the branding for the Trust and the officer replied that a report on branding would be considered later in the meeting, however officers' preference was for a distinct identity, demonstrating a degree of separation between Trust and Authority.

Turning to nominations for Trustees, the names of three Members were proposed and seconded: Mrs G Hayward, Dr RM Plummer and Councillor P Harries. As there were only two positions, a secret ballot was held, and Mrs Hayward and Councillor Harries appointed. The External Fundraising Manager added that recruitment of the remaining 4 Trustees was ongoing and Members were asked to draw the vacancies to the attention of those they felt would fit the role profile.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- a) The Memorandum of Understanding and Constitution be approved
- b) Mrs G Hayward and Councillor P Harries be appointed Trustees of the Trust; and
- c) That an application be submitted to the Charity Commission to register the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Trust.

[Councillor S Yelland was not present for the vote on the following item.]

12. Branding the National Park

Members' approval was sought for the creation of a bespoke brand identity for the National Park, separate to the existing corporate branding for the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority. It was reported that there were a number of key drivers for this, including the creation of the Charitable Trust (*Minute 11 refers*), encouragement of greater marketing of the National Park as well as branding on the clothing which would be sold as part of the sponsorship deal agreed between the National Parks Partnership and Columbia Clothing. It was intended to engage with a wide cross section of stakeholders in developing the brand, and Members would have an opportunity to input into this process.

Some Members were concerned with the potential cost of such an exercise, however the Chief Executive reassured them that as there was no intention to undertake a re-branding of the Authority, costs would be minimal and related mainly to engagement with the wider community.

It was **RESOLVED** that work to create a separate brand for the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park be approved.

13. Update of the Disposal of the Authority's Premises at Long Street in Newport

Members were reminded that at their meeting in March 2018, it was resolved to progress negotiations with Newport Town Council (The



Council) for the grant of a new occupational lease of the Authority's former operational premises at Long Street in Newport under the principle of Community Asset Transfer.

The building was presently closed to the public, however officers had reached an early agreement with The Council to facilitate the reopening of the premises under their long term control and management. In summary the proposed lease terms would see building passing into the control of The Council for a term of 30 years on full repairing and insuring terms at a peppercorn rental. The permitted use of the building would be limited and restricted to the Council's community aims and objectives and the report also set out alienation provisions precluding the assignment of the lease to any third party. However it was reported at the meeting that some of the non-profit organisations that Newport Town Council might want to accommodate could require some sort of sub-lease, and it was therefore requested that this provision be amended to allow for subletting of parts of the building to non-profit organisations subject to the landlords consent.

Supporting the revised recommendation, one of the Members advised that the Town Council was in discussion with a number of organisations and some 70 volunteers, however the documentation that was required to progress this would take time to draw up. In the meantime work was ongoing regarding dissemination of literature in the town in time for the coming season.

It was **RESOLVED** that Officers be authorised to proceed with the documentation of a new lease of the Authority's former operational premises comprising 1 & 2 Bank Cottages, Long Street, Newport to Newport Town Council on the terms outlined in the report reflecting the principle and spirit of Community Asset Transfer with the caveat that Newport Town Council should be permitted to sub-let part of the premises conditional upon any such prospective sub lessee being a not for profit locally based public service provider organisation only, and subject to the Authority's consent in its capacity as Head Lessor which shall not be unreasonably withheld.

14. Appointment of a Data Protection Officer

It was reported that the Authority had a legislative duty as a public Authority under the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulations which would come into force on 25 May 2018, to appoint a Data Protection Officer.

The role of a Data Protection Officer was set out in the report, as well as advice as to who could be appointed to that post.



Having reviewed its options, it was proposed that the current IT Manager, Paul Funnell, was appointed to the role of Data Protection Officer and the experience that he had which made him suitable for the role was also provided. As this was a new role, it was proposed to commence a review of the effectiveness of this arrangement within 12 months of appointment.

In making the recommendation, the Chief Executive paid tribute to the work undertaken both by Paul, and Mair Thomas, the Authority's Performance and Compliance Coordinator, in preparing for the introduction of the legislation.

It was **RESOLVED** that Paul Funnell be appointed as Data Protection Officer for the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority.

15. Future Landscapes Fund

It was reported that during 2017 the Welsh Government provided £275,000 to support the work of the Future Landscapes Wales Programme, this money being allocated to the Authority to manage on behalf of the partners in the Future Landscapes Wales Programme. The Authority currently held this in its reserves.

In December 2017 the Authority received a letter from the Welsh Government identifying a number of priority areas for allocating this money and these were set out in the report. It also stipulated that this money needed to be allocated on activities that had the agreement of the designated landscapes, in liaison with Natural Resources Wales and the Welsh Government.

Section 77 of the Authority's Financial Standards stipulated that payment of grant in excess of £20,000 required National Park Authority approval, however while the Authority held the Future Landscapes reserve, its allocation was dependent upon approval from both Welsh Government and Natural Resources Wales, along with the other Designated Landscapes. In order to allow for the prompt and effective distribution of the Future Landscapes Reserve it was therefore proposed that the Authority suspended the standing order regarding grants in excess of £20,000 expressly in relation to the allocation of this reserve.

It was **RESOLVED** that the variation to Financial Standards in relation to the Future Landscapes Fund be approved.

16. Any other business

The Chair allowed the following matters to be raised:

a) Lighting Seminar

Members wished to thank officers for organising the joint officer/Member seminar "Shedding light on our dark skies ", which took place on 9 May



and asked if there were opportunities for greater awareness raising of this subject through press releases or other publicity.

The Chief Executive concurred, and noted that publicity would be given to any events held at the network of sites which existed within the National Park. He added that it was also proposed to use that topic as the subject for the Community Council Seminar which would take place later in the year.

NOTED.

b) Ranger Recruitment

One Member noted the recent advertisement for a South Ranger and asked whether in future recruitment could take place earlier in the year so that seasonal Rangers could be in post over the Easter and May Bank Holidays.

The Chief Executive clarified that the recent advertisement had been for a permanent post, which had arisen as a result of the resignation of the current post holder who had secured another job. However two Seasonal Rangers had recently been appointed, one for the north and the other for the south of the county, and they were scheduled to start on 4 June on a four month contract. The start date for such posts could be reviewed in future years.

NOTED.

