

LLŶN AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE 5/4/17

Present:

T. Victor Jones (Llanbedrog Community Council) (Chair)
Councillor Angela Russell (Vice-chair)

Members: Councillors Gareth Roberts, Gruffydd Williams and R. H. Wyn Williams (Gwynedd Council), Ashley Batten (Gwynedd Archaeological Trust), John Gosling (Abersoch and Llŷn Tourism Partneriaeth), William I. Hughes (Farmers Union of Wales), Morgan Jones-Parry (Arfon and Dwyfor Access Forum), Sian Parri (Tudweiliog Community Council) and John Eric Williams (Cyfeillion Llŷn).

Officers: Bleddyn P. Jones (Llŷn AONB Service Manager), Elin Hughes (Llŷn AONB Projects Officer), Wyn Williams (Countryside and Access Manager) and Bethan Adams (Member Support Officer).

Apologies: Noel Davey (Campaign for the Protection of Rural Wales), Arfon Hughes (Nefyn Town Council), Laura Hughes (National Trust) and Alun Price (Natural Resources Wales).

1. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair took the opportunity to thank Councillor R. H. Wyn Williams, who was attending his last meeting on behalf of Gwynedd Council, for his valuable contribution to the Joint Committee and the area of Llŷn.

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

No declarations of personal interest were received from any members present.

3. URGENT ITEMS

The Llŷn AONB Service Manager referred to the matters below:

Landscapes of the Future of Wales

It was noted that conservation bodies had recently expressed concerns in the press as to the content of the draft report of the review. It was emphasised that there was general consensus among the partners involved in the review regarding the content of the draft. In terms of the timetable, it was reported that an amended report would be circulated among partners before an event is held to present the final report of the review during the Summer. It was explained that the report noted proposals to encourage collaboration, financial savings, attracting funding (but did not note that more funds would be available from Welsh Government) and supported the continuation of the Sustainable Development Fund.

A member noted that early discussions about the review had referred to the Welsh Government contributing financially toward the AONB and that officers would elevate the protection element of the designation.

A member noted that the Council had received a higher than average grant increase by Welsh Government for 2017-18 and that officers from Gwynedd had been at the forefront of providing the evidence to justify changing the distribution formula to reflect the true cost of care in the countryside. The member added that consideration should be given to

replicating this work in relation to the AONB. The Llŷn AONB Service Manager asked the member to confirm the name of the officer with whom he could contact in relation to this.

Nova Innovation Application

Reference was made to an application by Nova Innovation on behalf of Ynni Llŷn to the Crown Estate for the right to develop a possible tidal energy plan near Bardsey Island. It was noted that the Tudweiliog Community Council Representative had come across a consultation leaflet that did not refer to the Joint Committee. The representative further mentioned that the form referred to the AONB but that there was no reference to consultation with the Joint Committee. She suggested that Ynni Llŷn should be contacted and a request be made for more information about the project and to inform the Crown Estates that the Joint Committee should be consulted with regarding the plan.

A member noted that he had been given to understand that this was only an initial consultation involving the possibility of setting up such a scheme.

The Tudweiliog Community Council Representative noted that the document stated that the next step would be to apply to the Crown Estates for a licence. This would, therefore, be the time to submit the Joint Committee's input to the consultation.

RESOLVED to contact Ynni Llŷn to request more information about the project and to inform the Crown Estates that the Joint Committee should be consulted regarding the plan.

Llanaelhaearn Community Council Letter

It was reported that the Chairman was in receipt of a letter by Llanaelhaearn Community Council requesting the support of the Joint Committee in their request to Gwynedd Council for street lighting at the Trefor junction on the grounds of road safety. It was noted that the AONB Management Plan stated that an attempt should be made to restrict the number of road signs and street lights to maintain tranquillity and was, thus, a difficult situation. It was noted that discussions had been held between the Head of the Regulatory Department, Cabinet Member for Planning and Regulation, Local Members and Gwynedd Council. It was reported that the Head of the Regulatory Department was of the opinion that the junction was safe and that Gwynedd Council would not make any changes.

During the ensuing discussion, the following main points were noted:

- That there were a number of similar junctions within the AONB, it would not be possible to support every application.
- Concern about light pollution at night and the impact on biodiversity.
- In this case, a compromise should be reached with regard to darkness to satisfy people's needs because of the safety concerns.
- There had not been any fatal accidents since the new road.
- Local people should be supported.
- Not comfortable lobbying on the matter but support could be noted.
- A response to the letter should be drawn up noting that the Joint Committee accepted local concern, asking that the Council review the situation and if the Council were to decide that street lighting was required for safety reasons, the Joint Committee would not object.

