

CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA

MINUTES OF THE GOWER AONB PARTNERSHIP STEERING GROUP

HELD AT PENCLAWDD COMMUNITY CENTRE, PENCLAWDD ON
MONDAY, 19 DECEMBER 2016 AT 7.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor P Lloyd (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

M C Child
K E Marsh

Councillor(s)

J E C Harris

Councillor(s)

L James

Representing Organisations:

R Button	Tourism Swansea Bay
S Heard	Gower Riding Club/Port Eynon Community Council
S Hill	GGAT
Councillor P R Hood-Williams	Upper Killay Community Council
R Cooper	Llanrhidian Higher Community Council
G Howe	Gower Society
J Davies	Bay Trans
H Osborn	Natural Resources Wales
A Woodman	Resident

Officer(s)

Paul Meller	Strategic Planning & Natural Environment Manager
Chris Lindley	Gower AONB Team Leader
Jeremy Parkhouse	Democratic Services Officer

ALSO PRESENT:

B Parry	Walking Forum
Stephen Crocker	Tourism Swansea Bay
Cathy Lewis	Tourism Swansea Bay

Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s): J P Curtice
Independent Member(s): D Vine and R Wright

22 **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS.**

The Chair welcomed all present to Penclawdd Community Centre and commenced proceedings.

23 **DISCLOSURES OF PERSONAL AND PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS.**

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

24 **MINUTES.**

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Gower AONB Partnership Annual Meeting held on 19 September 2016 be accepted as a correct record.

25 **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES.**

Toilet Provision and Cleanliness on Gower

Rod Cooper queried progress in respect of the issues raised at the previous meeting, particularly at Rhossili and whether the issue had been highlighted to the relevant Cabinet Member(s).

Councillor M C Child, Cabinet Member for Wellbeing and Healthy City stated that the future ownership and management of the toilets at Rhossili were being discussed with the National Trust.

The Group raised issues in relation to general toilet provision on Gower, particularly the lack of staff resources to effectively manage Council run toilets, the impact poor cleanliness and provision of toilets had upon tourism and the need to improve cleanliness in order for the public to respect the service provided.

RESOLVED that Cabinet Member for Wellbeing and Healthy City provide an update to members on this issue.

Ash Die-Back

Chris Lindley, Gower AONB Team Leader informed the meeting that an information note regarding the disease in Swansea was available on the Council website and details would be circulated to Community Town Councils.

Broadband / Mobile Phone Reception on Gower

The Gower AONB Team Leader updated the meeting regarding the proposed mobile mast at Horton that was being progressed by the UK Governments agents Arqiva under the Mobile Infrastructure Project (MIP). This project finished in March 2016, so development work on the mast had not been completed. He stated that the UK Government had accepted that the MIP had not succeeded in the manner it had hoped. However, he highlighted the enhanced obligations on mobile companies to provide greater coverage over land mass that are being introduced in the Digital Economy Bill which should improve reception in rural areas.

26 **APPROVAL OF AONB MANAGEMENT PLAN.**

The Gower AONB Team Leader presented a report which sought approval of the Gower AONB Management Plan.

It was outlined that the Gower AONB Management Plan (2016) had been produced by the AONB Team on behalf of the Gower AONB Partnership. Once adopted by the Council under the Local Development Plan (LDP), it would form Supplementary

Planning Guidance (SPG) and would be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications within and affecting the AONB. A copy of the Management Plan was provided in the Appendix to the report.

It was added that the first statutory Gower AONB Management Plan was adopted by the Council and published in 2006. The plan was the result of wide-ranging consultation, with involvement from stakeholders over more than two years in meetings, focus groups, site visits, presentations and consultations.

The first review of the Management Plan was initiated in 2010, but had been protracted for a number of reasons. Production of the final Gower AONB Management Plan (2016) had been preceded by review activities and the final Management Plan retained much of the structure and format of the 2006 Plan. The Group was also provided with details of consultation undertaken on the draft Management Plan, legal and resources implications.

