

MEETING	Llŷn AONB Joint Advisory Committee
DATE	July 11 th 2019
TITLE	National issues.
PURPOSE	Inform members
AUTHOR	Llŷn AONB Officer
ACTION	None

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This report provides further information regarding the national situation in relation to the Welsh Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

2.0 THE MINISTER

2.1 In November 2017 Hannah Blythyn AS was appointed as Minister for the Environment and was given the responsibility for Wales' Designated Areas. Although there have been some governmental changes since then Hannah Blythyn is still responsible for the National Parks and AONBs.

3.0 VALUED AND RESILIENT

3.1 In July 2018, the Minister announced a statement titled “**Valued and Resilient – The Welsh Government’s Priorities for Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and National Parks**”. A copy of the full statement can be found on the Welsh Government’s website.

3.2 It is noted that the aim of the statement is to bring the review process to an end and set the Welsh Government’s priorities for the AONBs and National Parks. The statement declares **four goals** for the designated landscapes namely:

- That they are **Valued Places**
- That they contain **Resilient Environments**
- That they support **Resilient Communities**
- That the AONB Partnerships and National Park Authorities adopt **Resilient Ways of Working**.

3.3 Also, 10 priority themes were set. The requirements and expectations of the Designated Landscapes in the declaration are broad, varied and significant. They are expected to be implemented on many different levels for the benefit of these areas and beyond. Also, the declaration mentions establishing a performance review system and a performance management arrangement to measure the effect of the designation and efficiency in terms of the administration.

- 3.4 There is clearly a great difference between the AONB Partnerships and the Park Authorities and therefore the abilities of these organisations to realise these requirements. There is a brief reference to this in the document and is it noted that there are differences in terms of **status, profile and resources**.

4.0 PARITY WITH THE NATIONAL PARKS

- 4.1 As reported in the previous meeting the AONB Partnerships, Natural Resources Wales and the National Association for AONBs worked together to prepare a paper with proposals in terms of gaining more equality between the AONBs and National Parks. The response presents 12 proposals that would increase equality between the AONBs and Parks in terms of **status, profile and resources**.
- 4.2 Following on from this a meeting with the Minister and a Welsh Government officer was held in Cardiff in November 2018.

5.0 WELSH GOVERNMENT OFFICERS

- 5.1 Towards the end of 2018 there were changes in Welsh Government staff dealing with matters associated with National Parks and AONBs (Dept of Land, Nature and Forestry). By now there is a new team of staff in place.
- 5.2 A meeting with the new staff team was held in May 2019 where introductions were made and the proposals which had been submitted were discussed.
- 5.3 As an initial step Welsh Government has prepared and circulated a paper associated with setting up a Wales National Landscapes Partnership. The aim of this institution would be to improve partnership working, exchange information and best practice and create links with other sectors.

6.0 WALES DEVELOPMENT MANAGER - NAAONB

- 6.1 Another development on the national level is the appointment of a Wales Development Manager by the National Association of AONBs (which operates in Wales, England and Northern Ireland). The purpose of the post is to support AONB Partnerships in implementing the priorities set out in Valued and Resilient.
- 6.2 The person appointed to this 2 year role is Ian Rappel who previously worked for the Gwent Wildlife Trust.

7.0 RECOMENDATION

- 7.1 **To accept the information.**