

## Report of Democratic Services Manager

---

**Subject: General Update on Member Support and Development**

### 1. Purpose of report

To provide an update on matters relating to Member support and development.

### 2. Training Plan

The Member Training Plan was approved at the previous meeting of the Member Support and Development Committee and the attached Workshop Plan begins to map the training into the Calendar of meetings agreed earlier in the year. Further detail will be added as sessions are confirmed, and the Workshop Plan will be recirculated.

### 3. Training

Training activities for the first 4 months of the year have consisted of:

- Risk Appetite Workshop
- Management Plan Review Workshop
- Study Tour (Castell Henllys and Pentre Ifan)
- Effective Financial Governance (provided by Welsh Government)
- Study Tour of projects approved by the Grants Committee
- Access and Travel Management for the Pembrokeshire Coast
- CNP Healthcheck Report

Any feedback from Members regarding these sessions is welcomed.

### 4. Welsh Government Training Sessions

Welsh Government training on Effective Financial Governance took place on 20<sup>th</sup> June 2024. Further sessions on Sustainable and Ethical Governance and Governance of Risk are anticipated and I will share the dates of these when they become available.

Welsh Government Officers are also preparing a guide for Members on NPA Governance upon which officers have had the opportunity to comment. It is anticipated that this will be published later this year.

## **5. Member attendance**

Member attendance in the current financial year at meetings has been 81% (target 75%), while Member attendance at training events was 58% (target 65%). The below target attendance for training is due to low attendance at Study Tours, particularly the tour of Grants Committee approved projects and at the Financial Governance session (attended by only 6/18 Members).

With regard to Study Tours, those Members who are able to attend report on how useful they have found them, however it is accepted that they can be seen as less important in Members' busy diaries. Any suggestions for improving rates of attendance are welcomed.

## **6. Induction**

The Authority is reviewing its induction process for staff, Members and volunteers and a report will be presented to a future meeting of this Committee. There have been four new Members since April and their views on the induction they have received will be sought to help inform the review. It is intended to implement the revised process prior to the appointment of new Welsh Government Members who will replace current Members whose terms of office come to an end in Spring 2025. It is noted that the process for recruiting new Members will commence shortly, and Welsh Government Officers have arranged a meeting with your officers to discuss the process and requirements for the appointments.

## **7. Personal Development Reviews and Welsh Government Performance Appraisals**

Welsh Government appointed Members have been requested to make arrangements with the Chair to undertake their Performance Appraisal. At this time of year, it is also customary for Members to undertake Personal Development Reviews. Last year we undertook a simplified exercise whereby Members were asked to identify their training needs only, however less than half of Members completed the form. Members views are sought on the type of Review to be undertaken this year, and on ways to encourage participation.

## **8. Members' Travel Policy**

Some Members have requested that the Member Travel policy be reviewed. This policy has been in existence since 2013, so a review is certainly due. Officers have reviewed the policy and consider that, in the current financial climate, it remains fit for purpose, however it is presented to the Committee for Members' consideration.

Where Members' Standard mileage is used instead of the actual mileage travelled, the difference is usually minimal as the site in question is usually in the north of the County, and travelling directly there compensates for the fact that there is no need to travel to Pembroke Dock. For example, travel from Carmarthen to Pembroke Dock is 32 miles, while travel from Carmarthen to Newgale is 39 miles and to Castell Henllys is 26 miles by the most direct route.

The policy, which applies to both Welsh Government and PCC appointed Members, states that the provision to pay standard mileage applies when transport has been arranged from Llanion, and it is noted that when travelling north, a pickup in Haverfordwest is invariably offered. A Member's decision not to avail themselves of the transport is usually due to a need to leave the meeting early, to save time or to facilitate onward travel to another meeting. No Member should therefore be financially disadvantaged.

## **9. Wales Councillor Support Self Evaluation Framework**

As reported previously, a voluntary self-assessment framework has been developed by the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) in conjunction with Local Authorities to replace the Charter for Member Support and Development. The Democratic Services Manager at Bannau Brycheiniog and I (the officer at Eryri was unavailable) have met with the WLGA's Policy and Improvement Officer for Democratic Services to begin development of a Self-Evaluation Framework for National Park Authorities and a copy will be provided to a future meeting for your comments.

