

OPERATIONAL REVIEW COMMITTEE

27 March 2019

Present: Councillor K Doolin (Chair)
Councillor P Harries, Councillor PJ Morgan, Mr A E Sangster &
Councillor S Yelland.

[Councillor ML Evans arrived during consideration of Report 01/19
Update on Wales Coast Path Promotion Strategy]

(NPA Offices, Llanion Park, Pembroke Dock: 10.00am – 11.40am)

1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs Julie James, Dr R Plummer and Councillor A Wilcox,

2. Disclosures

There were no disclosures of interest.

3. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on the 12 December 2018 were presented for confirmation and signature.

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 12 December 2018 be confirmed and signed.

4. Update on Wales Coast Path Promotional Strategy

Sioned Humphreys, Wales Coast Path Marketing Officer presented an update on the promotional strategy which had been developed to re-focus and promote the path from 2018 onwards. She informed Members that the Wales Coast Path (WCP), which had been launched in 2012, generated £84.7M into the Welsh economy with an estimated 1,000 jobs supported by walking the Wales coastline and received a maintenance budget of £1Million per year. £150,000 was received from Visit Wales with a further £150,000 match funded from the Welsh Government. The vision was to make the WCP an iconic asset for Wales, to generate more people walking more often and that the collaborative project would benefit everyone.

Councillor M Evans arrived at this juncture.

A Marr & Associates, who specialised in attracting tourists, had been contacted to provide Public Relations and Marketing for the previous 9 months, and the Officer was very pleased with the way the path had been positioned as an iconic destination. Bilingual film and photography had been undertaken by Mother Goose a Pembrokeshire based Company to



meet the need for modern images. All images would be placed on Wales on View to enable businesses to access these for their own use. An online marketing toolkit would also be available to provide practical ideas for business and Hotels which included items such as maps, timetables, itineraries etc.

A walking festival led by Ramblers Cymru and other partners was planned during May with 7 walks in 7 locations over 3 weekends which it was hoped would further raise the profile. Augmented reality was due to be used at 7 gateway locations, Great Orme, Menai Bridge, New Quay, Pendine, Cardiff, Saundersfoot and Borth y Gest which would show Wales at its best in terms of being both accessible and with good facilities. A bilingual app was in development which would be linked to the panels giving interesting information about the areas. It would download one 7th of the data at the 'gateway' with the rest being fully downloaded once the devices had a strong Wifi signal. It was hoped that these would be launched in June and had been specifically designed to attract families.

Members wanted reassurance that the work would complement and add value to the Pembrokeshire Coast Path rather than undermining it. The Officer stated that she saw this as a partnership, with Pembrokeshire Coast Path being the gold standard and the other areas having to catch up. Promoting the whole path had strength and the Pembrokeshire Coast Path would not be undermined. The CEO stated that Pembrokeshire was the only coastal section that had National Trail status with other sections not likely to meet the standard for many years he noted that there were benefits from marketing as the Authority did not have sufficient resources to undertake similar marketing activities. One Member felt that it was refreshing to see an iconic asset like the Coast Path looked at in a different way with the hope being that the WCP would eventually achieve National Trail status. He thought that in the future different ways of using the path would need to be investigated. Members felt there was a need to be ahead of the game, to embrace the change and agreed that it was a fabulous piece of work.

NOTED

5. Performance Report for the Period Ending 31st January 2019

The report given by the Performance and Compliance Co-ordinator follows the structure of the Corporate and Resources Plan for 2018/19 following the seven well-being objectives, with an additional section providing general governance information.

The report highlighted data sets of interest including the % of planning applications determined within time period as above target at 83.63%



however, there was a decrease from 85.35% in quarter 2. The new Website was due to go live at the end of April/beginning of May. New Managers had been appointed for Castell Henllys and Oriell y Parc.

