

Operational Review Committee 18 December 2024

Present: Dr R Plummer (Chair)

Councillor M Bowen, Councillor T Evans, Councillor C George, Councillor SL Hancock MBE, Mr G A Jones, and Councillor C Williams BEM.

Also in attendance: Clare Flynn (Conservation Officer), Georgia Jones (Democratic Services Officer), Tegryn Jones (Chief Executive), Sarah Mellor (Conservation Team Leader), Sara Morris (Director of Place and Engagement), James Parkin (Director of Nature Recovery & Tourism), Anthony Rogers (Pembrokeshire Nature Partnership), Mair Thomas (Performance and Compliance Officer) and Michele Webber (Head of Nature Recovery).

[Councillors T Evans and C Williams joined the meeting during consideration of report 11/24, Well-being Objective Deep Dive/Self-Assessment: Conservation]

(Virtual Meeting: 10.00am – 12:40pm)

1. **Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs S Hoss and Councillor M Wiggins.

2. **Disclosures**

Dr R Plummer made a general declaration as a Board Member of Natural Resources Wales and as Chair of its Protected Areas Committee. Councillor C George declared an interest in relation to report 13/24, Pembrokeshire Nature Partnership Update.

3. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on the 25 September 2024 were presented for confirmation and authentication.

On the proposal of Councillor S Hancock, seconded by Councillor M Bowen, it was **resolved** that the minutes of the meeting held on 25 September 2024 be confirmed and authenticated.

4. **Action Log and Matters arising**

Members noted the contents of the action log.

Noted.

5. **Well-being Objective: Deep Dive / Self-Assessment: Conservation**

The Chair welcomed the Head of Nature Recovery who presented a deep dive report and self-assessment on the wellbeing objective of Conservation. It was reported that the Conservation objective focused on delivering nature



recovery and connectivity at scale to protect 30% of land and seas in the National Park for nature to flourish by 2030. The report featured details of the outcomes for the objective, a progress assessment, relevant statistics, case studies, challenges and opportunities, details of contributions to cross-cutting outcomes and an overall assessment with next steps.

Members commended Officers for their work and a discussion took place regarding funding. It was noted that finances were a challenge for delivery due to the often short-term and unpredictable nature of funding and its sources. The Officer emphasised the need for the Authority to be clear on its priorities as a result of this challenge. A discussion ensued regarding other challenges and key learning points for the team.

Noted.

6. Connecting the Coast

The Conservation Officer presented a report that provided Members with a review of the Connecting the Coast land management scheme and how it enabled nature recovery and collaboration with landowners in the coastal zone of the National Park. It was reported that as the project was due to end in March 2025, details of progress up to November 2024 were provided. The report featured background information of the scheme, details of activities undertaken, relevant statistics, images that conveyed the impact of the project and a map that illustrated the scale of the scheme.

Members commended Officers for their work and discussed the importance of the Authority collaborating with landowners and the need to effectively record the legacy of the scheme. Members commented positively on the flexibility of the scheme and the varying scales of intervention available to landowners that resulted in a greater engagement and impact.

Noted.

[The meeting was adjourned between 11:14am – 11:24am]

7. Pembrokeshire Nature Partnership Update

The Biodiversity Implementation Officer for the Pembrokeshire Nature Partnership (PNP) presented a report that provided an update on the operation of the PNP for the 2023/24 financial year. The report provided background information, relevant figures and a progress update.

A discussion took place regarding the importance of the Partnership, the challenge of financing the teams work and the need for the Partnership to obtain non-grant funding through means such as corporate investment. The level of engagement with the public was also discussed and the Officer stated that further work was required to raise awareness of the Partnership however due to a lack of resources, activity on platforms such as social media were limited.

Noted.

[Councillor C Williams left the meeting at this juncture in the meeting]

8. Wellbeing Objectives Performance Report

The Performance and Compliance Officer presented the Well-being Objectives Performance Report that detailed progress made against priority indicators/projects/work programmes for the period ending 31 October 2024 and included quarter 2 statistics for some measures. The performance report set out the Authority's performance against its four Well-being Objectives (Conservation, Climate, Connection and Communities) as set out in the Authority's Corporate and Resources Plan 2023/24 – 2026/27.

It was noted that a tender for the Coast Path Risk Assessment was live on Sell 2 Wales. The Officer agreed to request an update regarding the progress of the tender from the relevant team.

The report detailed visitor numbers for all Authority sites. In response to a Members query, the Director of Nature Recovery & Tourism explained that the decrease in visitor numbers had been linked to external factors such as the weather. He added that the sites had developed their offerings to full day experiences to compensate for the decrease in visitor numbers.

With regards to climate, it was noted that the Decarbonisation department were in the process of recruiting a Decarbonisation / Sustainability Officer and a Member requested an update on this recruitment. The Officer agreed to request an update from the relevant team and circulate this to Members.

In response to a Members' query, the Officer confirmed that the Estate Policy and Strategy referenced in the report would be presented to the National Park Authority for consideration, with a pre-consultation stage for Members.

A Member suggested that the Green Room Redevelopment be featured in future reports. This suggestion was noted by the Officer who commented that it could potentially be featured in the Decarbonisation section of the report.

Noted.