

OPERATIONAL REVIEW COMMITTEE

28th January 2015

Present: Councillor R Kilmister (Chairman)
Councillor O James, Councillor PJ Morgan, Mr A E Sangster and
Mrs M Thomas

(NPA Offices, Llanion Park, Pembroke Dock: 2:00pm – 15:50pm)

1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Ms C Gwyther; Councillors P Harries, S T Hudson and A Wilcox.

2. Disclosures of interest

No disclosures of interest were received.

3. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on the 15th October 2014 were presented for confirmation and signature.

Members did not believe that the minute reflected the strength of their concern that the Authority was to undergo yet another audit when its performance was satisfactory.

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 15th October 2014 be confirmed and signed subject to the above amendment.

4. Performance report for the period ending 31st December 2014

The Business and Performance Manager presented the performance to date for the Park Direction, Delivery and Discovery Teams against the strategic outcomes in the Improvement Plan Part 1 for the first nine months of the financial year using the Ffynnon performance management system. This showed the percentage of work completed, together with the associated RAG (Red-Amber-Green) status for each action. Progress on each action was set out in the report.

It was reported that a number of projects had already been completed and most others were underway. Overall, most performance was on target with only a few items where other priorities had meant a delay in commencing.

It was noted that most measures and actions were green, however the figure for total CO² emissions was above target, and it seemed that this was due to inclusion of the gas used at Oriol y Parc café, which had not been included the previous year. Members were interested to learn about the success of the Orchard Project being undertaken by the Delivery



team, however it was noted that St Brides, where the apple day had been held, was quite a long way from North Pembrokeshire. Officers advised that days had also been held at Oriel y Parc and Stackpole and as juicing and pasteurising equipment had been purchased, some elements of the project would continue next year. Members also noted the limited progress made on the Interpretation and Discovery Service reviews, which was due to other work priorities, and hoped that these would take account of the new budget position going forward.

Looking at the strategic outcomes from the Improvement Plan, Members commented that there did not seem to be measures which looked at the performance of the Authority against its impact on the local economy and well-being of residents and visitors, particularly for the Delivery team. Officers replied that the best information was available through the Visitor Centres, however most visitor information was available only at County level. There was an intrinsic link with the impact of the Rights of Way network, however this was difficult to measure. Considering measurement of that same outcome with regard to the impact of the planning service, Members considered that the number of business planning applications approved could also form a crude measure of the support to businesses that the Authority was offering. Officers replied that on the standard planning application form the information was not always available to create a consistent measure.

It was **RESOLVED** that the performance report be received.

5. Historic Buildings at Risk Update

The Building Conservation Officer reported that informal surveys of listed buildings within the National Park had been undertaken since 1998, and in 2012 Cadw began an all-Wales survey, with work for the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park having recently been completed. The Buildings at Risk Register categorised historic buildings into three categories: extreme risk, grave risk and at risk. Previously 3.8% of listed buildings were on this risk register, however following the recent survey this had risen to 6.5%. The reasons for the increase in this number could be attributed to declining public/private sector funding, storm damage in 2014 and redundancy, eg of traditional farm buildings. 17 buildings were classed as at 'extreme risk'; 1 at 'grave risk' and 62 'at risk'. These buildings included houses, outbuildings, telephone boxes and a folly.

There were various means available to the Authority to address the problem, including Enforcement (via Section 215 repairs/urgent works notices) or simple negotiation. To date the owners of 58 buildings had been contacted and progress was being made in 27 of these. All would continue to be monitored and in those cases that the quality of the building was marginal or beyond repair Cadw would be asked to review the listed status.



Acknowledging that some buildings were more important than others, Members asked if there was any prioritisation of at risk buildings, to which the officer replied that some were more easily remedied than others, for example where completion of minor repairs could lead to removal from the register. Sympathetic reuse was encouraged with enforcement as the last resort, however where a repairs notice is an option such instances would always be brought to the National Park Authority due to the risk of Compulsory Purchase being required.

