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Gwynedd
LL55 1SH

Meeting

LLŶN A.O.N.B JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Date and Time

4.00 pm, TUESDAY, 26TH NOVEMBER, 2024

Location

Virtual Meeting

For public access to the meeting, please contact us

Contact Point

Rhodri Jones

01286 679556

RhodriJones1@gwynedd.llyw.cymru

LLŶN A.O.N.B JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MEMBERSHIP

Gwynedd Councillors

**Dafydd Davies
Gareth Tudor Jones
John Brynmor Hughes
Gruffydd Williams
Gareth Williams**

Others

Aberdaron, Buan, Botwnnog, Clynnog, Llanbedrog, Llanaelhaearn, Llanengan, Nefyn, Pistyll and Tudweiliog Community Council nominees.

Gwynedd Council's Countryside Champion

Nominees of the following agencies/institutions:

**National Trust,
Natural Resources Wales,
Arfon and Dwyfor Access Forum,
Cyfeillion Llŷn,
National Farmers Union,
Farmers Union of Wales,
Abersoch and Llŷn Tourism Partnership,
Campaign for the Protection of Rural Wales,
Gwynedd Archaeological Trust,
Llŷn Fishermen's Association.**

A G E N D A

1. APOLOGIES

To receive apologies for absence.

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

To receive any declaration of personal interest.

3. URGENT ITEMS

To note any items that are a matter of urgency in the view of the Chairman for consideration.

4. MINUTES

4 - 7

The Chair shall propose that the minutes of this committee, held on 10 September 2024, be signed as a true record.

5. REVIEWING THE AONB MANAGEMENT PLAN

8 - 9

To inform members of the role the Joint Advisory Committee to play in the AONB Management Plan preparation and review process.

6. AONB MANAGEMENT PLAN

10 - 12

To inform members of the initial steps to be taken in the process of reviewing the Management Plan.

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

MEETING	Llŷn AONB Joint Advisory Committee
DATE	November 26 th 2024
TITLE	Reviewing the AONB Management Plan
PURPOSE	Inform members
AUTHOR	AONB Officer
RECOMMENDATION	Accept the Information

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Preparing and reviewing the Management Plan is one of Gwynedd Council's responsibilities in relation to the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty as part of the CROW Act 2000.
- 1.2 The existing Llŷn AONB Management Plan is dated and needs to be reviewed. Unfortunately a number of factors, including the pandemic, work on other projects and capacity issues have delayed the review process.
- 1.3 This report refers to the role of the Joint Advisory Committee in the Plan review process, type of meetings and also to the Guidance that is available to Local Authorities.

2.0 THE JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE'S ROLE

- 2.1 The Joint Advisory Committee (JAC) has a role to play in the AONB Management Plan preparation and review process. It is noted in the Terms of Reference that the role of the JAC is as follows:
 - To advise on the preparation and implementation of a management plan for the AONB.
 - To monitor and evaluate the progress within the Management Plans action programme annually and to review the plan itself regularly.
- 2.2 The Joint Advisory Committee includes representatives of Cyngor Gwynedd (6), the relevant Community/ Town Councils (10) and the following organisations/ bodies:
 - Natural Resources Wales
 - Arfon and Dwyfor Access Forum
 - Cyfeillion Llŷn
 - Campaign for the Protection of Rural Wales
 - The National Trust
 - Farmers' Union of Wales
 - National Farmers' Union
 - FWAG Cymru
 - Pysgotwyr Llŷn
 - Gwynedd Archaeology

- Tourism sector representative
- Business sector representative

3.0 JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETINGS

- 3.1 Prior to the pandemic meetings were held face to face, usually at Pwllheli. Like all other committees the meetings had to move to virtual ones as a consequence of the pandemic.
- 3.2 Recently, some members have asked about the possibility of re-introducing face to face meetings, or possibly hybrid meetings with some members in a committee room with others joining virtually.
- 3.3 The Joint Advisory Committee is administered by Cyngor Gwynedd. The Council has adopted a protocol whereby only specific meetings are held face to face/ hybrid (Full Council, Cabinet, Scrutiny and Planning committees) while all other meetings are held virtually. Furthermore, it must be stressed that technical equipment is needed for hybrid meetings and the Council does not have a room with this provision at Pwllheli.

4.0 GUIDANCE FOR LOCAL AUTHORITIES

- 4.1 When reviewing Management Plan relevant Authorities are expected to follow the guidelines which have been published on preparing and reviewing AONB Management Plans. The original such guidelines were published by the former Countryside Council for Wales many years ago. These guidelines provided information on what should be included in the Plan, how to set it out etc.
- 4.2 Recently Natural Resources Wales has commissioned *Land Use Consultants* to review and update these Guidelines and to make them relevant to National Parks as well as AONBs (Wales' Designated Landscapes). The purpose of the Guidelines, as outlined in the introduction, is ensure that management plans:
- guide, plan and manage transformational change;
 - are aligned with relevant policies and legislation;
 - engage key stakeholders and partnerships throughout the process.
- 4.3 The final version of the Guidelines are expected to be published soon. A representative from Natural Resources Wales will join the meeting to provide more information on the new Guidance.

5.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 5.1 Accept the information.

