
LLŶN AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE 10/09/2024

Present::

Members: Councillors: **Gareth Williams, Gareth Tudor Jones, Gruffydd Williams, Dafydd Davies** and **Angela Russell** (Countryside Champion - Gwynedd Council) along with **Jina Gwyrfai** (Llanaelhaearn Community Council), **T. Victor Jones** (Chair) (Llanbedrog Community Council), **Sian Parri** (Tudweiliog Community Council) and **Jenny Emmett** (Gwynedd Archaeology).

Officers: **Bleddyn P. Jones** (Llŷn AONB Officer), **Morus Llwyd Dafydd** (Llŷn AONB Projects Officer), **Elin Wyn Hughes** (Llŷn AONB Activities Officer), **Heledd Fflur Jones** (Planning Policy Team Leader) and **Rhodri Jones** (Democracy Services Officer).

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from **Einir Wyn** (Llanengan Community Council), **Eirian Allport** (Clynnog Fawr Community Council), **Gillian Walker** (Cyfeillion Llŷn), **Euros Jones** (FWAG Cymru), and **Linda Ashton** (Natural Resources Wales).

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

There were no declarations of personal interest.

3. URGENT ITEMS

None to note.

4. MINUTES

The Chair signed the minutes of the previous meeting of this Joint Committee, that was held on 27 June, 2024, as a true record.

5. LLŶN TIRLUN BYW PROJECT

Submitted - the report of the Llŷn AONB Activities Officer noting that the Llŷn Tirlun Byw Project was funded jointly by Natural Resources Wales and Cyngor Gwynedd.

It was explained there were three themes to the project namely; Historic Features, Natural Environment and Access. It was explained that a number of specific outputs had been set to ensure that the project's aim of completing minor works and holding activities was met. It was confirmed that the project outputs included:

- Completing work on 1-2 sites within Llŷn AONB for each of the following themes
 - Historic Features
 - Habitats
 - Access Improvement

- Hold 4 events to support rural skills development (such as repairing stone walls and hedgerows)
- Hold 6 events to give people an opportunity to keep fit and learn about nature and the environment (such as Guided Walks and Dark Skies)
- Hold a minimum of 8 events with Volunteers to support each of the project's themes including restoring features, litter picking and improving footpaths.

The Members were guided through a number of activities that were already being held including dry stone walling sessions (Rural Skills Training), Keep Wales Tidy (Litter Picking Sessions) and brush cutter training at Coleg Glynllifon (Training for Volunteers). Everyone involved with these events was thanked. Support was noted for projects that collaborated with Welsh language learners to ensure opportunities for learners to practise their language socially.

It was noted there were a number of activities in the pipeline noting that events would be promoted publicly over the next few weeks. Members were asked to share information about events in their local communities and everyone was invited to attend the events.

DECISION

To accept the report, noting the observations made during the discussion.

6. THE PERTHYN PROJECT

Submitted - the report of the Llŷn AONB Officer reminding members of the initial conversation on the matter during the meeting of this Joint Committee held on 27 June 2024.

Reference was made to the Commission for Welsh Speaking Communities that had been established by the Welsh Government in 2022 to research the challenges the Welsh language was facing and to suggest ways of amending public policies in the interest of the language and communities. It was explained that the Commission's final report had been submitted during this year's National Eisteddfod in Rhondda Cynon Taf. It was elaborated that the report looked at the decline of the Welsh language and emphasised the importance of the Welsh heartlands, such as Penrhyn Llŷn, and it set out recommendations for supportive actions in the future. Particular attention was drawn to the recommendation of designating areas 'of higher density linguistic significance' where over 40% of the population in specific areas spoke Welsh. It was noted that further recommendations for High Density areas included:

- Intensifying the consideration given to the Welsh language within policy frameworks.
- Approving policy interventions and variations to place emphasis on the Welsh language as a community language.
- Ensuring that policy interventions responded to the social and linguistic needs of these areas.
- Allowing additional powers to empower communities to reverse linguistic shift.

It was explained that the Perthyn project had been established by Cyfeillion Llŷn and Cymdeithas Pen-y-graig in response to Jeremy Miles' speech (Cabinet Member for the Economy, Energy and the Welsh Language) in 2022, when he said that the language belongs to everyone and we all had a duty to work together to secure its future. It was noted that Perthyn was in line with the Government's aim of reaching a million Welsh speakers by 2050 and supported the recommendations of the Commission on Welsh

Speaking Communities. It was explained that the project also looked at several other areas associated with the language such as housing allocation policies, language statistics and Welsh placenames.