NOTED.

6. Rights of Way Delegation Agreement

The report of the Access & Rights of Way Manager reminded Members that in June 1997, the National Park Authority had concluded a legal agreement with Pembrokeshire County Council by which the Authority was delegated a range of functions, powers and duties in respect of public rights of way (PROW), including maintenance and legal management of the Coast Path and the additional network of PROW in the National Park. Pembrokeshire County Council (PCC) retained responsibility for a number of urban routes within the Park and the Park Authority maintained 14 cross boundary routes from beyond the National Park boundary to the nearest road.

Over time, a number of PROW had altered in character or been improved to become active travel routes and a revision to the agreement was therefore necessary to clarify maintenance responsibilities. Meetings had now been held with PCC at which agreement had been reached on transferring 20 routes back into their maintenance and 33 additional cross boundary routes being maintained by the National Park in future. It was hoped that the Variation Agreement formalising these discussions would be signed before April.

The report also set out the issues surrounding Byway 2/8 at Angle which the County Council had not agreed to resume maintenance on. However a meeting had been held with PCC recently which proved useful in finding a way forward, and it was hoped that some joint maintenance and applications for funding would take place.

The officer thanked Members for their assistance in making progress on this matter. Members were pleased with the progress made, and hoped that a long term solution could be found regarding the byway at Angle.

NOTED.



7. Review of Tourism and Destination Management

Members were reminded that at a previous meeting of the Committee, a request had been made for information on the Authority's role in terms of tourism development and the current performance of the Authority's tourism related services.

The report before the Committee therefore provided an overview of the changing context of tourism development within the region, the evolving role of Destination Pembrokeshire in shaping the tourism priorities in Pembrokeshire as well as providing performance data on key tourism services provided by the Authority.

Members suggested a number of ideas for broadening the marketing work of the Authority, such as placing copies of Coast to Coast at railway stations in London or Birmingham, promoting activities to journalists from outside the County to encourage them to write about the National Park, and continuation of the 60th Anniversary poster campaign. The Director of Delivery and Discovery replied that traditionally Pembrokeshire County Council had focussed on marketing outside the County, while the National Park had concentrated on marketing inside, however the Authority had stepped outside of that boundary in recent years to contribute in a more proactive way. He noted that the role of the destination partnership in Pembrokeshire was changing and a report on that would be brought to a future meeting of the Committee. The Chief Executive also suggested that it might be helpful if a report on the work of the Authority's Marketing and Communications team could be brought to a future meeting.

Members were also surprised at the reduction in bed bookings taken at the Authority's Networked Information Centres and their changing role due to increased use of technology was briefly discussed. Officers also noted that there had been a shift in the role of the public sector from providing information to equipping and empowering others to do so through training and advocacy, an example being the Authority's work with Bluestone and Fishguard Chamber of Commerce. The future delivery of the Information Centre service was therefore one which would require further discussion in future.

NOTED.

8. Forward Work Programme

As discussed at the previous meeting of the Committee, a number of topics had been identified by Members and officers for future consideration by the Committee and these had been arranged into a suggested two-year forward programme. Members were keen to look at areas of the Authority's work in more detail and suggest ways that performance could be improved, which could be taken forward to the National Park Authority if appropriate.



Turning to the programme set out in the report, it was agreed that as things were liable to change, items to be considered at the next meeting should be a standing item on the Committee agenda. It was agreed that at the meeting in April the topics to be discussed would be partnership working, the Destination Pembrokeshire report and the work of the Communications and Marketing team. A report on social inclusion would be postponed until later in the cycle. Members were encouraged to let the Chief Executive or relevant Director know in advance of the meeting of particular questions or areas they would like addressed.

It was **RESOLVED** that topics to be considered at the next meeting of the Committee would be partnership working, the Destination Pembrokeshire report and the work of the Communications and Marketing team. The Future Work Programme would be included as a standing item on future agendas.

9. 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.

