

National Park Authority

05 February 2025

Present (Remotely)

Councillor D Clements (Chair)

Councillor M Bowen, Councillor T Evans, Councillor C George, Councillor SL Hancock MBE, Dr M Havard, Dr R Heath-Davies, Mrs J James, Councillor M James, Mr GA Jones, Councillor B Price, Councillor S Skyrme-Blackhall, Councillor A Tinley, Councillor V Thomas, Councillor M Wiggins and Councillor C Williams BEM.

Also in attendance:

Tim Buckle (Audit Wales), Catrin Evans (Head of Finance & Fundraising), Georgia Jones (Democratic Services Officer), Tegryn Jones (Chief Executive), Michael Kent (Monitoring Officer), Caroline Llewellyn (Democratic Services Manager), James Parkin (Director of Nature Recovery and Tourism), Alison Rees (Audit Wales), Libby Taylor (Head of Engagement and Inclusion) and Mair Thomas (Performance and Compliance Officer).

[Councillor C Williams joined the meeting during consideration of item 4, Action Log and Matters Arising. Councillor B Price joined the meeting before consideration of report 01/25, Wellbeing Objectives Internal Audit.]

[Online Meeting, 10.00am – 11.52am]

1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs S Hoss and Dr R Plummer.

2. Disclosures of Interest

Councillor B Price declared an interest in relation to report 04/25, Visit Pembrokeshire Funding.

3. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on the 11 December 2024 were presented for confirmation and authentication.

A Member highlighted, in relation to minute 15, that 4 Members were in fact appointed to the Oriell y Parc Stakeholder Group: Councillor S Hancock and Dr M Havard as representatives and Councillor T Evans and G Jones as substitutes.

On the proposal of Councillor D Clements, seconded by Councillor M Havard, it was **resolved** that the minutes of the meeting held on the 11



December 2024 be confirmed and authenticated subject to the above amendment.

4. Action Log and Matters Arising

Further to a discussion held in the previous meeting, a Member requested an update on the Welsh Government Members recruitment. The Chief Executive provided a brief summary of the updated timescale for recruitment and context which explained the cause for the delay.

A Member raised the matter of Member travel claims for electric vehicles and the lack of clarity surrounding the process. The Chief Executive agreed that officers would investigate the matter further by liaising with other National Park Authorities to understand best practice.

It was noted that progress was yet to be made in relation to action 982, to include quantitative measures in the Development Management Plan (DMP) and Members requested an update. The Director of Nature Recovery and Tourism confirmed that thematic subgroups had been established however Visit Pembrokeshire had found it challenging to identify volunteers to lead some of the groups. He added that it was hoped that the subgroups would be operating in the near future, and the above action would subsequently be addressed.

Noted.

5. Chair's Announcements

The Chair reported that the last month had been quiet for meetings and events however she had attended the FUW Farmhouse Breakfast which had raised funds for Wales Air Ambulance.

The Deputy Chair reported that she had attended the recent Corporate Joint Committee (CJC) Energy Committee and provided a summary of highlights to Members.

The Chief Executive took the opportunity to inform Members that a new levy imposed by the CJC had come into effect for the Authority in relation to Planning. He added that the South West constituent Authorities had been charged a levy according to their populations.

Noted.

6. Reports of meetings of various Authority Committees

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



- i) Development Management Committees held on 04/12/24 and 20/01/25
- ii) Grants Committee held on 18/09/24
- iii) People Services Committee held on 18/09/24
- iv) Operational Review Committee held on 25/09/24
- v) Audit and Corporate Services Review Committee held on 13/11/24

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

7. **Well-being Objectives Internal Audit**

The Chair welcomed Tim Buckle and Alison Rees from Audit Wales who presented the Audit Wales report on Setting Well-being Objectives. It was reported that Audit Wales undertook performance auditing and as part of the Auditor General's local government studies programme in 2022/23, Audit Wales reviewed the governance arrangements across the National Park Authorities in Wales focussing on the setting, delivery and monitoring of its wellbeing objectives. The report outlined the matters considered as part of the review, the findings, the recommendation from Audit Wales as a result of the review and the subsequent proposed organisational response for the Authority.

In response to a Members' query, Tim Buckle confirmed that the fee for conducting the Well-being Objectives Audit was incorporated into the overall performance audit fee and no additional payment would be required for the work.