It was added that the Perthyn project promoted a Welsh Welcome, a tourist industry that emphasised and supported the Welsh language and culture. It was explained that the project had three aims, namely:

- Safeguard and strengthen Welsh as a community language
- Increase the number of Welsh speakers and households
- Present a Welsh welcome and the history of our area to all

It was reported that Cyfeillion Llŷn and Cymdeithas Pen-y-graig had raised awareness of the Perthyn project with local community councils and towns. It was confirmed that Aberdaron, Botwnnog and Tudweiliog councils had designated areas of High Density linguistic significance and a number of other councils were now part of the project.

It was explained that 'plans to safeguard and strengthen the Welsh language' had been added to a list of plans that would be prioritised in the Local Regeneration Plan, Cynllun Ardal Ni Pen Llŷn 2023 for the first time, following the support of the Llŷn Community Councils to designate the Area as one of High Density linguistic significance.

DECISION

- **To welcome the report of the Commission for Welsh Speaking Communities and express support for the Welsh Government.**
- **To call on the Welsh Government to implement the recommendations of the Commission for Welsh Communities as a matter of urgency to protect the language in Pen Llŷn.**
- **To support in principle the Perthyn project and the three main aims.**

7. AONB MANAGEMENT PLAN

Submitted – the report of the AONB Llŷn Officer, reminding Members that preparing and reviewing the Management Plan was one of Cyngor Gwynedd's statutory responsibilities in line with the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. It was noted that this Joint Advisory Committee had a role to play during the process of preparing and reviewing the Plan.

It was acknowledged that a variety of factors had affected the Plan's review timetable since the pandemic, work on other capital projects and the officer's capacity to complete the work on time. Nevertheless, it was emphasised that the existing Plan had dated and that reviewing it was a priority.

The importance of considering the latest information about the characteristics of the area, plans, strategic and conservation objectives when reviewing the Plan was emphasised. It was also noted there would be a need to follow the guidelines of Countryside Council for Wales which had now been updated by Natural Resources Wales for AONB and National Parks. It was noted that Llŷn AONB officers had already completed some of the background work by commissioning an update of a State of the AONB Report, with a summary of an update on the area's characteristics submitted to the Joint Committee. It was added that a Consultant had been commissioned to update the Context of the Plan.

Members were reminded of the qualities of Llŷn AONB, noting it was not anticipated that there would be a need to amend these for the revised Plan. It was noted that the special qualities of the Llŷn AONB were:

- Beautiful Landscape and Coast
- Tranquillity and Clean Environment
- A wealth of wildlife and habitats
- The Historic Environment
- The Welsh Language and culture
- People and Close-knit Communities
- Local produce and businesses
- Access and Rights of Way

A new vision had been recommended for the revised Plan based on the year 2050, namely;

"An area of beautiful landscape and coast where indigenous wildlife thrives, low levels of environmental pollution and an abundance of public access opportunities. Historical buildings and features in good condition, local businesses succeeding and Llŷn communities sustaining the Welsh language and culture."

It was added that this vision was an update to the vision for 2040 which had already been included in the existing Plan.

It was explained that the AONB Unit was reviewing the objectives and policies of the existing Plan and would arrange a meeting of the Advisory Committee to discuss those amendments. It was elaborated that the Action Plan would be amended to include details of the work that was aimed to be completed within the Plan's operational period. It was noted there was a need to review the associated Environmental and Habitats Regulation Assessments.

It was then confirmed there would be a period of consultation on the draft revised Plan. It was confirmed that the Joint Committee had a role to consider the submitted comments.

A discussion was held on establishing specific sub-committees to develop the Plan and receive detailed input from Joint Committee Members on the specific qualities of the Llŷn AONB. Nevertheless, it was emphasised that this could hinder the process of updating the Plan as the Unit received fragmented information and recommendations. It was assured that discussions on aspects of reviewing the Plan would be discussed in detail at meetings of the Joint Committee in the future. It was agreed that it was crucial to have as much input as possible in the Plan recognising that it was Cyngor Gwynedd's statutory responsibility to complete it. It was noted that Joint Committee meetings were held more often when reviewing the Plan.

DECISION

- **To accept the information in the report for the Management Plan.**
- **To hold the next meeting of the Joint Committee in November to discuss matters relating to reviewing the Management Plan only.**

The meeting commenced at 4.00pm and concluded at 5.10pm.

CHAIR

