

# NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

05 June 2019

Present: Councillor P Harries (Chairman)  
Mr A Archer, Councillor Mrs D Clements, Councillor K Doolin,  
Councillor M Evans, Dr M Havard, Dr R Heath-Davies, Councillor M  
James, Councillor P Kidney, Councillor PJ Morgan, Councillor R  
Owens, Dr RM Plummer, Councillor A Wilcox, Councillor M Williams  
and Councillor S Yelland.

(NPA Offices, Llanion Park, Pembroke Dock: 10.50am – 11.50a.m.)

## 1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor P Baker, Mrs J James and Mr GA Jones.

## 2. Disclosures of interest

No disclosures of interest were received.

## 3. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 08 May 2019 were presented for confirmation and signature.

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 08 May 2019 be confirmed and signed.

## 4. Matters arising from the minutes

### (a) Minute 10 – Car parks

A lengthy discussion was held regarding the introduction of car parking charges, in particular at West Angle. Councillor R Owens felt uncomfortable with the proposal and wanted the matter revisited. The Chief Executive replied that the Car Parking Order had not yet come into force but, if Members wished to review the implementation of car parking charges at some point in the future, the matter could be considered afresh.

Dr R Heath-Davies was of the opinion that, as the Authority's membership had changed since the original decision to introduce charges at four new car parks had been taken, it would be useful for Members to have a debate over the wider policy of charging in order to understand how the decision was reached in the first instance. If such a debate were to happen, it would also be useful if Members could be given all relevant documentation as background information.



Councillor M Evans disagreed as, in his opinion, the decision to charge for car parking at the four sites had been taken democratically and Members were now in danger of undermining the hard work undertaken by officers.

(b) Minute 12 – Award of additional grant in aid for Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority

Referring to the funding element received for work to the Wales Coast Path, Councillor M Evans queried how much-needed work to the Coast Path from Penally to Lydstep could be prioritised. The Chief Executive agreed to look into the matter.

**NOTED.**

(c) Minute 13 – Deputy Monitoring Officer – confirmation of appointment

The Chief Executive reported that progress was being made on the appointment of a new Monitoring Officer.

**NOTED.**

**5. Chair's Announcements**

The Chairman took the opportunity to congratulate Mrs Nicola Gandy on her recent appointment as Director for Park Direction and Planning.

Mrs Gandy thanked the Chairman for his comments, adding that she was looking forward to her new role and the challenges ahead. She wished to thank Ms Jane Gibson, the current Director, for her support, stating that she would not be in this position had it not been for her encouragement and assistance.

**NOTED.**

**6. Personnel Committee: 15 May 2019**

The report of the meeting of the Personnel Committee held on 15 May 2019 was presented for information.

The Chief Executive wished to thank all concerned for their involvement in the subsequent two-day process for the appointment of Director of Park Direction and Planning.

It was **RESOLVED** that the report of the meeting of the Personnel Committee held on 15 May 2019 be received.

**7. Audit and Corporate Services Review Committee: 15 May 2019**

The report of the meeting of the Audit and Corporate Services Committee held on 15 May 2019 were presented for consideration.



Referring to Minute 4 (Health and Safety Group: report of meeting), Dr M Havard pointed out a discrepancy in the date referred to in the resolution, in that it should read 2018, not 2019.

It was **RESOLVED** that the report of the meeting of the Audit and Corporate Services Review Committee held on 15 May 2019 be adopted, subject to noting the above-mentioned change.

#### **8. Consultation Draft National Park Management Plan 2020 – 2024**

The Conservation Policy Officer 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.

Following Members' agreement on 20 June 2018 on the proposed timetable for preparing the new Draft Plan, much had been done to engage a whole host of partners and wider organisations/bodies in the preparation process, and a log of the engagement work undertaken to date was annexed to the report before Members that day. The Officer stated that he and his colleagues had benefitted considerably from the 12 month lead-in to completing the draft Plan. He wished to thank Members for their input at Workshops and, also, colleagues Phil Barlow for the Sustainability Appraisal and Mair Thomas for her work on the Equality Impact Assessment.

Turning to the Draft Plan itself, the Officer reported that it had been divided into five themed sections, namely a landscape for life and livelihoods; well-being, enjoyment and discovery; restoring biodiversity; celebrating heritage and managing natural resources sustainably. The document highlighted where changes had been made as a result of the engagement process, Members' Workshops, the Sustainability Appraisal and the Equality Impact Assessment.

In addition to a raft of supporting material, there were also three appendices to the consultation draft Management Plan, which:

- Identified relevant legislation, policy and guidance and how it had been taken into account;
- Contained more background on the special qualities of the National Park;
- Referred to lessons learned from the previous Management Plan;
- Explained how opportunities and challenges had been identified, and
- Listed some of the key data sources taken into account in drafting the Plan.

Three Assessments would also accompany the Management Plan – a Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environment Assessment; an Equality



Impact Assessment and a Habitats Regulations Assessment, the latter having recently been commissioned.