RESOLVED that the Llŷn AONB Service Manager respond to the letter on behalf of the Joint Committee based on the above observations.

4. MINUTES

The Chair signed the minutes of the previous meeting of this committee held on 22 November, 2016, as a true record, subject to the following corrections:

- Change the sentence 'It was noted that the Joint Committee meetings would most likely be held in Pwllheli after the closure of the building.' in the second paragraph on page five to read 'It was noted that when the building closes, it is most likely that meetings of the Joint Committee will be held in Pwllheli.'
- Change part of the second paragraph on page seven to read '...He drew attention to the fact that there were more current studies in relation to wind turbines and solar farms, noting that the sites for wind turbine clusters which had been proposed on technical grounds by ARUP Associates in 2012 had been ruled out by later studies which considered landscape sensitivity. The draft JLDP also designates the area around Rhoslan as the only priority search area in Dwyfor for large solar farms due to landscape issues as well as the capacity of the national grid.'

5. LATEST PROJECTS BY THE LLŶN AONB UNIT

The Llŷn AONB Projects Officer submitted her report on the work of the AONB Service. The following projects were expanded upon:

- Getting rid of Untidy Road Signs;
- Llŷn Circular Cycle Routes;
- Interpreting Tre'r Ceiri;
- Ffynnon Aelrhiw Project.

A member noted that he was aware that the poet Joseph Sherman had composed poetry associated with Tre'r Ceiri and that he would send them on to the AONB Service.

The Llŷn AONB Service Manager referred to the presentation received at the previous meeting in relation to the Rhodd Eryri plan, which is a pilot scheme in which visitors contributed to local conservation work. He noted that he had attended an event held in Llanberis to celebrate the success of the first year of the plan. He noted that 45 businesses were now members of the plan and that a collection of £3,500 had been made with the aim of collecting £10,000 by September.

In response to members' observation in relation to a similar project in the AONB, the Llŷn Service Manager noted that more information would be presented in terms of setting up such a project for the AONB at upcoming meetings.

RESOLVED to accept the information.

6. THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FUND

Submitted - the report of the Llŷn AONB Projects Officer detailing the position of the Sustainable Development Fund. It was noted that £55,000 was in the Fund at the beginning of the 2016/17 financial year and that all funds had been distributed. Attention was drawn to the appendix that provided a summary of the projects that had received a contribution from the Fund.

It was reported that £55,000 was in the Fund for 2017-18 and members were encouraged to promote the Fund.

The Officer responded to questions/observations by members in relation to specific projects.

The Chairman expressed his gratitude for the work.

RESOLVED to accept the information.

7. LOCAL MEMBERS AND THE JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Submitted – the report of the Llŷn AONB Service Manager, explaining the implications and the process of changing the constitution of the Consultative Joint Committee in terms of the numbers of Local Members who could be members of the Joint Committee at any given time in accordance with the decision of the Joint Committee in its meeting on 24 June 2015.

It was explained that the existing constitution stated that the number of members on the Joint Committee at any one time was five with members changing places following local elections. Attention was drawn to the fact that, at the time the decision was made, the boundaries of wards within the area would be changed and that fewer Local Members would represent the wards within the AONB (in part or fully). However, no changes were made to the wards and so the number of members representing wards within the AONB (partly or fully) was 11.

An observation was made that, if all Local Members were on the Joint Committee the membership of the Joint Committee would increase from 27 to 33 with a substantial majority being members of Gwynedd Council. It was highlighted that there was already a seat for representatives from every Community Council within the AONB.

During the ensuing discussion, the following main points were noted:

- As the electoral boundaries would not change that it should be up to Local Members to decide amongst themselves who should be members of the Joint Committee.
- That a representative from the Campaign to Protect Rural Wales had sent observations noting that he was of the opinion that the number of Local Members on the Joint Committee should remain at five, as 11 Members would change the balance too much in terms of representation from the Council. He also suggested that members could be changed once a year in order to achieve a gradual change.
- One option would be to hold a presentation form Local Members about the AONB before they fill in a form stating their reasons for wanting to be members of the Joint Committee and leave the decision to the Joint Committee as to which members should serve on the Joint Committee.
- Disagree with having 11 Local Members on the Joint Committee as there needed to be a cross-section/balance of membership and the decision should not be left to local members as opinions could differ.
- Consideration should be given to distributing the seats of local members in accordance with the political balance of the Council.
- Community Councils needed to be pressured into sending representatives to meetings of the Joint Committee.

