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## LLŶN AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE 25/3/15

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**Present:** Councillor Gruffydd Williams (Chairman)

**Committee Members:** Councillors Angela Russell and R. H. Wyn Williams (Gwynedd Council), Emily Bateman (Gwynedd Archaeological Trust), Noel Davey (Campaign for the Protection of Rural Wales), John Gosling (Abersoch and Llŷn Tourism Partnership), William I. Hughes (Farmers' Union of Wales), T. Victor Jones (Llanbedrog Community Council), Sian Parri (Tudweiliog Community Council), Morgan Jones-Parry (Arfon and Dwyfor Access Forum), John Eric Williams (Cyfeillion Llŷn) and Wenda Williams (Aberdaron Community Council).

**Officers:** Bleddyn P. Jones (Llŷn AONB Service Manager), Catrin Glyn (Llŷn AONB Projects Officer), Nia Haf Davies (Planning Manager (Joint Planning Policy Unit – Gwynedd and Anglesey) present for item 9 on the agenda) and Bethan Adams (Member Support and Scrutiny Officer).

### 1. CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR

It was noted, in accordance with the Joint Committee's current terms of reference, that a Committee Chair and Vice-Chair could only be appointed from amongst the elected members of Gwynedd Council.

It was explained that the Joint Committee had decided at its meeting on 22 October 2014:

*“To ask the Monitoring Officer to submit the Joint Committee’s recommendation that had been made at the meeting held on 21 November 2013 to the full Council.”*

It was reported that further legal guidance had been received recently noting that it was a matter for the Cabinet Member – Planning and Regulatory to amend the Joint Committee’s constitution, rather than the full Council. It was noted that a Cabinet Member’s Decision Notice had been prepared in relation to amending the Joint Committee’s constitution to note that a Chair could be elected annually from amongst all the members of the Joint Committee.

Guidance was provided that they could elect a Member of Gwynedd Council as Chair for this meeting or elect a Member of Gwynedd Council in accordance with the current arrangement. It was trusted that the decision would be in force in order to be able to appoint a Chair and Vice-chair under the new arrangement at the next meeting of the Joint Committee.

#### **RESOLVED:**

- (i) To note the information;**
- (ii) To appoint Councillor Gruffydd Williams as Chair for this meeting.**

### 2. WELCOME

The Chairman welcomed Emily Bateman (Gwynedd Archaeological Trust) to her first meeting along with Nia Haf Davies, Planning Manager (Joint Planning Policy Unit – Gwynedd and Anglesey).

- ### 3. APOLOGIES:
- Councillor W. Gareth Roberts, Laura Hughes (National Trust), Arfon Jones (Nefyn Town Council), Alun Price (Natural Resources Wales), Gillian Walker (Botwnnog Community Council) and Dylan Williams (NFU Wales).

#### **4. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST**

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

#### **5. MINUTES**

The Chairman signed the minutes of the previous meeting of this Committee held on 22 October 2014.

#### **6. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

The Llŷn AONB Service Manager noted that a report on establishing a Planning Matters Sub-committee would be submitted at the next meeting of the Joint Committee.

#### **7. A REVIEW OF WELSH DESIGNATED LANDSCAPES**

Submitted – the report of the Llŷn AONB Service Manager noting the latest situation in terms of the Welsh Government's review of Designated Landscapes.

Attention was drawn to a statement by Carl Sargeant, Minister for Natural Resources, which contained information about the conclusions of Part 1 of the review.

It was reported that a letter had been received today which noted that consideration would be given to the management arrangements in Part 2 of the review and there would be an opportunity to contribute to the process.

Members were given an opportunity to ask questions and offer their observations. During the discussion the following main points were noted:

- Concern regarding the cost of rebranding;
- The AONB brand was recognised nationally therefore there would be a different system in Wales;
- The reference to 'beauty' should be kept in the designation's name;
- The name proposed for the 'National Landscapes of Wales' designation gave national status to the designation;
- Priority should be given to the conservation purpose out of the three statutory purposes when they conflicted;
- They needed to know why it was recommended to change the name of the designation;
- It was advantageous for the AONB to be given the same status as the National Parks and a name under a Welsh national umbrella would maximise the area's importance;
- An area should be defined in the name if the designation's name was to be changed.

