

LLŶN AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE 11/7/19

Present:

Morgan Jones-Parry (Arfon and Dwyfor Local Access Forum) (Chair)

Members: Councillors Anwen Davies, John Brynmor Hughes and Aled Wyn Jones (Gwynedd Council) and also Noel Davey (Campaign for the Protection of Rural Wales), John Gosling (Abersoch and Llŷn Tourism Partnership), Jina Gwyrfaï (Llanaelhaearn Community Council), T. Victor Jones (Llanbedrog Community Council), Siân Parri (Tudweiliog Community Council), Glyn Roberts (Botwnnog Community Council) and Gruffydd Williams (Nefyn Town Council).

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

Apologies: Councillors Gareth Williams and Angela Russell (Gwynedd Council Rural Champion) together with Eirian Allport (Clynnog Fawr Community Council), Alun Price (Natural Resources Wales) and Gillian Walker (Cyfeillion Llŷn).

1. CHAIR

A request was made for nominations for a Chair for the year 2019-20. Members noted their wish to defer electing a Chair, until the next meeting, as the Vice-chair was not present.

RESOLVED to elect Morgan Jones-Parry as Chairman for this meeting.

2. VICE-CHAIR

RESOLVED to defer the item until the next meeting.

3. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

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

4. URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items.

5. MINUTES

The Chair signed the minutes of the previous meeting of this Joint Committee, that took place on 20 November 2018, as a true record.

A member asked in the context of the Joint Committee's decision at the previous meeting, to send a letter to the Chief Executive requesting that the Council obtains legal opinion from an independent barrister, who was an expert in the field, on the developments at Plas Pistyll and Fferm Pistyll. In response, the Member Support Officer noted that a response had been received from the Council's Legal Service stating that nothing had become evident thus far that would need such support.

6. NORTH WALES DARK SKIES PROJECT

It was explained that in north Wales the three AONBs and the National Park were working jointly on a Dark Skies Project and a project officer had been appointed to lead the work.

The Llŷn AONB Service Officer noted that a message had been received from Dani Robertson, who was to give a presentation on the project, that unfortunately she was in a traffic jam as a result of an accident on Britannia Bridge.

7. LLŶN AONB SERVICE EVENTS PROGRAMME

The Llŷn AONB Projects Officer submitted a report on the AONB Service events programme. Further details were given on the following events and members were encouraged to share the information:

- Rural Skills Training
- Guided Walks
- Local History Exhibition
- Photography Competition
- Session Raising Awareness about Non-native Invasive Plants
- Dark Sky Day

A member noted, in the context of the Session Raising Awareness about Non-native Invasive Plants, that Himalayan Balsam was spreading in habitats from Pistyll to Garn Boduan. It was added that Anglesey Council's AONB Service had got to grips with the problem on Anglesey. In response, the Llŷn AONB Service Officer noted that he would contact the AONB Officer at Anglesey Council to get further information.

In response to an enquiry from a member, the Llŷn AONB Service Officer noted that Natural Resources Wales recognised the problem regarding invasive plants. It was explained that the AONB Service was working with Natural Resources Wales to dispose of Giant Hogweed in afon Soch.

A member enquired if the weed killer 'Roundup' would be used to treat invasive plants, noting his concern regarding its use. In response, the Llŷn AONB Service Officer noted that matters had been discussed in the news regarding the impact of using weed killers on health. An assurance was given that only limited use would be made of weed killer in a specific area by experienced contractors.

RESOLVED to accept the information.

8. PROJECTS IN LLŶN AONB

The Llŷn AONB Projects Officer submitted her report on the work of the AONB Service. An update was given on the following projects:

- Marine Refuse
- Llŷn Windmills
- Non-native Invasive Plants
- Access Improvement
- Improving the Environment
- Llwybr y Morwyr (Seamans path)

Members were given an opportunity to make observations and ask questions, the following main points were noted by members:

- That Llanengan Litter Pickers went around the area's beaches to collect refuse. The work made a difference and looked after the area;
- Following storms micro plastics had appeared on beaches;
- In which locations would the work of disposing the Giant Hogweed in afon Soch be undertaken?
- In terms of restoration of a stone wall on the road from the village of Llithfaen towards Cae'r Nant housing, would it be possible to make improvements to the road?
- That it was difficult to gain access up to Gyrn Goch;
- That someone looked after the zig-zag steps from Tyddyn Hywel Quarry. Can the steps be promoted?
- That Llwybr y Morwyr path between Nefyn and Llanbedrog/Abersoch was especially good. There was a need for more signs and some sections required attention, including:
 - the path from Madryn to the old dump, with unruly bracken growing;
 - each side of the boardwalk between Cors Ceirch and Tyncoed, the Council had completed the work on the path however it needed to be re-done as cattle had damaged it;
 - the path from Bryncynan;
 - the boardwalks at Y Fach at Abersoch.
- The remainder of the funding for the Llwybr y Morwyr path would be spent on diverting the path near Plas Glyn y Weddw. There was funding left as it was not possible to complete the tarmac work on the cliffs to the Cliffs Hotel, as it was an area of a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI);
- That Llwybr y Morwyr path was excellent and was important in terms of linking the paths;
- That attention needed to be given to the path near Foel Fawr, Llamwyr Llŷn, running club often ran on this path;
- What was the latest regarding the proposed path from Pwllheli to Garnguwch?
- The landowner of one field from the road in Madryn was willing to create a public footpath if the Council would erect a fence around the field. Would it be possible to carry on with discussions with the landowner?

