



City and County of Swansea

Notice of Meeting

You are invited to attend a Meeting of the

Gower AONB Advisory Group

At: Multi-Location Meeting - Gloucester Room, Guildhall / MS Teams
On: Monday, 26 June 2023
Time: 6.30 pm
Chair: Councillor Paul Lloyd

Membership:

Councillors: P R Hood-Williams, L James, S E Keeton, N L Matthews and A H Stevens

Steering Group Members: Howard Evans, Stephen Heard, Carrie Townsend Jones, Alan Kearsley-Evans, Peter Lanfear, Philip Ogleby, Hamish Osborn, Barbara Parry, Clive Scott, Anthony Thomas and Paul Tucker

Agenda

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1 Apologies for Absence.	
2 Election of Vice-Chair for the 2023-2024 Municipal year.	
3 Declarations of Interest. www.swansea.gov.uk/disclosuresofinterests	
4 Minutes. To approve & sign the Minutes of the previous meeting(s) as a correct record.	1 - 4
5 Gower AONB Team Report. (Mike Scott)	5 - 6
6 Road and Village Signage. (Howard Evans - Gower Society) (Verbal)	
7 Sustainable Development Fund - Financial Summary. (For Information) (Mike Scott)	7

Next Meeting: Monday, 25 September 2023 at 6.30 pm

Huw Evans

Huw Evans
Head of Democratic Services
19 June 2023

Contact: Democratic Services: - 636923

Agenda Item 4



City and County of Swansea

Minutes of the **Gower AONB Advisory Group**

Multi-Location Meeting - Gloucester Room, Guildhall / MS

Teams

Wednesday, 15 February 2023 at 6.15 pm

Present: Councillor P Lloyd (Chair) Presided

Councillors

P R Hood-Williams L James

Stakeholder Members

Howard Evans	Carrie Townsend Jones	Peter Lanfear
Hamish Osborn	Barbara Parry	Clive Scott
Anthony Thomas	Paul Tucker	

Officer(s)

Paul Meller	Natural Environment Section Manager
Jeremy Parkhouse	Democratic Services Officer
Mike Scott	Gower AONB Officer

Apologies for Absence

Councillors: S E Keeton, N L Matthews and A H Stevens

Steering Group Members: Stephen Heard, Alan Kearsley-Evans and Philip Ogleby

5 Election of Vice-Chair for the remainder of the 2022-2023 Municipal year.

Resolved that Barbara Parry be elected Vice-Chair of the Advisory Group for the remainder of the 2022-23 Municipal year.

6 Declarations of Interest.

In accordance with the Code of Conduct adopted by the City and County of Swansea, no interests were declared.

7 To approve & sign the Minutes of the previous meeting(s) as a correct record.

Resolved that the Minutes of the Gower AONB Advisory Group Meeting held on 31 January 2023 be approved and signed as a correct record.

8 Terms of Reference.

The Gower AONB Advisory Group Terms of Reference were presented 'for information'.

9 Sustainable Development Fund - Appointment of Panels.

Mike Scott, Gower AONB Officer presented a report which sought the appointment of membership to the Sustainable Development Fund (SDF) Panel and Appeals Panel.

It was explained that Welsh Government provided annual funding for the SDF grant scheme (currently £100,000 per year). The scheme is managed locally by the Gower AONB Team, with a grants panel and an appeals panel to consider and approve grant applications.

The SDF Panel and the SDF Appeals Panel, are appointed by the Gower AONB Advisory Group, each with a membership of eight, as set out in the Terms of Reference document.

Noted comments of Carrie Townsend Jones in relation to membership of the Sustainable Development Fund Panel. It was explained that Councillors were appointed at the Annual Meeting of Council and any changes to their membership had to be agreed by Council.

Resolved that: -

1) The following be appointed to the Sustainable Development Fund Panel: -

- Councillor Paul Lloyd (Chair)
- Councillor Andrew Stevens
- Councillor Lynda James
- Councillor Sara Keeton
- David Cole
- John France
- Cari Jones
- Francis Morgan

2) The following be appointed to the Sustainable Development Fund Appeals Panel:

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- Barbara Parry (Chair)
- Councillor David Hopkins
- Councillor Paxton Hood-Williams
- Hamish Osborn
- Peter Lanfear
- Clive Scott
- Anthony Thomas
- Judith Doyle

10 Sustainable Development Fund - Financial Summary.

Mike Scott, Gower AONB Officer presented the Sustainable Development Fund (SDF) Panel Financial Summary report 'for information'.

It was outlined that Welsh Government had confirmed the SDF budget for 2022/23 at £100,000.

To date, 11 projects had been supported, with £54,378 committed. A further 8 applications were in progress, requesting £45,622.

If these were approved, this would fully commit the funds for 2022/23.

It was added that the Committed Funds figure included the CCS Management Fee of £10,000.

Total Funds available	£100,000
Committed Funds	£54,378
Uncommitted Funds	£45,622
Applications in progress	£45,622

A detailed report would be produced after April and circulated to Advisory Group members, highlighting the work done by the projects supported.

The SDF budget for 2023/24 had been confirmed as £100,000 by Welsh Government.

A new SDF Grants Panel had been appointed and would meet on 27 February 2023.

11 Gower AONB Work Programme Update.

Paul Meller, Natural Environment Manager presented a report which summarised the work of the Gower AONB team since the last Steering Group meeting in March 2022.

It was added that more detailed update reports would follow in due course as project work progressed. It was anticipated that sub groups of the Advisory Group would be established to work with the Gower AONB Team to help progress these and other projects / AONB Management Plan Actions as appropriate.