In conclusion, the Conservation Policy Officer stated that, subject to Members' comments that day, he would finalise the documents with a view to presenting them for public consultation. Any comments would then be presented to Members at the end of the year, with a view to having an agreed National Park Management Plan in place by 2020. He added that this would not be the end of the cycle; rather, he hoped it would be the basis for conversations with partner organisations when they were considering their own plans.

Dr M Havard congratulated the Conservation Policy Officer on a very good, clear document. She noted that the process behind the Plan had met all expectations required by Welsh Government under the new legislative framework but that this needed to be included in the foreword. She added that the foreword should also reflect the exceptional work already undertaken by the Authority.

Dr R Heath-Davies questioned whether any work had been undertaken with regard to Technical Advice Note 20: Planning and the Welsh Language and what the findings were as she could see no evidence of this in the draft document. The Officer replied that a specific Welsh language assessment had not been undertaken, but that the impact of the Plan on the Welsh language had been considered.

Dr Heath-Davies advised that the Welsh Language Standards required at least an over-arching language impact assessment to be carried out and she proposed that this should be undertaken prior to commencement of the consultation process. The proposal was duly seconded. She also questioned whether Policy H2: Promote the Welsh language and local dialects and celebrate culture and creativity related to the landscape could be split into two sections; one on cultural heritage and one on language.

Councillor M James referred to the closure of public toilets and the impact on tourism and blue flag beaches. He appreciated that this was not within the Authority's remit, but the consequences could have an effect on the National Park. He also commented on water quality and the importance of budgets being available for continual testing as water quality was key to the rural economy. The Officer responded that the matter of public toilets closures had been flagged up in the Equality Impact Assessment, adding that a specific question could be devised to include in the consultation process.



The Chairman asked for reference to the marine environment to be included in the list of 'Opportunities and Challenges', while Councillor M Evans asked for the wording used in the glossary term for 'affordable housing' be amended. Councillor Evans also highlighted the importance of tourism revenue to the economy, in that the three National Parks in Wales generated over £3 billion per annum and he suggested that there was potentially a greater role for the Authority to play in this area.

It was **RESOLVED** that Members:

- (a) approve for public consultation:
  - (i) the 'Consultation draft National Park Management Plan 2020 – 2024' attached to the report before Members that day;
  - (ii) the 'Sustainability Appraisal (incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment)' of the Management Plan;
  - (iii) the 'Equality Impact Assessment' of the Management Plan;
- (b) grant delegated authority to officers:
  - (i) to issue for public consultation a 'Habitats Regulations Assessment' of the Management Plan;
  - (ii) to make any minor amendments to the 'Consultation draft National Park Management Plan 2020 – 2024' that may be required by the 'Habitats Regulations Assessment' (any substantive change in policy direction would be reported back to Members);
  - (iii) to make any minor amendments to the 'Consultation draft National Park Management Plan 2020 – 2024' as may be deemed necessary for accuracy or clarity, and
- (c) require officers to undertake a Welsh language impact assessment as required under Welsh Language Standards 88 – 93 prior to commencement of the public consultation process on the 'Consultation draft National Park Management Plan 2020 – 2024'.

## 9. 2018/19 Annual Governance Statement

It was reported that the Annual Governance Statement provided the vehicle for demonstrating the Authority's success in delivering continuous improvement in performance; identified control systems and processes and highlighted significant governance issues to be addressed.

Members' comments on the draft Statement were welcomed, a draft having already been considered by the Audit and Corporate Services Review Committee at its meeting held on 15 May 2019.

Dr R Plummer welcomed the fact that the document had been drafted and appreciated the work involved in preparing it. In response to Dr M Havard's comment that the Authority's Whistle Blowing Policy was now



10 years' old, the Finance Manager reported that reference to it would be deleted from next year's Statement as details of the policy had now been incorporated into the Anti-Fraud and Bribery Policy.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Annual Governance Statement 2018/19 be approved.

#### **10. 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 (2016), any grant of sponsorship payment totalling over £10,000 under one agreement, had to be approved by the Authority.

His report detailed two such payments in the 2019/20 financial year, in the sum of £12,500 to the Pembrokeshire Coastal Forum to help integrate and manage coastal activity, and a payment of circa £73,000 to Pembrokeshire County Council as a contribution towards the Pembrokeshire Greenways Partnership.

Members considered the two grants to be of extremely good value and were positive projects for the Authority to support.

It was **RESOLVED** that the payments, as set out in the report before Members that day, be approved.

*(Councillor P Kidney tendered his apologies and left the meeting at this juncture.)*

#### **11. 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 Compliance Notice required an Annual Report to be produced by 30 June every year and the report for 2018/19 was presented for Members' consideration.

The report was generally agreed, subject to minor amendments. It was also highlighted that Members needed to lead from the front with regard to promoting the Welsh language within and with-out the Authority.

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

