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## LLŶN AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE 6/9/17

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**Present:** T. Victor Jones (Llanbedrog Community Council) (Chair)

**Members:** Councillor Gareth Williams (Gwynedd Council), Eirian Allport (Clynnog Fawr Community Council), Noel Davey (Campaign for the Protection of Rural Wales), Brett Garner (Llŷn Anglers Association), John Gosling (Abersoch and Llŷn Tourism Partneriaeth), Laura Hughes (National Trust), Morgan Jones-Parry (Arfon and Dwyfor Access Forum), Sian Parri (Tudweiliog Community Council), Sianelen Fleming (Pistyll Community Council), Alun Price (Natural Resources Wales), Hedd Rhys (NFU Cymru) and Gruffydd Williams (Nefyn Town Council).

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

**Apologies:** Councillors Anwen Davies, Simon Glyn and John Brynmor Hughes (Gwynedd Council), along with Jina Gwyrfai (Llanaelhaearn Community Council), Gillian Walker (Cyfeillion Llŷn) and Wenda Williams (Aberdaron Community Council).

The Llŷn AONB Service Manager welcomed the members to the meeting. He noted that the Llŷn Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty had been established in 1957 and had given protected status to the area. He elaborated upon the work of the AONB Unit.

Everyone introduced themselves.

### 1. CHAIR

A request was made for nominations for Chair for the 2017-18 year. Members noted their wish for the current Chair to continue. It was explained that a Chair's term was only one year, therefore, it was not possible to re-elect.

Members noted their wish to wait until the next meeting to elect a Chair in order to give the other members not in attendance an opportunity.

**RESOLVED to elect T. Victor Jones as Chair for this meeting.**

The Chair took the opportunity to thank the former members for their contribution to the Joint Committee and he welcomed the new members who were attending their first meeting.

### 2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

Councillor Gruffydd Williams (Nefyn Town Council) declared a personal interest in item 8 on the agenda as he was a member of Gwynedd Council's Planning Committee. The Member was of the opinion that it was a prejudicial interest, and he withdrew from the room during the discussion on the item.

### 3. MINUTES

The Chairman signed the minutes of the previous meeting of this Committee held on 5 April, 2017 as a true record.

The Llŷn AONB Service Manager reported that it had not been possible to act on the request of the Joint Committee to the 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". Consequently, he explained that Gwynedd Council's members on the Joint Committee had been rotated.

A member enquired about the Landscapes of the Future of Wales review. In response, the Llŷn AONB Service Manager noted that the process was continuing and that a report would be submitted at the next meeting to provide members with an update on the review.

#### **4. AONB MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Submitted – the report of the Llŷn AONB Service Manager presenting the amended draft AONB Management Plan for the attention of the Joint Committee in accordance with the decision made at the previous meeting to discuss it before holding a public consultation.

It was explained that chapters Part 1 and 2 of the plan had appeared before the Joint Committee for observations over a number of meetings. The complete amended plan before the joint committee included the Action Plan, namely the actions and detailed projects intended to be delivered over the coming years.

The Joint Committee was asked to consider the draft amended Management Plan, suggest changes or improvements and accept the draft amended plan as the basis for public consultation.

It was noted that following the public consultation the intention was to return to the Joint Committee with details of the responses received and recommendations to change the Plan.

Members were given the opportunity to make observations. individual members noted the following main points:

- The need to update information in the Plan;
- A member enquired about the lifespan of the Plan, noting that it was a plan for the period from 2015 to 2020; but that it would not be adopted until 2017;
- Including photographs and graphs in the Plan would liven it up and make it easier to read;
- In terms of tourism figures, the 2011 STEAM figures had been included but the 2015 figures were available. Attention had been drawn at the previous meeting to the fact that the figures were misleading as such a detailed analysis could not be obtained;
- That consideration should be given to making more reference to the Coast Path; it attracted more people to the area and referring to the path would place pressure on the need to invest in other paths, e.g. circular paths;
- That the references made in the Plan to the Joint Local Development Plan (JLDP) should be increased and that reference should be made to Policy AMG1 which referred to the AONB Management Plan;
- Reference was made to a number of studies in the Plan, would it be possible to include a bibliography?
- Botwnnog had not been included on the AONB map;
- It should be noted when wind turbines were discussed that the JLDP placed a 15 metre height restriction and a summary should be included of the number of wind turbines that had been granted planning permission;
- In terms of invasive plants, had Himalayan Balsam (Jumping Jack) been identified?
- Concern about the cumulative impact of demolishing and building a new house as such planning applications were submitted often. Would it be possible for the

Plan to refer to the need to protect houses from being demolished in places such as Abersoch?

- Concern about the cumulative impact of developments and the need to discuss with caravan park owners the way forward in the context of screening and being in-keeping with the area before they ruined the draw that attracted visitors to the area;
- That the Rollback Rights as exist in England should be explored in the context of coast paths falling into the sea - the current process in Wales was long-winded and an all-important resource was being lost. Need to pressurise Welsh Government;
- There was a need to be careful in respect of extending Welsh Government's rights in enforcement on coastal land because of the impact on landowners, including the implications of the responsibilities of accountability and the impact of dogs disturbing stock;
- In the context of policy CP 6 "Promote new affordable homes to meet proven local need, as long as schemes, designs and materials are in-keeping with the AONB's environment", the Council should ensure that the income received as a result of the tax premium on second homes in the area stays in Pen Llŷn to provide affordable housing and provide assistance to young people to buy a house in the area.