## **10. Welsh Members' Seminar**

Arrangements for hosting the Seminar, to be held on 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> November at the Giltar Hotel in Tenby, are well advanced and the programme has recently been circulated to Members of each of the National Park Authorities in Wales. The theme is "National Parks for All?". We have requested that booking forms are returned by Friday 6<sup>th</sup> September and I will provide a verbal update at the meeting on levels of attendance.

### **Risk considerations and compliance**

The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 places increased requirements on all local authorities in Wales in relation to corporate governance and Member support and development. The Authority has developed a strong ethos of Member development over the years, ensuring that it continues to have informed Members who can make decisions based on understanding, skills and experience. Building upon, and developing, the good work carried out to date will re-emphasise the fact that the Authority works to a high standard of governance.

The Authority is also committed to encouraging individuals from all walks of life to become involved in public life and will continue to introduce measures to enable everyone to take part.

## **11. Recommendations:**

**Members are asked to:**

- a) Suggest any amendments to the Member Travel Policy, which would then be reported to the National Park Authority for approval;**
- b) Comment on and note the remainder of the report.**

*(For further information, please contact Caroline Llewellyn, Democratic Services Manager by e-mailing [carolinel@pembrokeshirecoast.org.uk](mailto:carolinel@pembrokeshirecoast.org.uk))*

**PEMBROKESHIRE COAST NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY**



**TRAINING/WORKSHOPS 2024/25**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Meeting</b>
Wed 10 July 2024 10:00	Workshop
Wed 10 July 2024 14:00	Workshop
Wed 24 July 2024 13:30	Workshop
Wed 31 July 2024 14:00	Workshop
Wed 11 Sept 2024 13:30	Workshop
Wed 02 Oct 2024	IT day – small groups/drop in sessions
Wed 09 Oct 2024 10:00	Study Day - St Brides
Wed 20 Nov 2024 10:00 – 2.30pm Oriol y Parc	Workshop – LDP / Coal Authority
Wed 27 Nov 2024 10:00 Online	Workshop – St Brides
Wed 11 Dec 2024 13:30 Online	Workshop - Budget
Wed 05 Feb 2025 13:30	Workshop
Wed 26 March 2025 13:30	Workshop
Wed 30 April 2025 13:30	Workshop
Wed 07 May 2025 13:30	Workshop
Wed 04 June 2025 10:00	Study Day

I am in discussion with the following organisations to see if any of the free dates above are convenient:

- NFU Cymru - Agriculture
- Dŵr Cymru - investment programme and general water quality impacts
- Highway Authority (Steve Bengier)

I am also intending to schedule in Sessions on Ways of Working/Member Feedback and the S6 Biodiversity Duty in the vacant slots.

**PEMBROKESHIRE COAST NATIONAL PARK  
AUTHORITY**



**MEMBERS' TRAVEL POLICY**

**2013**

## **1. Introduction**

Travelling is a necessary requirement of being a Member of the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority. Meetings are normally held at the Authority's headquarters at Llanion Park, Pembroke Dock, although there are sometimes exceptions to this rule.

Members are also required to represent the Authority at external events, be they meetings with partner organisations locally or nationally, formal events with Welsh Government Ministers or National Parks Wales/National Parks UK Conferences, etc.

This document sets out the Authority's policy in relation to such travelling, and is based upon the need to make the best use of the Authority's resources.

## **2. Authority meetings at headquarters**

When a Member joins the Authority for the first time, the mileage between the Member's home address and the Authority's headquarters at Llanion Park will be agreed with the Democratic Services Manager, and a form will be signed by the Member to this effect. The agreed mileage will normally be the shortest route between the two points, unless there is good reason to determine otherwise (e.g. the need to drop a child at school en route to Pembroke Dock).

The form also provides an 'opt-out' clause whereby Members can choose not to claim for routine Authority meetings, but can claim for attending meetings on behalf of the Authority at other venues.

It is the responsibility of the Member to advise of any changes in circumstance which affects the agreed mileage.

