

# National Park Authority

24 July 2024

## **Present (In Person)**

Councillor D Clements (Chair)

Councillor M Bowen, Councillor C George, Dr M Havard, Dr R Heath-Davies, Councillor M James, Mr GA Jones, Councillor S Skyrme-Blackhall, and Councillor M Wiggins.

## **Present (Remotely)**

Councillor SL Hancock MBE, Mrs S Hoss, Mrs J James, Councillor B Price, Councillor A Tinley, Councillor V Thomas and Councillor C Williams BEM.

## **Also in attendance:**

Georgia Jones (Democratic Services Officer), Lynda Jones (BAAB Architects), Tegryn Jones (Chief Executive), Michael Kent (Monitoring Officer), Caroline Llewellyn (Democratic Services Manager), Gary Meopham (Estates Officer), Sara Morris (Director of Place and Engagement) and Mair Thomas (Performance and Compliance Coordinator).

[Llanion Park, Pembroke Dock and Remotely  
10.00am – 12:00; 12:10pm – 12:50pm]

### **1. Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor P Morgan and Dr R Plummer.

### **2. Disclosures of Interest**

Councillors M Wiggins and V Thomas both made a personal declaration in relation to report 28/24, Proposed Designation of Cresswell Quay as a Conservation area.

### **3. Minutes**

The minutes of the meetings held on the 19 June 2024 (NPA Ordinary Meeting and AGM) were presented for confirmation and signature.

In the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting, it was highlighted that both the start time of the meeting (10:30am) and timings of the break (12:00pm-12:10pm) had been recorded incorrectly.

Members commented that the wording of Minute 7 did not adequately reflect their level of disappointment with the report and its failure to mention the excellent induction and training provided by the Authority and its attainment of the Advanced Charter for Member Support and Development.



On the proposal of Dr R Heath-Davies, seconded by Councillor S Skyrme-Blackhall, it was **resolved** that the minutes of the meetings held on the 19 June 2024 (NPA Ordinary and AGM) be confirmed and signed with the above amendments.

#### **4. Action Log and Matters Arising**

An update on the Pay and Grading Review was provided by the Chief Executive who suggested that further information regarding timescales would be available by the next meeting of the National Park Authority.

The Democratic Services Manager confirmed that since the publication of the Action Log, item 958 had been completed.

**Noted.**

#### **5. Chair's Announcements**

The Chair reported that there had been a significant change in the political landscape at Pembrokeshire County Council. As a result of changes to the political balance it was announced that Councillor Alderman had lost his seat on the Authority and the Chair expressed thanks to him for his contributions to the Authority over the years. The Chair also welcomed Councillor A Tinley who had joined the Authority.

The Chair reported that she had attended the following events;

- The funeral of the son of a member of staff who had sadly died in a road accident
- The Oriel y Parc Exhibition that celebrated 200 years of the RNLI
- The Cleddau Project 'My River' Community Exhibition that encouraged young people to learn the importance of protecting the River Cleddau
- The Welsh Government Board Chairs Meeting
- The Welsh Local Government Association AGM
- A service at St Davids Cathedral that celebrated 200 years of RNLI
- The Royal Welsh Show where she and the Authority's CEO attended the Presidents Lunch and the Commercial Blade Sheep Shearing Competition which National Parks Wales had sponsored
- A meeting with the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales to discuss the 2024/25 draft annual report

**Noted.**

#### **6. Reports of meetings of various Authority Committees**

The following reports of meetings of several of the Authority's Committees were presented to Members for consideration/information:



- (i) Development Management Committee held on 05/06/2024, 19/06/2024 and 08/07/2024;  
The Chair of the Development Management Committee took the opportunity to highlight the importance of Members attendance at scheduled Site Visits.
- (ii) Standards Committee held on 01/05/2024;  
It was suggested that an Action Log for the Standards Committee be established.
- (iii) Human Resources Committee held on 15/05/2024;
- (iv) Youth Committee held on 11/06/2024 and 09/07/2024;

It was **resolved** that the minutes of the above-mentioned Committees be adopted/received.

## 7. **Committee Vacancies**

The matter of Committee Vacancies was submitted as a supplemental agenda item following the departure of Councillor S Alderman however at the Chair's discretion, it was considered at this juncture.

Following a discussion, it was **resolved** that the vacancies be filled by the following Members:

- a) Audit & Corporate Services Review Committee: **Councillor A Tinley**
- b) Grants Committee: **Councillor A Tinley**
- c) Standards Committee Appointments Panel: **Councillor A Tinley**
- d) Joint Council for Wales: **Councillor M Bowen**
- e) South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee Regional Energy Strategy Sub-Group: **Dr R Heath-Davies**
- f) Port of Milford Haven Advisory Committee: **Dr M Havard**

## 7. **Draft Statement of Accounts 2023/24**

The Chief Executive presented the Draft Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2024 for comments and outlined key points and figures to Members. The Chief Executive explained the process of authorising the accounts and highlighted the financial challenges of the Authority. It was added that despite this, the Accounts for 2023/24 had ended in a strong position.

The Chief Executive brought Members attention to the summary table of total revenue & expenditure and confirmed that for the first time, additional funding received from Welsh Government to address the



Authority's deficit had been included in the figures for the National Park Grant. In response, Members suggested that a statement explaining the inclusion of this funding in the National Park Grant figure be featured beneath the table.

It was noted that the accounts featured a section on 'Assumptions made about the future and other major sources of estimation uncertainty' and a Member queried why the costs associated with the Pay & Grading Review had not been featured here. The Chief Executive responded that although allowances had been made, it was predicted that salaries would remain consistent with current figures following the review. It was acknowledged that despite this, the Pay & Grading review posed a potential risk to the Authority and the Chief Executive agreed to include a statement to that effect.