On the proposal of Councillor SL Hancock MBE, seconded by Mrs J James, it was **resolved** that;

- i) the Audit Wales report on Setting Well-being Objectives be received by Members
- ii) the organisational response be agreed

8. **Pembrokeshire County Council (PCC) Levy**

The Head of Finance and Fundraising presented a report that sought approval from Members for the issue of the levy of £1,137,195 to PCC for the financial year of 2025-2026. It was reported that the Authority was required to present the approved levy letter to PCC by the 15th of February 2025. In addition, the Officer highlighted that there was an increase of £53,866 in the levy in comparison to the previous year due to the increase in Welsh Government National Park Grant funding upon which the calculation was based.

On the proposal of Councillor D Clements, seconded by Dr R Heath-Davies, it was **resolved** that;

- i) the calculation of the levy for 2025-2026 be approved



- ii) the issue of the levy letter to Pembrokeshire County Council for a sum of £1,137,195 be authorised
- iii) the National Park Authority continue with the current arrangement of 12 equal monthly instalments receivable on or before the 12th of each calendar month, to be received by bank transfer.

9. Equality Plan and Objectives

The Performance and Compliance Officer presented a report that sought Members approval for the Authority's Equality Plan and Objectives for 2025-2029. It was reported that the draft plan had been presented to Members for their comments at the September 2024 meeting and as a result of Members' views and consultation feedback, the plan had since been updated.

It was noted that the Plan featured a section on the Welsh Language and a Member requested that a statement regarding intersectionality be included and the Officer agreed to feature this.

A discussion ensued regarding the accessibility of the National Park and a Member commented that further messaging was required to communicate that the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park was a Park for all. Officers confirmed that the Authority actively promoted messaging to highlight that the Park was for everyone to enjoy and in addition to several accessibility projects hosted by the Authority, Officers aimed to work with a Strategic Advisor as part of Tirweddau Cymru to further develop the Authority's communications surrounding accessibility. Members discussed ways in which the Authority could reach different groups within communities and the importance of understanding different barriers that impacted the accessibility of the National Park.

On the proposal of Mrs J James, seconded by Councillor M Bowen, it was **resolved** that;

- i) the Authority's Equality Plan and Objectives 2025-2029 be approved with the addition of the above comments
- ii) delegated authority be given to Officers to incorporate as necessary any minor changes as needed (e.g. typos)

10. Visit Pembrokeshire Funding

The Chief Executive presented a report that sought Members agreement to provide a cash contribution of £25k to Visit Pembrokeshire (VP) for the financial year 2025-26, instead of an in-kind contribution. It was reported that VP had made a positive progress in developing its membership base and that a further review would be undertaken along with discussions with other partners regarding future funding.



It was noted that in February 2020, the Authority agreed to support VP for a 5-year period and 2025 marked the 5th year of support. Members agreed that a cost-benefit analysis would be required in the upcoming year to assist Members in future discussions regarding future funding for VP. Members discussed the financial situation of the Authority and the sustainability of VP as an organisation.

On the proposal of Dr M Havard, seconded by Dr R Heath-Davies, it was **resolved** that a cash contribution of £25k be provided to Visit Pembrokeshire for the financial year of 2025-26 and a cost benefit analysis be conducted.

11. Calendar of Meetings

The Democratic Services Manager presented a report that outlined the proposed calendar of meetings for the 2025/26. The Officer confirmed that since the publication of the report, two amendments had been made to the calendar: due to confirmation of the date of the Welsh Members' Seminar on the 1st and 2nd of October 2025, there would no longer be a workshop on the 1st, and the CEO Panel for that date would be rescheduled in due course.

On the proposal of Mrs J James, seconded by Mr G Jones, it was **resolved** that the calendar of meetings for 2025/26 be approved.

12. Safeguarding Policy

The Head of Engagement and Inclusion presented a revised Safeguarding Policy for the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority and highlighted the changes that had been made since it was last presented to Members.

Members thanked Officers for their work in updating the statement following Members' feedback. With regards to the section related to guidance on transporting children, young people and vulnerable adults, a Member suggested alternative wording to be featured, and this was noted by the Officer.

On the proposal of Mrs J James, seconded by Dr R Heath-Davies, it was **resolved** that the contents of the revised policy be agreed, subject to the above suggestions.

