
LLŶN AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE 29/03/2023

Present:

T. Victor Jones (Chair) (Llanbedrog Community Council)

Members: Councillors Gareth Williams, John Brynmor Hughes, Gareth Tudor Jones, Gruffydd Williams, and Angela Russell (Cyngor Gwynedd Rural Champion) together with Noel Davey (Campaign for Rural Wales), Brett Garner (Llŷn Fishermen Association), Jina Gwyrfai (Llanaelhaearn Community Council), Sianelen Plemming (Pistyll Community Council), Eirian Allport (Clynnog Fawr Community Council), Andrew Davidson (Principal Archaeologist - Gwynedd Archaeological Trust) and Molly Lovatt (Natural Resources Wales).

Officers: Bleddyn P. Jones (Llŷn AONB Service Manager), Morus Llwyd Dafydd (Llŷn AONB Projects Officer), Kevin Roberts (Countryside Warden - Llŷn AONB) and Rhodri Jones (Democracy Services Officer).

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Robert Parkinson (National Trust), Morgan Jones-Parry (Arfon and Dwyfor Access Forum), Wenda Williams (Aberdaron Community Council), Einir Wyn (Llanengan Community Council), Euros Jones (FWAG Cymru), Lea Elin Connelly (Biodiversity Team Leader, Sian Parry (Tudweiliog Community Council) and Councillor Dafydd Davies.

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

None to note.

3. URGENT ITEMS

Members were reminded that 'Llygad Llŷn', the annual AONB newsletter would be published over the next few weeks and a request was made for Members' assistance to raise awareness about it.

Members were informed that Wyn Williams (Countryside Manager) would be retiring in a few weeks. It was agreed to send the committee members' gratitude to him prior to his retirement.

4. MINUTES

The Chair signed the minutes of the previous meeting of this Joint committee held on 27 June 2022, as a true record.

5. NATURE RECOVERY ACTION PLAN

The report was submitted by the Llŷn AONB Officer for information to the Members. It was explained that the nature recovery plan was operational across local authorities in

Wales and an advisor had been appointed to assist to prepare the plan in Gwynedd in accordance with the Council's duty.

It was reported that the plan's consultation period would commence in the next few weeks and Members were encouraged to complete the consultation and to encourage others in their communities to complete this.

It was confirmed that this consultation questionnaire would also be distributed during the Nefyn Show to be held on the first of May this year to get the views of the public on the nature emergency in Gwynedd and within the AONB.

Several different views about priorities and nature recovery processes were shared and attention was given to various ideas. The need for Members to complete the consultation questionnaire was emphasised to ensure that their views were considered jointly with the views of the public.

DECISION

To accept the information noted in the report and note the observations raised during the discussion.

6. STRATEGIC PLAN FOR THE VISITOR ECONOMY

The report was submitted by the Llŷn AONB Officer for Members' information. It was explained that Cyngor Gwynedd had been collaborating with Eryri National Park to create a strategic plan to realise the vision and principles of the Gwynedd and Eryri Sustainable Visitor Economy Plan 2035.

It was reported that the impact of tourism because of the Covid-19 Pandemic had increased the pressure on culture and the environment. It was considered that there were various issues that caused concern to the Welsh language, transport and the rural economy as well as tensions in some areas due to the unprecedented number of visitors.

It was confirmed that Cyngor Gwynedd had approved the strategic plan following a period of consultation of the concerns jointly with Eryri National Park. It was explained that the vision for the Gwynedd and Eryri Strategic Plan was 'A visitor economy for the benefit and well-being of the people, environment, language and culture of Gwynedd and Eryri'.

The principles and aims of the plan were detailed, namely:

1. Celebrate, respect, and protect our communities, language, culture and heritage.
2. Maintain and respect our environment.
3. Ensure that the advantages to Gwynedd and Eryri communities outweigh any disadvantages.

It was confirmed that a full copy of the strategic plan may be viewed on the Council's website.

In response to a question about the role of the AONB when implementing the plan, the Llŷn AONB Officer confirmed that the unit had been part of a task group that had worked together to prepare it. In order to clarify the role of the AONB in the plan's implementation, officers will discuss with the Tourism Team and will report back to Members.

DECISION

To accept the information noted in the report.

7. SUSTAINABLE LANDSCAPES, SUSTAINABLE PLACES PROJECT

The report was submitted by the Llŷn AONB Officer for information to the Members. It was explained that only information about capital projects had been included in the report and these had been funded via the Welsh Government's Sustainable Landscapes Sustainable Places programme.

It was explained that Designated Landscape in Wales had submitted projects for the period 2022-25. Details were given that these had been submitted within the themes set, namely: Biodiversity and nature recovery, Decarbonisation, Resilient and green communities and Sustainable Tourism. It was confirmed that the projects for the Llŷn AONB were:

- Gyrn Goch Circular Walk
- AONB Warden electric van
- Common Land in Rhos Botwnnog, Foel Gron Mynytho and Horeb/Mynytho
- Canolfan Llithfaen
- Access improvements to Mynydd Tir y Cwmwd, Porth Ysgo and Porthor jointly with the Wales Coast Path
- Traditional Boundaries (stone walls, 'cloddiau' and hedges)
- The Dark Sky

It was mentioned that other projects had been developed via funding received from Cyngor Gwynedd and Natural Resources Wales. Recent positive work with volunteers was discussed to re-establish paths and litter pick.