The Group discussed the following: -

- *5.33 - Objective 16: To improve the current standard and level of maintenance of public rights of way so that 95% are open, usable and clearly signposted -* specifically concerns regarding future access and provision of public rights of way;
- *The two main activities with a potential impact on Gower are marine dredging for sand and offshore wind turbine developments –* concerns were also expressed regarding barrage schemes and large schemes that could potentially affect the AONB and other areas, e.g. Atlantic Array;
- Use by the Authority of previously published policies, especially those relating to static caravans and chalets and how these areas would be included in the Action Plan;
- *Theme 14: Awareness Raising and Understanding – Vision – A landscape which is fully recognised for its special qualities and is appreciated and understood by residents and visitors –* it was proposed that this theme should be the first theme as it is the most important;
- The need for the Management Plan to be adopted and used effectively;
- *3.71 - Permission may be granted for the specific purpose of providing affordable housing to meet an existing deficiency for people who need to live locally where this cannot be met through the general housing market –* It was highlighted that local Planners needed to adopt the spirit of this objective;
- The need to have a realistic Plan with recordable outcomes, to annually review the Management Plan and to measure against its objectives;
- The formal process of approval through the Authority;
- How bodies other than the Council are affected by the Management Plan;
- *Objective 28: Maintain good practice highway improvements across the AONB -* The requirement to include lowering traffic speed on Gower within the Plan and to consult with residents regarding any new proposals;
- The success of the 2006 Plan particularly an assessment of the objectives and actions from the 2006 Management Plan which shows where objectives and actions had been achieved / completed, not progressed, superseded or required carrying forward into the current plan period;

- The need to have a shortened version of the Plan with clear KPI's;
- Delivering the Plan would involve partner organisations.

Paul Meller, Strategic Planning and Natural Environment Manager informed the Group that Planning Services had changed the method it monitored policies and strategies and those not working would be addressed at an early stage. He added that the Plan would be reported to Planning Committee and subject to approval, would form Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) and would be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications within and affecting the AONB. He further stated that the Plan was not simply a planning based document and involved other service areas such as highways, parking and tourism.

It was proposed that the following amendments be made: -

- The two main activities with a potential impact on Gower are marine dredging for sand and offshore wind turbine developments be amended to include sea barrages;
- The Management Plan be regularly monitored and reviewed annually;
- Theme 14: Awareness Raising and Understanding – Vision – A landscape which is fully recognised for its special qualities and is appreciated and understood by residents and visitors be moved to Theme 1 of the Plan.

Given that the Management Plan was more than a planning-based document, the Group felt that a wider approval than that provided by the Planning Committee would be more appropriate.

RESOLVED that:-

- 1) The Gower AONB Management Plan be approved subject to the above amendments being made and that officers then progress Council approval in the manner most appropriate to the Council Constitution;
- 2) The Gower AONB Team Leader report on progress against the Action Plan targets for the next meeting.

27 **PLANNING RELATED MATTERS ON GOWER. (VERBAL)**

Gordon Howe, Gower Society raised issues in relation to planning matters on Gower. He highlighted the following: -

- Colours of static caravans – The colours should be improved on static caravans, particularly as caravans must be renewed after 10 years on site. Some caravan roofs had changed colour but the sides also needed changing. He added that it was a matter of trying to get people to appreciate the difference; Sheds within the AONB being given conditions to make them less conspicuous in the landscape – A number of sheds had been erected on Gower with / without consent that were contrary to planning conditions. He added that the modern materials used on white shed roofs did not fade, unlike older sheds. He had highlighted these cases to Planning Services to enforce.

RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted.

28 **GOWER LANDSCAPE PARTNERSHIP UPDATE. (VERBAL)**

The Gower AONB Team Leader provided a verbal update regarding the Gower Landscape Partnership.

He outlined that the Partnership had moved to a different model of delivery, which was more of a commissioning role. He provided examples of the work undertaken by the Partnership and updated the Group on membership changes.

RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted.

29 **SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FUND UPDATE.**

The Gower AONB Team Leader provided an update report on the Sustainable Development Fund Panel.

It was outlined that this year, the budget for the fund was £55,000. There were currently 17 projects being funded, with a further 4 applications under assessment. Currently £7,626.52 was uncommitted for 2016/17, but this would be fully committed by the end of January.

The Committed Funds figure included a CCS Management Fee of £5,500 (10%).

Total Funds available	£ 55,000.00
Committed Funds	£ 47,373.48
Under Commitment	£ 7,626.52
Pending Applications	£ 7,625.00

The budget for 2017/18 would not be confirmed until March / April 2017, however, the Welsh Assembly Government had indicated that funding for 2017/18 would remain the same as 2016/17. There were 6 projects currently being funded for 2017/18, with 2 applications under assessment and 3 more anticipated within the next 2 months.

A budget of £48,600 was anticipated, with £25,670 currently committed, and applications valued at £20,600 anticipated. It was likely that the fund would be fully committed ahead of 2017/18.

RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted.

30 **AFFORDABLE HOUSING SUB-COMMITTEE.**

Dates were requested in respect of Affordable Housing Sub-Committee meetings.

RESOLVED that the Gower AONB Team Leader circulates dates to the Sub-Committee.

The meeting ended at 8.35 pm

CHAIR