#### **RESOLVED:**

**(i) to accept the report;**

**(ii) that the Llŷn AONB Service Manager summarises the discussion and sends it to the Panel.**

#### **8. UPDATE ON PROJECTS**

The Llŷn AONB Projects Officer provided an update on the work of the AONB Unit.

It was noted as a correction to the list of Conservation Areas in the report that Aberdaron and Porthdinllaen were also Conservation Areas.

In response to a member's question regarding funding sources for making improvements to the Conservation Areas, it was noted that it was intended to hold discussions with the Community Councils and the relevant stakeholders. It was added that grant applications could be submitted to different sources, for example, the Sustainable Development Fund and CADW.

A member noted that it would be useful to receive information on the Conservation Areas and World Wars projects.

**RESOLVED:**

- (i) to accept the report;**
- (ii) that a summary of the Llŷn Conservation Areas project and the World Wars project should be submitted to the Joint Committee.**

**9. GWYNEDD AND ANGLESEY LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2011-26**

Submitted – the report of the Llŷn AONB Service Manager which highlighted the policies that were relevant to the Area of Beauty in the Draft Deposit Plan of the Gwynedd and Anglesey Local Development Plan 2011-26. It was noted that the members would have an opportunity to agree on the content of the Joint Committee's response to the consultation on the Draft Deposit Plan which would end on 31 March 2015.

The Planning Manager (Gwynedd and Anglesey Joint Planning Policy Unit) set out the background and context to the process. She drew attention to the Welsh Government's guidance that if there was already a national policy in place, there was no need for policies on the particular matters in the Plan. She noted that the Joint Planning Policy Unit encouraged individuals/groups to use the interactive portal or the relevant response form to make comments on the Plan.

In response to a member's question regarding receiving comments in a different format to what the Unit encouraged, the Planning Manager (Gwynedd and Anglesey Joint Planning Policy Unit) noted that every comment would be considered, and if a summary had not been included, the unit would contact the individual/group to agree on a summary which would appear on the interactive portal.

In response to a question, it was noted that a complete hard copy of all the comments would be available, with the personal details taken out.

The Llŷn AONB Service Manager guided the members through the report, drawing attention to the following matters specifically:

- There was no specific policy on maintaining and protecting the AONB, it was felt that an explicit policy was needed;
- There was a specific policy for Special Landscape Areas (AMG1) which protected the setting of the AONB where it bordered with the Special Landscape Area (SLA) of Western Llŷn, but this protection was required for parts of the AONB which did not border with the SLA;
- Policy AMG 3 referred to Coastal Protection, including the Heritage Coast. The Heritage Coast was a local designation which followed the coastal boundary of the AONB to a vast degree in Llŷn, and it was believed that the policy should reflect the designation more positively.
- Policy TWR 3 'Static Caravan and Chalet Sites and Permanent Alternative Camping Accommodation' was supported as it was proposed to refuse new sites and extensions within the AONB and the SLA which was a stronger provision than currently;
- Policy TWR 5 'Touring Caravan, Camping and Temporary Alternative Camping Accommodation' – there was considerable pressure from these types of

developments in the Llŷn area, and it was believed that the policy should be stricter within and nearby the designated area and that consideration should be given to restricting the numbers and addressing the AONB more specifically;

- Policy PCYFF 2 'Design and Place Shaping' – it should refer specifically to the AONB;
- Policy ADN 1 'On-shore Wind Energy' – Concern about criterion 2 specifically because it did not refer to protecting the setting of the AONB. There was also concern about the categories and developments under 5MW being classed as 'Small', because turbines could be considerable in size;
- Policy ADN 2 'Other Renewable Energy Technologies' – it was believed that this policy was too open-ended in respect of proposals outside development boundaries, and there should be a reference to solar farms.