## **3. Site inspections**

Whenever possible/practicable, transport will be arranged by the Democratic Services team for Members to attend site inspections. Members should endeavour to travel to Llanion Park to avail themselves of the arranged transport, unless:

- (a) arrangements have been made for the Member to be picked up en route to the site, in which case travel expenses to and from the pick-up point only will be paid, or
- (b) the distance from the Member's home to the site is less than the distance to Llanion Park, in which case travel expenses will be paid for the lesser mileage.

Where transport has been arranged and the distance travelled by a Member directly to the site is **greater** than the distance to Llanion Park, travel expenses for the lesser mileage<sup>1</sup> only will be paid.

#### **4. Authority meetings elsewhere in the National Park**

When meetings of the Authority and/or its Committees have been arranged away from Llanion Park, transport will be arranged by the Democratic Services team whenever possible/practicable. Members should endeavour to travel to Llanion Park to avail themselves of the arranged transport, unless:

- (a) arrangements have been made for the Member to be picked up en route to the meeting venue, in which case travel expenses to and from the pick-up point only will be paid, or
- (b) the distance from the Member's home to the meeting venue is less than the distance to Llanion Park, in which case travel expenses will be paid for the lesser mileage.

Where transport has been arranged and the distance travelled by a Member directly to the meeting venue is **greater** than the distance to Llanion Park, travel expenses for the lesser mileage<sup>2</sup> only will be paid.

#### **5. Meetings, conferences, etc. elsewhere in the county**

Members are required to represent the Authority on various outside bodies. Where an officer is also required to attend, Members should endeavour to travel with the officer concerned, and travel expenses will be paid for the mileage travelled to and from the pre-arranged pick-up point (whether at Llanion Park or elsewhere if the mileage is less. If the distance travelled to the pick-up point is **greater** than the distance to Llanion Park, travel expenses for the lesser mileage only will be paid). Members travelling alone to an event where transport has been arranged will not be eligible to claim travel expenses.

Where no officer is attending, or pool/hire car/train arrangements are found to be impractical and a Member has to use his/her own vehicle to attend a meeting, travel expenses from the Member's home directly to and from the venue will be paid<sup>3</sup>. If more than one Member is attending the same meeting, arrangements should be made to travel together whenever possible, and a passenger supplement of 5p per mile can be claimed by the driver.

---

<sup>1</sup> Whether to Llanion or a pre-arranged pick-up point, whichever is less

<sup>2</sup> See footnote 1 above

<sup>3</sup> Members are reminded that, if they have travelled from (or are intending to travel to) another meeting en route, for which they can claim expenses, they should ensure that the same journey is not claimed for twice



## **6. Meetings, conferences, etc. outside the county**

In the majority of circumstances, travel arrangements will be made by the Democratic Services team, whether via pool/hire car or train and Members should endeavour to avail themselves of these arrangements at all times. Travel expenses will be paid for Members' journeys to and from pre-arranged pick-up points en route. Members travelling alone to an event where transport has been arranged will not be eligible to claim travel expenses.

## **7. Car sharing**

Members are encouraged to share journeys whenever possible, whether with officers, other Members or partner organisations. If carrying passengers in their own vehicle, a passenger supplement of 5p per mile can be claimed by the driver.

If a journey to an Authority meeting is shared, the passenger should indicate this by ticking the box alongside his/her name when signing the meeting attendance list.

## **8. Travel expenses claims**

Individual travel expenses claims will be generated at the end of each month by the Democratic Services team after checking the relevant meeting attendance list(s) for that month. A claim form will be sent electronically to each Member, and it is the Member's responsibility to check that the details are correct and to include details of any other meeting(s) that s/he has attended on behalf of the Authority during that month.

Completed claim forms must be returned to the Democratic Services team by the 3<sup>rd</sup> of each month at the latest in order that the claim can be processed in time for payment at the end of that month. A valid VAT receipt must accompany each claim, together with any other receipts if applicable.

Claim forms over three months old will not be paid, save in exceptional circumstances.

## **9. Insurance**

All Members must ensure that they have adequate motor insurance for using their car for Authority business, and that a copy of a current certificate is made available for inspection when using a pool or hire vehicle.