MEETING	Llŷn AONB Joint Advisory Committee
DATE	November 26 th 2024
TITLE	AONB Management Plan
PURPOSE	Inform members
AUTHOR	AONB Officer
RECOMMENDATION	Agree on a Vision for the Plan

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This report contains information on the initial steps to be taken in the process of reviewing the Management Plan. Some elements of the contents of this report have been presented to the Joint Advisory Committee previously, however no decision was made at that time.

2.0 THE REVIEW PROCESS

2.1 As noted in the previous report we will need to follow the steps outlined in the guidelines on preparing and reviewing Management Plans. These guidelines have been prepared by Natural Resources Wales (Countryside Council for Wales previously). A revision of the guidelines is underway and is expected to be published soon.

2.2 In brief this means following the steps noted below when reviewing the Plan:

- Consider the effectiveness of the existing Plan
- Consider the latest information regarding the area's features (condition)
- Take into account information and obligations of relevant plans and strategies
- Review the Plan's Vision, Aims/ Objectives and Policies.
- Create a new Action Plan for the plan period.
- Reviewing the Strategic Environmental and Habitats Impact Assessment.

2.3 It is important to consult with the AONB's inhabitants and other stakeholders during the review process. The Joint Advisory Committee has a role to play here as there is a good representation of various areas and of organisations and bodies among the membership.

3.0 STATE OF THE AONB

3.1 One of the first steps to be taken as part of the Management Plan review therefore is to assess the condition of the various features and see if there have been changes over time. These changes may be for better or worse.

3.2 The AONB Unit commissioned an update of the State of the AONB Report in 2021. This Report contains information on the condition of the AONB's special features and pressures upon them. A summary has been presented to the JAC in the past. Although the information in this report has dated slightly

it is felt that it is still useful for the review process.

- 3.3 To compliment the State of the AONB report more up to date and local information can be collected and used during the review process.

4.0 PLANS AND STRATEGIES

- 4.1 Some time ago the AONB Unit commissioned consultants to update the Management Plan's context. The work included updating information on plans, strategies, Acts etc which are relevant to the AONB Management Plan. This information will be useful to the full plan review process.
- 4.2 The AONB Unit will review this information over the next few months to ensure it is up to date and comprehensive.

5.0 SPECIAL QUALITIES

- 5.1 As part of the preparation work on the earlier Management Plans the special qualities of the Llŷn AONB were defined – these can be seen below. These qualities are fairly general and we do not foresee a need to change these for the revised Plan.

- Beautiful landscape and coast
- Tranquility and a 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

6.0 THE VISION

- 6.1 A Vision for the Llŷn AONB area (based on a 2040 date) is included in the existing Plan and reads as follows:

AN AREA OF BEAUTIFUL LANDSCAPE AND COAST, SUPPORTING A WEALTH OF WILDLIFE AND PROVIDING A RANGE OF NATURAL SERVICES FOR RESIDENTS AND VISITORS. HISTORIC FEATURES AND OTHER QUALITIES BEING VALUED AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES SUSTAINING THE WELSH LANGUAGE AND CULTURE.

- 6.2 It is believed that this Vision in the most part is still mostly relevant but could be somewhat simplified and be amended to include some other relevant matters. Therefore it is suggested that the following amended Vision is included in the revised Plan (based on 2050):

AN AREA OF BEAUTIFUL LANDSCAPE AND COAST WHERE INDIGENOUS WILDLIFE THRIVES WITH LOW LEVELS OF ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION AND A VARIETY OF PUBLIC ACCESS OPPORTUNITIES.

HISTORICAL BUILDINGS AND FEATURES IN GOOD CONDITION, LOCAL BUSINESSES SUCCEEDING AND LLŶN COMMUNITIES SUSTAINING THE WELSH LANGUAGE AND CULTURE.

7.0 AIMS/ OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

- 7.1 Soon the AONB Unit will start to assess and revise the existing Plan's aims/ objectives and policies and suggest updating/ changes to respond to new information and/ or a change in circumstances. There may be a need to include additional new policies. A meeting of the JAC will be arranged to discuss the draft aims/ objectives and policies.
- 7.2 When the aims/ objectives and policies have been agreed upon there will be a need to review the Strategic Environmental and Habitats Regulations Assesments. The aim is to appoint a Consultant to undertake this work.
- 7.3 Hand in hand with other work on the Plan there will be a need to update the Action Plan. The Action Plan which includes information on the work which it is intended to undertake during the Plan period, stating who will be lead partner, a timeline and if possible the source of finance. It must be remembered that in this respect the Plan is for the area not for the AONB Unit and a variety of organisations and bodies can implement actions to achieve the aims/ objectives of the Plan.
- 7.4 There will be a need to undertake a period of consultation on the revised draft Plan. As part of this work we will consult with public and private sectors, societies and individuals by various methods to get their views on the Plan. The Joint Advisory Committee will have a key role in assessing the responses received during the consultation period.

8.0 KEY ISSUES

- 8.1 As another initial step in the review process members of the JAC are requested to suggest what, in their opinion, are some some of key issues which are having an impact upon the qualities and the Llŷn Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty as noted above.
- 8.2 Also, we would welcome suggestions as regards possible actions or projects which could engage with the challenges facing these qualities.

9.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 9.1 Accept the amended Vision to be included in the Management Plan.
- 9.2 Provide comments regarding key issues and pressures on the area's qualities.