

NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

30 January 2019

Present: Mrs G Hayward (Chair)
Mr A Archer, Councillor P Baker, Councillor Mrs D Clements,
Councillor K Doolin, Councillor P Harries, Dr R Heath-Davies, Mrs J
James, Councillor P Kidney, Councillor PJ Morgan, Dr RM Plummer,
Mr AE Sangster, Councillor A Wilcox, Councillor M Williams and
Councillor S Yelland.

(NPA Offices, Llanion Park, Pembroke Dock: 10.00am – 12.25p.m.)

1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor M Evans, Councillor M James and Councillor R Owens.

2. Disclosures

Councillor P Baker disclosed a personal interest in Report 06/19 (Pembrokeshire County Council's Preferred Strategy Local Development Plan 2) due to being Pembrokeshire County Council's Cabinet Member for Planning and Infrastructure.

3. Minutes

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

Referring to Minute 6 (Europarc Youth Manifesto), Mr AE Sangster recollected that the recommendation was to note and support the principles of the Youth Manifesto and to consider the next steps and actions. Members agreed that the alteration was to be included.

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 28 November 2018 be confirmed and signed subject to the above amendment.

4. Matters arising from the minutes

- (a) Update report on the proposed variation of the pre-existing Car Park Order in readiness for the start of the 2019 car park charging season (Minute 10 refers)

The Chief Executive referred to the above-mentioned Minute, stating that he had attended a meeting with Pembrokeshire County Council Officers and Cabinet Members who felt that there had not been enough clarity in the process taken by the Authority. As the County Council was the Highway Authority, he had agreed to bring the matter back to Members for clarification.



He went on to say that two requests had been received from Community Councils asking that the management of the car park in their respective area be transferred to them. Both of these issues would be brought to Members at the next Authority meeting in March with the aim being to bring the revised Order to the Authority meeting in May.

NOTED.

(b) Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales Draft Annual Report 2019/20
(Minute 14 refers)

Members noted that they had flagged the issue of reimbursement, using emphasis to re-chase the issue of inequality. Responding to comments from Members regarding the taxation of Members' expenses, the Chief Executive stated that he was aware that the Cairngorms National Park were exploring options in this regard and that the Lake District National Park were currently taking a test case. He had also raised the issue at a meeting with the Welsh Government and confirmed that it was not a forgotten issue.

NOTED.

5. Chair's Announcement

The Chair had attended two drop-in meetings held in Tenby and Fishguard for those individuals who were interested in applying to become a Member of the Authority. Also in attendance were the Chief Executive, Libby Taylor (Ranger Services Manager) and two Welsh Government officers. There had been a good turnout at both events with the calibre of people attending being very impressive.

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:

- (a) Development Management Committees held on 17 October 2018 and 5 December 2018;
- (b) Audit and Corporate Services Review Committee held on 28 November 2018;
- (c) Operational Review Committee held on 12 December 2018, and
- (d) Standards Committee held on 19 December 2018.

NOTED.



7. Review of Employer Discretions in Relation to the Dyfed Pension Fund

Mr Matthew James from the Dyfed Pension Fund was welcomed to the meeting. Mr James reported that, on 14 May 2018, the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 were introduced. As a result, all Scheme employers were required to review their employer policies and the proposed amendments to the Authority's current policies were attached to the report before Members that day. The Chief Executive informed Members that the advice of the Pension Fund administrators had been taken and that there was a mechanism in place whereby a period of one month had to elapse before any changes to policy could come into effect. This would enable members of staff to challenge any of the proposed amendments.

Members sought reassurance that any amendments made by the Authority would not be at variance with other local authorities. Mr James informed Members that it was a mandatory exercise that all local authorities had to go through. He added that the Pension Fund administrators would be dealing with the Fund actuary, with the valuation report being made available in February 2020. He added that the Authority's rates would be varied in accordance with the evaluation, but all policies were geared towards being cost neutral to the Authority.

It was **RESOLVED** that the proposed changes to the discretions the Authority adopted in relation to the Local Government Pension Scheme, as set out in Appendix B attached to the report before Members that day, be approved.

8. Oriel Y Parc – Service Level Agreement with Amgueddfa Cymru National Museum of Wales

Members were asked to approve a new five year Service Level Agreement (SLA) between the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority and Amgueddfa Cymru National Museum Wales (ACNMW).

The Director of Countryside, Community and Visitor Services felt that it had been a very positive partnership with a high level of joint working and trust. He then introduced Mr Ashley McAvoy from ACNMW to give a presentation.