In response to the above, the officers noted:

- The content would be updated before the draft plan was released for public consultation;
- That Welsh Government was eager for AONB plans to run in parallel but enquiries would be made about the lifespan of the plan;
- Photographs would be added to the Plan to make it a lighter read and possibly there would be an opportunity to draw-up a concise and easier to read document;
- After receiving observations at the previous meeting, a few changes had been made in terms of tourism figures. The warning about the figures was noted and the information would be updated with the 2015 figures;
- A bibliography would be included;
- That potential projects had been included in the action plan under BP 6 "Target indigenous and non-indigenous invasive species and raise awareness and methods of treatment and eradication". There was a responsibility on landowners to prevent them from spreading; Himalayan Balsam was not included in the Weeds Act 1959;
- That the chapter "Historic Environment" dealt with the need to maintain and protect historic buildings and protect the design and use of suitable materials. Planning permissions were a matter for the Planning Service;
- That the need to carry out research in terms of the cumulative impact of developments could be included in the action plan;
- An action could be noted in the action plan in order to investigate 'Rollback Rights' and contact Welsh Government. Welsh Government was currently undertaking a consultation where reference was made to the coast and extending open land to the coast. As part of the Council's response to the consultation, it was noted that England's experience in the field should be looked at;
- The Joint Committee's request, that the Council use the income received as a result of the tax premium on second homes in the area should be kept in Pen Llŷn to provide affordable housing and assistance for young people to buy a house in the area, would be noted as an action.

The representative of the Campaign for the Protection of Rural Wales noted that he had further observations on the Management Plan and that he would forward them to the Llŷn AONB Service Manager. In response, the Llŷn AONB Service Manager noted that

he would appreciate receiving further observations and he thanked the National Trust Representative for the observations already received.

**RESOLVED:**

- (i) that the Llŷn AONB Service Manager incorporates the observations of members and further observations of the Campaign for the Protection of Rural Wales Representative in the draft amended Management Plan;**
- (ii) to accept the draft amended Plan as a basis for the public consultation.**

**5. PLANNING APPLICATION - THE SHANTY, ABERSOCH**

The Llŷn AONB Service Manager noted that this report was being submitted before the Joint Committee at the request of the Chair. It was explained that the planning application for 'The Shanty, Abersoch' (Application no. C17/0159/39/LL) was an application to demolish a house and build a new house in the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

He reported that the AONB Service, in accordance with a service agreement, had submitted observations on the application to the Planning Service. Attention was drawn to the following matters in terms of considering the likely impact on the AONB:

- The site's location on the coast in the AONB.
- The visibility of the site from nearby public viewpoints.
- That there were buildings on the site at present (unlisted)
- The other buildings nearby (size, design, materials)
- The size and design of the proposed new building
- The materials proposed
- Potential impact on views from the Coastal Path above the site

He noted that the planning application had been discussed at a meeting of the Planning Committee on 3 July 2017 where it had been resolved to defer a decision in order to carry out a site visit. Attention was drawn to the fact that the application would be discussed by the Planning Committee on 25 September 2017 following a site visit.

Members were given the opportunity to make observations, individual members noted the following main points:

- The design was not in-keeping historically;
- The house on the site should be protected by moving it to another location due to its importance as a piece of recent history from the 1950s;
- The proposed house would be more visible from the sea rather than from the Coastal Path;
- Concern about the cumulative effect of such developments on the area;
- The proposed house would be approximately twice the footprint of the existing house; therefore, it would be an over-development of a prominent site and would have a visual impact. Abersoch had lost its character due to planning applications that had been granted over the years;
- Not in favour or against the proposal. The Council did not have the money to defend planning appeals and developments brought work to local people. The need to consider the impact of planning permissions to demolish and build a house in the area;
- The proposal was contrary to planning policies as the proposed house did not follow the same footprint;
- That a house similar to the proposed house was located near the site;
- Approving the application would set a precedent and there was a duty on the Joint Committee to object the application.

**RESOLVED** to submit the following observations for the attention of the Planning Service in relation to the planning application of 'The Shanty, Abersoch' (application no. C17/0159/39/LL):

- **That the Llŷn AONB Joint Advisory Committee objected to the application on the following grounds:**
  - **The proposal would be an over-development of this prominent site with a substantially larger foot print than the present dwelling.**
  - **The development would be intrusive.**
- **That the Joint Advisory Committee was concerned about the cumulative impact of such developments on the AONB.**

## **6. ELECTING NEW MEMBERS TO THE GRANTS PANEL**

Submitted – the report of the Llŷn AONB Projects Officer outlining the background of the Sustainable Development Fund, namely a Welsh Government grant source to the five AONBs in Wales to be allocated to projects with a sustainable nuance in their communities.

She explained that applications from the Fund were assessed according to core environmental, social, economic and cultural criteria.

She noted that the total Fund for this year was £55,000 to each area, and in relation to the Llŷn AONB, there was £32,806 left in the Fund.

She explained that the AONB Unit and the Grants Panel was responsible for the administration of the Llŷn area Fund. She noted that the Grants Panel dealt with decisions on grant applications in excess of £3,000.

The Officer elaborated on the role of the Grants Panel, and explained that new members needed to be elected for the next five years following the elections in May 2017.

In response to a question from a member regarding information about the money already allocated, the Llŷn AONB Projects Officer provided an outline of the projects that had been allocated money from the Fund this year and she noted that she would send the information to the members of the Grants Panel.

### **RESOLVED:**

- (i) To accept the report.**
- (ii) To elect the following members to serve on the Sustainable Development Fund Grants Panel for the next 5 years:**  
**Councillor Gareth Williams, Eirian Allport, Noel Davey, John Gosling, T. Victor Jones, Morgan Jones-Parry, Sian Parri and Gruffydd Williams.**

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

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**CHAIR**