It was noted that officers were working to raise awareness of the AONB by sharing updates on the website, social media and in the 'Llygad Llŷn' magazine.

DECISION

To accept the information noted in the report.

8. THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FUND

The report was submitted by the Llŷn AONB Officer for Members' information. It was reported that £100,000 was available in the Sustainable Development Fund at the beginning of the 2022-23 financial year and they had managed to allocate £92,149.52 of this to worthy projects. It was explained that this led to a small underspend of £7,850.48.

It was confirmed that the projects supported during the past year were:

- Llŷn Maritime Museum
- Llŷn Fflecsi Bus

- Llandegwning Cemetery Gate
- R S Thomas Festival
- Eglwys Newydd Aberdaron
- Sarn Exhibition
- Aberdaron Sailing Club
- Llithfaen Playground
- Hafod Ceiri Windows
- Coedlan Carl Archaeological Survey
- Aberdesach Car Park
- Melin Daron
- Plas Carmel Shed
- Aberdaron Community Noticeboards
- Dog waste bag dispensers
- Abersoch Hall.

It was confirmed that the budget was to fund projects over a period of two years rather than a year (between 2023-25), if required, as a total funding of £100,000 was available for the 2023-24 financial year and a further £100,000 had been granted for the 2024-25 financial year.

It was noted that the latest Welsh Government guidelines placed more emphasis on the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and gave priority to projects that related to 'de-carbonisation' and 'nature recovery' themes.

It was emphasised that the work of promoting the opportunity to apply for the grant from the Sustainable Fund had begun and Members were urged to further share information on the opportunities.

Members of the Sustainable Fund Panel were given an opportunity to stand down to give other Members of the Joint Committee an opportunity, if they wished.

During the discussion, Members raised the following matters:

- Representatives from the Campaign for the Protection of Rural Wales and Clynog Fawr Community Council offered to stand down from the Sustainable Fund Panel should anyone else be keen to be part of it.
- It was considered whether it was possible to attract different organisations to be members of the Panel to ensure a wide cross-section when considering applications.

In response, it was noted:

- That several organisations were part of the Membership of this Joint Committee. Members were reminded that the Panel membership were members of the Joint Committee and therefore any cross-section would derive from the organisations that are part of the Joint Committee.
- Both representatives were thanked for offering to stand down. It was resolved to re-visit the Panel membership at the next Joint Committee meeting to have a discussion when more representatives are present.

DECISION

- To accept the report on the Membership of the Consultative Joint Committee.**
- To consider the Membership of the Sustainable Development Fund Panel at the next meeting of the Joint Committee.**

9. DARK SKY DESIGNATION

The report was presented by the Llŷn AONB Projects Officer who noted that the AONB Unit had been working for some time to apply for an International Dark Sky status for Llŷn. It was explained that data collection was a huge challenge as the Llŷn AONB was extensive. Details were given that the unit was focusing on a specific area of Llŷn on the tip of the Peninsula to receive the International Dark Sky designation rather than the whole area.

It was confirmed that Ynys Enlli had been designated as a Dark Sky Sanctuary in February this year and was the first site in Europe to receive this designation. It was reported that news of this designation had raised the awareness of people about the island and the Llŷn area and it was hoped that the Dark Sky designation would benefit the area of Pen draw Llŷn in the same manner.

During the discussion, Members raised the following matters:

- It was asked if this matter had been discussed at a meeting of Aberdaron Community Council.
- Details of other matters to be considered were given such as safety and the need to have specific lighting in some parts of the area.

In response, it was noted:

- That officers hoped to receive support from the Joint Committee to work towards completing an application for a Dark Sky designation. It was confirmed that no work had been completed at the moment to work towards this designation and no application had been completed. Details were given that consultation with the community was an important element of the work and therefore discussions at Aberdaron Community Council meetings were key to see whether the community supports the intention to apply for a designation or otherwise.
- Assurance was given that every effort was being made to ensure health and safety in every situation. It was discussed that the Night Project was collaborating with various businesses and organisations to learn about light pollution and the methods to reduce it and to continue to light locations effectively.
- It was elaborated that close cooperation occurred between the AONB Unit and Cyngor Gwynedd planning officers to set conditions that relate to lighting on new applications when appropriate. It was explained although these conditions had been set recent recruitment deficiencies had led to fewer enforcement officers and some issues continued to be raised.

DECISION

To accept the information noted in the report and support the AONB Unit to work towards making an application for a Dark Sky designation for the Pen Draw Llŷn area, in consultation with the Pen Draw Llŷn communities.

The meeting commenced at 4.00pm and concluded at 5.05pm.

CHAIR