Mr McAvoy stated that the partnership was very important, increasing access to the exhibition programme at Oriel y Parc, with a key highlight being the connection with the Tate Gallery. He asked for continuance of support to shared outcomes, to promote Brand Wales, Oriel Y Parc, learning constructs and creative industry. He added that a more structured approach had given access to the breadth of the Museum's collection with greater focus on delivery against the Authority's purposes.



One new element in the SLA was to extend the partnership to include other cultural providers in the area. He had attended the launch of the Riverside Gallery in Haverfordwest and would explore the opportunity to join up Oriel y Parc and Riverside once the revised SLA was in place with a relaunch. He stated that it had been a joy working with National Park Authority and Oriel y Parc staff over the last 9 months and he was looking forward to working with them in the future.

Members felt that these partnerships were very important but would have liked to have seen a harder evaluation of whether expectations were being met. They also considered that there could be better scope for the retail and commercial element, and this could be of mutual benefit. Mr McAvoy confirmed that evaluation had not been one of their strengths to date and this would be worked on. There was a need to develop within the partnership a sense of the audience visiting Oriel y Parc. Measuring attendance and building on this was the key. Due to finances being challenging in the public sector ACNMW had been encouraged to develop commercially and that they would be working towards that with Oriel y Parc.

Members acknowledged that the exhibitions were a very important element of the partnership but were concerned that the new agreement was for a minimum of one exhibition and felt that this would not get the best value out of the partnership. It was thought that a high profile exhibition would encourage people to visit, however locals would only visit once. Members also wanted more information on the standard conditions of loan and costs compared to the previous agreement. Mr McAvoy explained that the insurance costs, etc. and conditions were the same as previously. He added that the gallery was an asset owned by the Authority so basic provision had to be covered by the agreement.

He went on to say that ACNMW were not able to maintain the current turnover of exhibitions but that they were focused on increasing the quality of them. Where there was only one exhibition they would look to refresh and add to it to get people to return. He felt that the pooling of resources and creating bridges locally would give better value where neither party would lose out.

Members wanted reassurance that all exhibitions would be refreshed or elements changed in order to increase visitor footfall. Mr McAvoy replied that some of the Museum's most popular exhibitions were family focused and long-term displays. They would like to move to a 3 year programme model working with the Museum to ensure it was designed for the area. He stated that the location of Oriel y Parc was very attractive to national galleries and they hoped to expand on that.



One Member noted that the partnership was a delicate balance and, whilst there were pressures on ACNMW there were also pressures on the Authority. Assurances were sought that the balance did not tip and put more pressure on the Authority. It was felt that one exhibition per year would make it difficult to engage different audiences and tick all the boxes and this was a worry. The Director of Countryside, Community and Visitor Services stated that and the Authority was now more corporately embedded with ACNMW. The partnership provided more opportunities to market the gallery space and to get high-end objects of art to Oriel y Parc. Members felt that officers needed to make sure that evaluation took place as the partnership progressed as it provided the Authority with more information for moving forward. The Director replied that the Authority's Operational Review Committee would be provided with progress against measures for the partnership. Mr McAvoy confirmed that there were currently discussions regarding specific collection items being exhibited in the areas that they had originated from.

It was **RESOLVED** that the new 5 year Service Level Agreement between the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority and Amgueddfa Cymru National Museum Wales be approved, subject to typographical errors being corrected.

9. Draft Budget Planning 2019/20 and Forecasts for 2020/21 to 2024/25

In introducing the report, the Chief Financial Officer reported that there was a typographical error in the title of the report and that it should have read 2024/25; this was duly noted.

He went on to say that the report set out the draft Revenue and Capital budgets for 2019/20 and forecast 2020/21 to 2024/25, the draft 2019/20 levy on Pembrokeshire County Council, Prudential Indicators for the capital programme and Investment Strategy & Treasury Management Policy Statement for 2019/20. With regard to the budgets for 2019/20, the report set out the Authority's budget strategy and the key assumptions on which this had been based, and as previously been discussed by Members in budget workshops.

Revenue Budget 2018/19 and draft Revenue Budget 2019/20

Looking back at the previous year's budget, it was reported that the 5% reduction in the core National Park grant had been reinstated in July 2018, resulting in an increase of £145,000 to core funding. However, due to the timing of this the Levy from Pembrokeshire County Council had remained at the initial budgeted funding level. The forecast revenue position showed a projected surplus of £200,000 less the Capital Expenditure funded from the General Reserve of £24,000. As a result, the General Reserve balance was expected to increase from £1,006,000 to £1,182,000 at the end of the 2018/19 financial year.