**Noted.**

#### **8. Partnership Framework Monitoring Report 2023/24**

The Chair welcomed the Performance and Compliance Officer who presented a new annual Partnership Framework Monitoring Report which provided an overview of key strategic partnerships that supported the Authority in achieving its wider strategic priorities.

It was noted that each Partnership had a RAG rating and a Member suggested that a statement be featured in the introduction of the report to explain which elements of a partnership were considered by the RAG rating. The Officer agreed to feature the requested statement in the next annual report.

A Member highlighted the importance of the Authority's relationship with local Town and Community Councils and queried whether the Authority had plans to further formalise these partnerships in future. In response, the Chief Executive confirmed that prior to the Pandemic, the Authority had arranged a Seminar for Town and Community Councils and would consider hosting more in future. It was added that other opportunities would be explored of ways to strengthen these partnerships.

A discussion ensued regarding the purpose of the report and the value of the document in supporting the Authority to understand the value of each partnership, assessing risk and prioritising partners in future if necessary. It was agreed that the report emphasised that the Authority was a small organisation which required the support of Partners to achieve its objectives.

**Noted.**



## 9. **Proposed Designation of Creswell Quay as a Conservation Area**

The Chair welcomed the Director of Place & Engagement and Lynda Jones from BAAB Architects who presented a report that sought approval from Members to initiate a public consultation for the designation of Creswell Quay as a Conservation Area.

The report provided background information on the area and conservation areas more generally, a map that illustrated the proposed boundary, and a proposed programme for the consultation. The benefits of designating Creswell Quay as a Conservation Area were explained and the special qualities of the area that had been assessed as part of the process were also outlined.

Members queried whether any threats had been identified that had made the designation a requirement. The Officers responded that no threats had been identified however the Authority had a legal duty as the Local Planning Authority to identify areas that required additional protection as a preventative measure for the future.

With regards to the proposed boundary, Members queried why a particular area of woodland had not been included within the boundary lines. In response, it was explained that the woodland in question already benefited from the protection of a Tree Preservation Order however the comment would be noted and taken into consideration.

On the proposal of Dr M Havard, seconded by Councillor V Thomas, it was **resolved** that:

- a) the formal public consultation and engagement proceeds with regards to designating Creswell Quay as a Conservation Area as set out on the map attached at Appendix A;
- b) a Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan for Creswell Quay be drafted.

[The meeting was adjourned between 12:00pm – 12:05pm)

## 10. **Welsh Language Awarding Grants Policy**

The Chair welcomed the Democratic Services Manager who presented a report that sought Members approval for a new Welsh Language Policy on Awarding Grants. It was reported that the policy had been developed to provide guidance to Officers on how to promote and encourage the use of the Welsh Language when advertising and awarding grants on behalf of the National Park Authority.

Members discussed the tone of the policy and agreed that the nuance of some sentences were in need of re-wording to emphasise that the



Authority required a policy of this nature to further promote the use of the Welsh Language rather than to just adhere with the Welsh Language Standards. This was noted by the Officer.

A discussion ensued regarding the complexity of the policy and a Member queried whether it would be more appropriate for the Authority to have a policy that looked at each grant application on a case by case basis. In response, the Chief Executive explained that the format of the policy reflected the Authority's small Grants Team and Programme however agreed to a review in 18 months to ensure the policy was adequate.

A Member highlighted certain sections of the policy where more informal wording had been used and it was suggested that the language be reviewed. The suggestion was noted by the Officer.

On the proposal of Councillor D Clements, seconded by Dr R Heath-Davies, it was **resolved** that the Welsh Language Policy on Awarding Grants be approved with the review period for the policy being 18 months.

#### **11. 'The Shed Bistro' Lease at The Lean To, Ty Mawr**

The Chair welcomed the Estates Officer who presented a report that provided details of a property known as 'The Lean-To, Ty Mawr' which formed a part of the Authority's estate and sought permission to extend the building with corresponding adjustments made to the lease. The report provided background information and proposed plans for the property.

On the proposal of Mr GA Jones, seconded by Councillor S Skyrme-Blackhall, it was **resolved** that delegated authority be given to the Chief Executive to finalise and document a supplemental lease with the tenants of the Lean-To, Ty Mawr to provide for:

- a) their construction of the new roof across the external seating area in accordance with planning permission NP/24/0151/FUL
- (b) regularise their ongoing use of the external seating area within the terms of a lease
- (c) an increase in the passing rent from £7,500pa to £12,000pa.

#### **12. Exclusion of the Public**

It was noted that in discussing the following report, information might be shared which was commercially sensitive, and it was therefore requested that the public be excluded from the meeting.

On the proposal of Councillor D Clements, seconded by Councillor S Skyrme-Blackhall, it was **resolved** that the public be excluded from the



meeting as exempt information, as defined in Paragraph 14 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act, would be disclosed.

### **13. Audit Response to Governance Report**

The Chief Executive presented a report that sought Members agreement to the Authority's Organisational Response to the report of Audit Wales on Governance of National Park Authorities.

It was explained that at the National Park Authority meeting that took place in June 2024, Audit Wales had presented their report and in response, several Members had expressed their concern and dissatisfaction with the findings and had asked that the Organisational Response be amended accordingly. The Chief Executive noted that this had proved difficult, and that Members' comments had therefore been incorporated into a response letter to outline the Authority's concerns to Audit Wales.

On the proposal of Mrs J James, seconded by Councillor M Bowen, it was **resolved** that the Organisational Response and letter from the Chair to the Auditor General be agreed and that both documents be submitted to the Auditor General with a request that the letter be included as an annex to the Organisational Response.