In response to the above observations, the officers noted that:

- The Llanengan Litter Pickers were undertaking commendable work and they had received a financial contribution from the Sustainable Development Fund to buy equipment;
- There was an arrangement between Llanengan Litter Pickers and the Maritime Service for collecting refuse bags following their clean-up campaigns. Such campaigns were welcomed and others are encouraged to ensure that such an arrangement is in place;
- Work on disposing Giant Hogweed will be undertaken at Saithbont and Llandegwnig. The work would continue this year as well as next year;
- It was hoped that a passing area could be created when undertaking the work to restore the stone wall near the road from the village of Llithfaen towards Cae'r Nant housing. Ymgynghoriaeth Gwynedd were responsible for the project and it was hoped that the work would be undertaken during September and October;
- That the Coastal Path Project Officer was working with Rhodwyr Llŷn regarding access down to Gyrn Goch;
- The zig-zag steps were a path for workers to Tyddyn Hywel Quarry, the need to promote this was noted;

- That additional work in the context of Llwybr y Morwyr path had been identified and the work will be undertaken in the next few months. Following this the Path would be marketed by the Council;
- That the Senior Rights of Way Officer (Dwyfor) had been to look at the site near Foel Fawr;
- Priority would be given to completing the work on Llwybr y Morwyr path before moving on to act regarding the proposal to create a path from Pwllheli to Llithfaen;
- It was proposed to proceed with the public footpath in the Madryn area.

RESOLVED to accept the information.

9. UPDATE ON 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 the sum in the Fund at the beginning of the 2018/19 financial year and all funds had been distributed.

It was noted that £55,000 was the sum in the Fund at the beginning of the current financial year and all of this had already been earmarked. Attention was drawn to a summary of the projects that had received a contribution from the Fund.

It was reported that no confirmation had been received about the continuation of the Fund beyond 2019/20.

It was noted that Thom Hadfield and Geraint Evans from Welsh Government had visited the AONB Service in May, they had also visited Hafod Ceiri, Llŷn Maritime Museum, O Ddrws i Ddrws, Tafarn yr Heliwr and Plas Carmel. It was emphasised that the visit was an important event for the AONB Service and gave an opportunity to convey a strong message that the Fund really did make a difference to Llŷn communities.

A member noted his congratulations on the successful visit and that there were several successful projects to be shown.

A member enquired whether it would be possible to get a badge to be exhibited to recognise the Fund's contribution towards projects in Nefyn. In response, the Llŷn AONB Projects Officer stated that she had undertaken research regarding the best way to show the Fund's contribution, and it was likely that stickers would be produced. She noted that she would send some to the member.

RESOLVED to accept the information.

10. NATIONAL ISSUES

The Llŷn AONB Service Officer submitted the report, which included further information about the national situation in relation to Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty in Wales.

He noted that further to the update given at the previous meeting on 20 November 2018, at the end of 2018 there had been a major change in terms of Welsh Government officers who worked on AONB and Park issues (Land, Nature and Forestry Division). It was added that a new team of officers were in place and a meeting took place in May 2019 to introduce everyone and have a discussion on the proposals submitted by the AONB Partnerships, Natural Resources Wales and the National Association. It was noted that the meeting was an initial but constructive meeting.

It was explained that as an initial step, Welsh Government had prepared and circulated a paper with proposals to establish a National Welsh Landscape Partnership. He added that the aim of this establishment would be to improve collaboration, sharing information and good practice and create links between the landscapes and other sectors.

It was highlighted that the Association of AONBs (that operated in Wales, England and Northern Ireland) had appointed a Wales Development Manager. It was noted that the purpose of the post was to assist AONB Partnerships to implement the Welsh Government's Valued and Resilient priorities. It was noted that Ian Rappel, who used to work for the Gwent Wildlife Trust, had been appointed to this post (for a period of two years).

A member noted that if the same status was given to the AONB as the National Parks, then it had to be ensured that there were financial resources to deliver this.

In response to an enquiry from a member, the Llŷn AONB Service Officer noted that the AONB Management Plan had been adopted and he would check the version on the website. In response to a further question, it was noted that a paper copy of the document could be placed in the Libraries at Nefyn and Pwllheli, as well as Siop Gwynedd at the Council Offices in Pwllheli.

RESOLVED to accept the information.

The meeting commenced at 4.35pm and concluded at 5.30pm.

CHAIR