It was proposed and seconded that the number of Local Members should remain at five and that a recommendation be made to the Cabinet / Cabinet Member - Planning and Regulatory that the constitution of the Joint Committee should be amended to note that seats are distributed among Local Members in accordance with the Council's political balance arrangements and to remove the phrase "Gwynedd Council Members to be rotated following local elections". A vote was taken on the proposal and it carried.

RESOLVED that the number of Local Members remain at five and to recommend to the Cabinet / Cabinet Member - Planning and Regulatory that the constitution of the Joint Committee should be amended to note that seats are distributed among Local

Members in accordance with the Council's political balance arrangements and to remove the phrase "Gwynedd Council Members to be rotated following local elections".

8. AONB MANAGEMENT PLAN

Submitted – the report of the Llŷn AONB Service Manager providing an update on the work of updating and reviewing the AONB Management Plan. Members were guided through four draft chapters of Part 2 of the management plan, 'Clean Environment and Tranquility', 'Habitats and Wildlife', 'Work, Produce and Skills' and 'People and Communities' which was appended to the report.

Attention was drawn to the fact that these were the final chapters of the draft Plan to be considered. It was reported that the next step would be to create an action plan to coincide with the policies and bring all materials together to create a complete revised Management Plan in draft form. Subsequently, a public enquiry would be held for at least six weeks before the Joint Committee reconvenes with details of the responses and recommendations received.

Members were given the opportunity to make observations. The following main points were noted:-

Habitats and Wildlife

- Page 31 - Neptune Campaign should be referred to under the heading 'Marine species'.
- Page 32 - not happy that CO₂ emissions are referred to under the heading 'Climate Change', climate change can be noted but responsibility should not be placed on human activity. Of the opinion that the sun was a big factor in climate change.
- That the wording of policy BP5 was weaker than that noted on page 32. Also, it was noted in the final paragraph on page 32 '...creating renewable energy on a suitable scale...'; what is meant by suitable scale should be clearly stated in the policies.

Work, Produce and skills

- That some of the figures included in the chapter were misleading as it would not be possible to obtain such detailed analysis from STEAM figures. The Abersoch and Llŷn Tourism Partnerships Representative stated that the figures should be discussed with Steven Jones (Senior Tourism Services Officer) and that he would also be willing to assist. He added that it was difficult to obtain concrete figures for the AONB.

People and Communities

- Page 55 - consideration should be given to noting, under the chapter of 'Holiday Homes and House Prices', the need to look at the reasons why so many houses are for sale in some specific areas of the AONB.
- Page 56 - Fuel Poverty - direct link between the tax on carbon and the fact that the United Kingdom had to import fuel as new coal fired power stations were no longer allowed, policy had led to fuel poverty among many people.
- With regard to the order of chapters, consideration should be given to putting this chapter at the beginning of the plan, in order to give the chapter greater emphasis.
- That communities were ageing and the need to look at the way in which individuals could be supported to stay in their communities. Even though this was not unique to the AONB, consideration should be given to making reference to the matter.

The Llŷn AONB Service Manger stated that observations had been received by the representative of the Campaign for the Protection of Rural Wales on the draft chapters and

that they would be considered and incorporated into the chapters. He added that any member was welcome to send him observations on the chapters.

It was noted that the representative had expressed his opinion that the full plan should be submitted to the Joint Committee before going out to consultation. A discussion took place on the matter. In response to a question about the timetable, the Llŷn AONB Service Manger noted that the intention was to consult on the plan during July and to bring it to the Joint Committee in September/October with comments made during the consultation period, and for the plan to be adopted before the end of the year. A consensus was reached that the draft plan should come before the Joint Committee before a public consultation.

RESOLVED:

- (i) to accept the report;**
- (ii) that the Llŷn AONB Service Manager amend the draft chapters in accordance with the comments of the Joint Committee.**
- (iii) hold a meeting of the Joint Committee to discuss the draft Management Plan before the public consultation is held.**

The meeting commenced at 4.30pm and concluded at 6.20pm.

CHAIR