The Chief Financial Officer took Members through the report, stating that – while he welcomed news that the National Park grant and levy would remain unchanged from the 2017/18 level, it was worth noting that the total reduction since 2013/14 in cash terms had been £783,000. The report went on to show the impact of a flat line grant on the Authority’s budget over the next 5 years, which showed an annual deficit in 2020/21 of £238,000 rising to £718,000 by 2024/25. He had also applied a sensitivity analysis to what would be the Authority’s revenue budget position if a 5% reduction in funding was imposed. The resulting budget forecast model showed a deficit of £435,000 in 2020/21 rising to £1,426,000 in 2024/25.

He went on to say that the Authority had countered the reduction in core funding by making significant savings in its operating cost base, and by increasing income from other sources. This again was presented in the report before Members that day, together with a summarised and more detailed revenue budget for 2019/20.

The report also set out the Capital Programme for 2019/20, which forecast a spend of £1,142,900, some of which would be funded by earmarked reserves, the general reserve, capital receipts and other external grants.

With regard to financial reserves and balances, it was anticipated that the general reserves would rise at the end of 2018/19 to £1,182,000 and then, due to funding some of the capital programme, fall to £1,167,000 by the end of 2019/20. In addition, the disposal of land at Sageston had increased the capital receipts reserve to £653,000 at the end of 2018/19, although this was expected to fall to £354,000 by the end of 2019/20.

The Chief Financial Officer concluded by noting that he envisaged £2.7m earmarked reserves at the end of 2019/20. Members enquired about the cost implications of the role review. The Chief Executive confirmed that the Authority remained committed to undertaking such a review, but in the longer-term. He added that the Authority had recently consulted staff on the National Joint Council’s proposed changes to the salary structure and that the exercise had not raised any negative comments. These changes had to be implemented by the end of the current financial year.

In response to a question from Members, the Chief Financial Officer reported that the lease on the Tenby Visitor Centre premises was due to expire in December 2019. Members were pleased to see the Chief Financial Officer back after sick leave and complimented him on the management of the Authority’s resources under difficult circumstances.



It was **RESOLVED** that the Draft Budget 2019/20 be approved, subject to noting that the National Park grant/Levy was yet to be confirmed, and that the financial forecasts for 2020/21 to 2024/25 be noted.

Levy on Pembrokeshire County Council

The Chief Financial 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. He noted that there was a slight change as the National Park grant was £600,000 lower than anticipated, which had had a knock on effect on the levy.

<u>Levy on Pembrokeshire County Council</u>
--



The Authority must authorise the making of a levy of £984,885 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	£5,627,897
• 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	----- £5,627,897
LESS	
• Section 72, Grant (NPG)	£2,954,655
• Income credited to the Revenue Account	£1,688,357
• other sums not covered above which are likely to be available in the year	- ----- £4,643,012 -----



Levy requirement

£984,885

It was **RESOLVED** that Members authorise a levy of £984,885 (or other appropriate amount as determined on receipt of confirmation of the approved net funding from the Welsh Government) from Pembrokeshire County Council for the year 2019/20.

Prudential Code Indicators and Investment Strategy 2019/20

The Local Authorities (Capital Finance & Accounting) (Wales) Regulations 2003 require the Authority to have regard to the CIPFA Prudential Code in setting annual budgets. Members were asked to consider the advice of the Chief Financial Officer in determining an affordable, prudent and sustainable capital investment programme, as set out in the report before Members that day.

The report went on to present the Authority's Investment Strategy for 2019/20, which complied with statutory guidance and supported the prudential borrowing system.

Members stated that the clarity of the report was much appreciated.

It was **RESOLVED** that Members **ADOPT** the Prudential Indicators as presented and **APPROVE** the Investment Strategy & Treasury Management Policy Statement for 2019/20.

10. Corporate Plan 2019/20

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 Well-being of Future Generations legislation required public bodies to publish a plan showing how it would deliver towards the well-being goals and how it had applied the Sustainable Development principles in its work. At present, it was not yet certain whether the Authority would be required to continue to comply with the requirements of the Local Government Measure therefore, in order to reduce the need for duplication, the draft corporate plan presented to Members was intended to fulfil the requirements of both pieces of legislation by developing the Authority's well-being objectives which could also be considered the improvement objectives.

The Plan presented was still very much a draft plan. The final version of the corporate plan would be presented to Members for approval in March. There was a typographical error on page 125 (Improvement Area: Sustainable Tourism) which should read 7,300 people were employed in the Tourism sector in Pembrokeshire.