Members were interested to know why visitor numbers had fallen given that they felt it had been a good year for tourism. The Officer explained that it was thought that the weather was simply too hot, with the counters on the coast path taking a similar hit. In response to another question, it was noted that no Parkwise sessions had been undertaken in Quarter 3 as the post holder had left and more staff needed to be trained to lead these events. The Chief Executive added that there were many posts that relied on one person which caused an issue if they left or were on long term sickness leave. The CEO had attended a Public Services Board meeting on work experience placements which indicated that the public sector were wanting to provide more opportunities for people to work in the public sector environment. Some organisations were already set up to implement this. One option would be to spread work placements across several organisations. The meeting was felt to have been well attended and positive. One Member was concerned about the amount of young people leaving Pembrokeshire and what could be done to retain them.

Members wanted to know why the training session for teachers was indicated red and pointed out that there were other opportunities with different organisations such as The Darwin Centre & Welsh Water. There was also an Educational Trust starting in Lawrenny and that the National Park could potentially latch onto this.

The CEO replied that this work had been undertaken as part of the Outdoor Schools programme and he informed Members that he had recently received correspondence from the Welsh Government giving the Authority an additional £638K of funding. This included funding to support the outdoor schools network, as well as for projects to make Rights of Way more pollinator friendly, land management, drinking fountains, a mobile information unit, Carew walled garden and upgrading broadband at our sites. There was also an additional £200k to support the work of the Wales Coast Path(WCP) and the Authority would also be managing capital funding for the WCP by giving grants to other Authorities. These items would need to be brought to the next Authority meeting as grants over £10k currently had to be approved by Members.

Members also enquired about the decrease in sales at Castell Henllys. The CEO noted that this issue had also been raised at the Audit and Corporate Services Review Committee when he had advised that the site had been without a dedicated manager, but that Delun Gibby had now been appointed to that post. He stated that Castell Henllys consistently



receives positive feedback from those who visited the site. The Café at Castell Henllys would go to tender at the end of the season.

Members asked about the decline in the number of voluntary wardens (VWs) noted in the report, and the Officer explained that an exercise had been undertaken to remove inactive VWs from the list which accounted for the lower figures. The target for next year would be lower, however, the Authority would be actively recruiting and it was hoped that people from the Pathways Project would become VWs.

RECEIVED AND NOTED

6. Risk Register

Members were asked to consider the latest Risk Register, which had been amended in accordance with an internal audit recommendation.

The Finance Manager confirmed that the format had changed from a 3x3 to a 4x4 Matrix, however Members felt that the change had made the register more complicated. The CEO noted their comments, and stated that the Audit and Corporate Services Review Committee had approved the Internal Audit recommendation that officers look at the framework however the issue was being able to identify the risk in the organisation and respond to it.

Members enquired about the risk at Cilrhedyn and were informed that costs had been reduced, it was running far more efficiently and was not a facility lying idle. It was noted that it would cost a lot more to create a new base for the North Wardens, there was potential to split the site but there was no pressure to make any decisions at the moment.

One Member raised concerns regarding the future of tourism marketing in Pembrokeshire, although this did not currently form part of the risk register. The Chief Executive agreed that no clear strategy was in place and both Pembrokeshire County Council and the tourist trade itself needed to play their parts.

NOTED

7. Development Management Online Search Facility

Caroline Bowen Senior Planning Officer gave Members a demonstration of the new search facility which enabled members of the public to access applications and plans online. All applications since 2009 were listed, however full details were only available for those submitted more recently; details would be included for all 2019 applications, however this was a work in progress. A link was provided on the site for comments on



applications, with these going through to the Officer but not available to the public as all personal information had to be redacted due to GDPR regulations. One Member felt that the number of comments should be recorded without any further information being available and the officer replied that she would feed the Member's comments back to the Team Leader. Members felt the new system would be a benefit for Town and Community Councils in terms of access and printing. It was confirmed that they would still be notified in writing if there was a planning application in their area. Members believed this to be an excellent new facility.

NOTED

8 Continuous Improvement Group: delegation of issues

It was **RESOLVED** that there were no issues that needed to be delegated to the Continuous Improvement Group for consideration.