A discussion ensued on the content of the Joint Committee's response, and the following points were highlighted during the discussion:

- Concern with regard to allowing caravan sites to remain open for 12 months, and monitoring arrangements in the current financial climate;
- Follow-up work was required after permitting caravan developments to ensure that the development was adequately screened;
- Farms had had to diversify in order to secure their future;
- There was a need to restrict the number of extensions to caravan sites;
- Better management was needed in terms of permitting caravan developments on land abutting the AONB as they had an impact on the AONB;
- Policy ADN1 'On-shore Wind Energy' changed the current situation of not allowing wind turbines in the AONB by noting that applications for turbines up to 15m in height could be approved. It was essential that the AONB was protected. In response, the Planning Manager (Gwynedd and Anglesey Joint Planning Policy Unit) noted that a review by an external company had concluded that there was capacity within the AONB to cope with small/micro wind turbine developments. She added that policy ADN1 did not grant an automatic right to such developments;
- The Joint Committee's statement in respect of wind turbine developments should be adhered to;
- Caravan developments were not permitted within the AONB but under the policy wind turbine developments were allowed in the AONB which had an adverse effect;
- There was a need to tighten policies in respect of wind turbine developments, taking account of the appeals that had been approved because of a weakness in the local policies;
- The Deposit Plan should give more attention to solar farms;
- They welcomed the fact that wind turbines greater than 15m in height would not be permitted in Pen Llŷn.
- Any application for a wind turbine within the AONB should be refused, and only turbines up to 11m in height should be approved in the rest of Pen Llŷn;
- Noting specific size limitations on wind turbines in different locations was a strong step forward rather than determining applications based on capacity alone;
- The plan should make it clear that there was local commitment to protecting the AONB;
- In respect of TAI5 'Open Market Housing', there should be a connection with the language;
- In terms of housing numbers, the Planning Manager (Gwynedd and Anglesey Joint Planning Policy Unit) noted that the housing distribution reflected the roles of the different settlements;
- In response to comments in relation to the number of houses, the Planning Manager (Gwynedd and Anglesey Joint Planning Policy Unit) noted that policy PS13 noted that it was anticipated that 2,604 houses would be built up to 2018

because of the economic situation. She noted that there was a statutory requirement to undertake monitoring work on the plan annually and to review it every four years, and if the economic situation remained the same it was anticipated that the Plan would have to be revisited and consideration possibly given to the housing growth level and allocation;

- The Development Plan should refer to the AONB Management Plan;
- A request was made for the members to receive a copy of the comments submitted on behalf of the Joint Committee to the Joint Planning Policy Unit.

**RESOLVED:**

**(i) That the Joint Committee's response to the consultation on the Draft Deposit Plan should include a reference to the following:**

- There is no specific policy on maintaining and protecting the AONB, it is felt that an explicit policy is needed;
- There is a specific policy for Special Landscape Areas (AMG1) which protects the setting of the AONB where it borders with the Special Landscape Area (SLA) of Western Llŷn, but this protection is required for parts of the AONB which do not border with the SLA;
- Policy AMG 3 refers to Coastal Protection, including the Heritage Coast. The Heritage Coast is a local designation which follows the coastal boundary of the AONB to a vast degree in Llŷn, and we believe that the policy should reflect the designation more positively.
- Policy TWR 3 'Static Caravan and Chalet Sites and Permanent Alternative Camping Accommodation' is supported as it is proposed to refuse new sites and extensions within the AONB and the SLA which is a stronger provision than currently;
- Policy TWR 5 'Touring Caravan, Camping and Temporary Alternative Camping Accommodation' – there is considerable pressure from these types of developments in the Llŷn area, and it is believed that the policy should be stricter within and nearby the designated area and that consideration should be given to restricting the numbers and addressing the AONB more specifically;
- Policy PCYFF 2 'Design and Place Shaping' – it should refer specifically to the AONB;
- Policy ADN 1 'On-shore Wind Energy' – Concern about criterion 2 specifically because it does not refer to protecting the setting of the AONB. There is also concern about the categories and developments under 5MW being classed as 'Small', because turbines can be considerable in size;
- Policy ADN 2 'Other Renewable Energy Technologies' – we believe that this policy is too open-ended in respect of proposals outside development boundaries, and there should be a reference to solar farms.
- Any application for a wind turbine within the AONB should be refused, and only turbines up to 11m in height should be approved in the rest of Pen Llŷn in accordance with the Joint Committee's statement in respect of wind turbines;
- Concern with regard to allowing caravan sites to remain open for 12 months, and monitoring arrangements in the current financial climate.

**(ii) that the Llŷn AONB Service Manager sends a copy of the response that will be submitted to the Joint Planning Policy Unit to the members.**

The meeting commenced at 4.30pm and concluded at 7.00pm