The report provided details on the following areas: -

- New Terms of Reference for the AONB Advisory Group.
- Gower AONB Management Plan.
- Mapping a Local Ecosystem Resilience Baseline for Swansea.
- Carbon Baseline Assessment of Gower (working towards Net Zero).
- Dark Sky Gower.
- Landscapes Wales Seminar at Down to Earth, Cilibion, Gower 9/10, March 2023.
- Clyne Valley Country Park.
- Port Eynon Waterfront development.
- Port Eynon Sand Dunes - Geomorphological Assessment and Management Options Appraisal.
- Archaeology and Scheduled Monuments Works (various).

- Other Ongoing Project work – Gower Places of Worship / Fairwood Common / Cefn Bryn / Gower Drystone Walling Project.
- Grant Funding Update.

Mike Scott, Gower AONB Officer added that the Advisory Group would be provided with regular updates in between meetings.

The Steering Group requested that future meetings commence at 6.30pm.

Resolved that the contents of the report be noted.

The meeting ended at 7.02 pm

Chair

Agenda Item 5



Report of the Natural Environment Manager

Gower AONB Advisory Group – 26 June 2023

Gower AONB Team Report

Gower AONB team members will provide verbal reports on the following:

- 1) **Gower Show** – Gower AONB Partnership will have a marquee as usual, hosting a number of partners.
- 2) **Gower Dark Sky Community Application** – a draft application for “Dark Sky Community” status was submitted in January, and we are awaiting a response from the International Dark Sky committee. The application has been acknowledged, and a newly appointed project officer has been in touch.
- 3) **Gower Dark Sky – Retro Fit Projects** – Ty Rhossili has been surveyed and lighting upgraded to meet the requirements of the building’s use as well as adhering to dark sky standards. The Wales-wide collaborative project is underway with lighting consultants Ridge having surveyed Gower AONB and a report with recommendations for lighting improvements and estimated costings will be provided in the coming months.
- 4) **Port Eynon Bay Dunes** – work is being planned for September. No comments have been received from the Community Councils.
- 5) **Fairwood Common** – Work to install a new water connection at Moor lakes was completed in March 2023, providing drinking water for stock grazing the Common. Dormouse surveys are being undertaken to ascertain their presence in suitable habitat on the Common.
- 6) **Pennard Castle** – Interpretation panels were installed in 2022 & 2023. Stage 1 of the ivy removal works are underway – rare plant seed has been collected and grown on at Celtic Wildflower Nurseries, and a Scheduled Monument Consent application has been made. A contractor is lined up to undertake investigative works so that a tender document for Stage 2 of the works (ivy removal & some restoration work) can be drawn up for bidding contractors.
- 7) **Gower Places of Worship** – Initial surveys of twelve churches completed in 2022. Have made a start on implementation of some recommendations – new tower doors at Oxwich and Llanrhidian to allow continued access by roosting bats. Specialist surveys for bats and swift boxes are underway for several churches.

8) Clyne Valley Country Park – Following a site visit with Corporate Building Services, stabilisation work will start this autumn on the Ivy Tower. Work is also being planned on the main buildings of the Clyne Woods Arsenic Works, following an environmental survey. A planning application has been submitted for replacement signage at Blackpill. Work to make the buildings at New Mill Farm safe is underway.

Biodiversity interpretation and a nature trail installed 2022. A second round of Japanese knotweed treatment scheduled for autumn 2023. Working with NRW on a survey of Clyne River to determine what restoration and flood mitigation measures can be implemented with the help of CVCP.

9) Parkmill Japanese Knotweed – A third year of treatment is scheduled for autumn 2023. A survey in spring 2024 will determine the need for any further treatment.

10) SDF Panel – dates of the grant panel have been confirmed for 2023/24 (30th June, 22nd September, 8th December, 15th March 2024).

11) AONB Advisory Group – dates for the Advisory Group have been confirmed for 2023/24 (26th June, 25th September, 26th February 2024).

12) NAAONB Rebrand – the National Association of AONBs is discussing a significant rebrand to address some of the issues raised in the Marsden Report – mainly around inclusion and working with under-represented communities, better communications, providing a more unified image, seeking to achieve a higher profile, and greater recognition of their contribution to nature recovery and climate change agendas.

13) AONB Team Staffing – an “AONB Nature and Communities Officer” post is being advertised, which will provide a third member of staff within the AONB team, enabling more project work to be carried out. Work on restructuring the Natural Environment Section is continuing.

Agenda Item 7



Report of the Gower AONB Officer

Gower AONB Advisory Group – 26 June 2023

Sustainable Development Fund – Financial Report

For Information

Sustainable Development Fund – Financial Summary

1. Final Figures for 2022/23

The SDF budget for 2022/23 was £100,000, which was fully spent. A total of 19 projects were supported

The Committed Funds figure includes the CCS Management Fee of £10,000.

Total Funds available	£100,000
Committed Funds	£100,000
Uncommitted Funds	£0
Applications in progress	£0

A detailed report will be produced over the summer, and circulated to Steering Group members, highlighting the work done by the projects we have supported.

2. Interim Figures for 2023/24

The SDF budget of £100,000 for 2023/24 has been confirmed by Welsh Government. So far 14 projects have funding committed, with a further 4 applications in progress at present.

The Committed Funds figure includes the CCS Management Fee of £10,000.

Total Funds available	£100,000
Committed Funds	£53,173
Uncommitted Funds	£46,827
Applications in progress	£30,616

The next meeting of the SDF grants panel is on 30th June 2023.

Mike Scott,
16th June 2023