Members wanted to congratulate the Performance and Compliance Co-ordinator on the skilful, realistic and impressive piece of work that had



been produced. With regards to priority actions one Member felt there was an area to explore on the marine side; the Management Plan went into detail about the state of the rivers but did not explore the impact rivers had on coastal areas. The Officer stated that it was currently under a Global heading but could be moved to the Resilience section of the plan and this would be considered when looking at amendments to the draft plan. The Chief Executive felt that there was a clear link to the Management Plan and Corporate Plan but could be developed further.

Members noted that the average time taken to deal with enforcement issues was taking longer. The Officer explained that the backlog of cases had an impact on the figures, but officers were working on clearing the backlog, therefore it was hoped that better figures would be seen next year.

It was **RESOLVED** that the comments expressed by Members at the meeting be taken on board by officers and that a final draft of the Corporate Plan be presented to the next meeting of the Authority.

11. Draft Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report for the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Management Plan 2020-2024

The Head of Park Direction presented Members with a draft Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report for the National Park Management Plan (2020-2024). It was hoped that, subject to any comments made at the meeting, the Report and its associated appendices would be approved for an 8-week consultation period. The Officer advised she could take Members' queries away to consider as part of the Consultation. She added that the main purpose of the Sustainability Appraisal was to test how well the Plan would perform.

Members asked several questions on the content of the document, including accessibility, air pollution, travel and car use. One Member expressed concern regarding the impact of second homes on local communities. It was felt that there was a need for a workshop on this subject. Another Member thought that there would be merit in linking up with the other National Parks to discuss this issue.

It was **RESOLVED** that Members approve the draft Scoping Report and associated appendices to the National Park Management Plan for consultation.

12. Pembrokeshire County Council's Preferred Strategy Local Development Plan 2 and Supporting Documents

The Head of Park Direction reported that Pembrokeshire County Council's current Local Development Plan would expire in 2021. In preparing for the successor Local Development Plan 2, the County



Council had published its Preferred Strategy for consultation. The report before Members that day presented the officers' proposed response to this consultation. She informed Members County Council officers had engaged with the Authority's officers on the preparation of the Preferred Strategy and this had gone well. She asked that the draft response be approved.

It was **RESOLVED** that the representation set out in Appendix A on Pembrokeshire County Council's Local Development Plan 2 Preferred Strategy be approved as the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority's consultation response.

13. Membership of the Pembrokeshire Local Access Forum

The Access and Rights of Way Manager explained that the purpose of the report was to appoint a Member of the National Park Authority to serve on the Pembrokeshire Local Access Forum (LAF) for the term 2019-2021.

Councillor Paul Harries declared an interest as a member of the LAF but it was noted that his term had already ended. Members nominated Councillor Paul Harries for a further term in this role.

It was **RESOLVED** that Councillor Harries be appointed to serve on the Pembrokeshire Local Access Forum for the period 2019-2021.

14. Member Support and Development

The purpose of the report was to establish a Member Support and Development Committee to drive forward the Member Support and Development Programme. Draft Terms of Reference for the Committee were appended to the report before Members that day.

Members were hugely supportive of the proposal and felt confident that they could apply for advance status for the Wales Charter for Member Support and Development. There was a requirement of 9 members for the Committee, 3 being Welsh Government Members and 6 County Council Members. It was felt that even though Mr Archer was nearing the end of his term at the Authority, his experience would be valuable for the remainder of the term.

One Member was concerned about the potential time and money involved. Members were informed that a lot of work was already being undertaken and meetings would take place whenever possible on a day when other meetings were taking place. Another Member suggested that the Terms of Reference be amended to include the following remit:



“To promote the value to, and encourage engagement of, all Members in engaging with the process to achieve Advanced Charter status.”

It was **RESOLVED**:

- (a) that a Member Support & Development Committee be established, comprising the following Members:

Mr A Archer, Councillor Mrs D Clements, Councillor K Doolin, Mrs J James, Councillor M James, Councillor P Kidney, Dr RM Plummer, Councillor A Wilcox and Councillor M Williams;

- (b) that Terms of Reference 3 be amended to read:

“To develop an application for Advanced Charter status of the Wales Charter for Member Support and Development and to recommend it to the Authority prior to submission to the Welsh Local Government Association”, and

- (c) that the following remit be added to the Terms of Reference:

“To promote the value to, and encourage engagement of, all Members in engaging with the process to achieve Advanced Charter status”.

