



City and County of Swansea

## Minutes of the **Gower AONB Partnership Steering Group**

**St Madoc Centre - St Madoc Centre, Llanmadoc, Gower, Swansea**

**Monday, 26 March 2018 at 7.00 pm**

**Present:** Councillor P Lloyd (Chair) Presided

**Councillor(s)**

J P Curtice  
A H Stevens

**Councillor(s)**

P R Hood-Williams

**Councillor(s)**

L James

**Co-opted Member(s)**

Roger Button  
Rod Cooper

**Co-opted Member(s)**

Stephen Heard  
Michael Lewis

**Co-opted Member(s)**

Hamish Osborn  
Paul Tucker

**Officer(s)**

Chris Lindley  
Paul Meller  
Jeremy Parkhouse  
Mike Scott

Gower AONB Team Leader  
Strategic Planning and Natural Environment Manager  
Democratic Services Officer  
Gower AONB Officer

**Apologies for Absence**

Independent Member(s): Sue Hill, Gordon Howe, Keith Marsh, Barbara Parry, Deborah Vine and Rebecca Wright

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**34 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.

**35 Minutes.**

**Resolved** that the Minutes of the Gower AONB Partnership Steering Group Meeting held on 11 December 2017, be accepted as a correct record.

**36 Matters Arising from the Minutes.**

**Future Landscapes Wales – Governance Principles Report**

The Gower AONB Team Leader informed the Steering Group that the original meeting with Wye Valley AONB on 1 March 2018 had been postponed due to snow. The meeting had been re-scheduled to 24 April 2018.

## **Membership**

It was explained that a replacement would be sought for Rebecca Wright whose role with NRW had changed and was not so relevant to the Steering Group.

### **37 Statement on Designated Landscapes on 13 March 2018 - Hannah Blythyn AM, Minister for Environment.**

The Gower AONB Team Leader provided the Statement on Designated Landscapes dated 13 March 2018 by Hannah Blythyn AM, Minister for Environment.

He highlighted the main points outlined in the statement including: publishing a policy statement ending the review process; the impact of Brexit and future land management; supporting the land / products; safeguarding and realising the benefits of public goods; and strengthening the status and scrutiny of management plans.

**Resolved** that the contents of the report be noted.

### **38 Gower Dark Sky Survey.**

The Gower AONB Team Leader presented the Gower Dark Sky Survey report.

It was outlined that Dark Sky Wales Training Services were commissioned in December 2017 by Swansea Council to undertake a baseline study of dark sky quality within the Gower AONB. The study was undertaken during December 2018 on clear and moonless nights. The report highlighted the findings from the study and included recommendations for progressing Dark Sky activities in the area.

He informed the Group of the requirements required and added that in order to achieve dark skies status, several different issues had to be in place. These included issues such as having an adequate baseline and monitoring system, a lighting plan and new developments complying with the scheme.

An event at Rhosilli had been organised on 15 April 2018 as a taster event and a number of tickets had been purchased.

The Group discussed the report and were very positive regarding the possibility of the AONB achieving dark skies status. The importance to tourism was highlighted along with the need to get businesses involved in the process.

The Chair commented that the recommendations provided by Dark Skies Wales contained within the report were a good starting point. These included:

- Introduce an education program for;
  - I. General Public
  - II. Schools
  - III. AONB staff and volunteer groups
  - IV. Swansea Council staff

- Conduct annual SQM studies to monitor light pollution levels;
- Enter into dialogue with representatives from Swansea Council to examine possible reductions in light pollution from the Mumbles/City area;
- Enter into dialogue with Camarthenshire County Council to examine the possible reduction in light pollution from Llanelli/Bury Port areas;
- Engage with business in the area to promote the use of dark skies during the summer months to increase economic prosperity in the area.

The Strategic Planning & Natural Environment Manager commented that the Council had supplementary planning guidance regarding light which would be reviewed post publication of the Local Development Plan. He added that it was important to consult the public regarding the aims of achieving dark skies status.

The Gower AONB Team Leader added that all AONB's in Wales were looking to achieve dark skies status and would look to progress matters by working in partnership to reduce costs.

**Resolved** that: -

- 1) The recommendations contained within the report be approved;
- 2) A further report be provided to the Annual meeting.

### **39 Natural Resources Wales - AONB National Partnership Programme 2018-2021.**

The Gower AONB Team Leader introduced the Natural Resources Wales (NRW) – AONB National Partnership Programme 2018-2021.

He highlighted the support and grant funding provided by NRW and the support they would be providing during the next 3 years, which was enormously beneficial to the AONB.

Hamish Osborn, NRW commented on the Partnership Programme and highlighted the partnership working between the AONB Team, Nature Conservation Team and NRW. He also referred to the projects being supported on Gower.

**Resolved** that the contents of the report be noted.

### **40 Sustainable Development Fund Report.**

The Gower AONB Officer presented the Sustainable Development Fund (SDF) report. It was reported that Welsh Government had confirmed the SDF budget for 2017/18 as £55,000. There were currently 18 projects with SDF funding for 2017/18, which had fully committed the funds for 2017/18.

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

Total Funds available	£ 55,000.00
Committed Funds	£ 55,000.00
Uncommitted Funds	£ 0
Applications under consideration by the panel	£ 0
Applications under consideration as delegated issues	£ 0

SDF budget for 2018/19 and 2019/20 had been confirmed as £55,000, with an indication that the budget for 2020/21 would be the same.

The fund was heavily committed, with £26,590 (with another £22,000 anticipated) committed for 2018/19, and £27,650 (with a further £25,000 anticipated) for 2019/20.

**Resolved** that the contents of the report be noted.

#### **41 Gower Landscape Partnership.**

The Gower AONB Team Leader presented the Gower Landscape Partnership (GLP) financial report from the 15 February GLP meeting.

He stated that there was a large amount of work to be completed and two Board meetings were scheduled prior to the end of the programme. He would be meeting with the External Funding Team to assess the spend prior to project completion.

He added that he had been contacted by the Heritage Lottery Monitoring Officer, who had been appointed to monitor the programme. The Officer had stated that GLP were not a cause for concern and were seen as a low risk project. This was largely due to the manner in which the External Funding Team had managed the project closure. A final report would be forwarded to HLF in July 2018. A monitoring plan must also be finalised, along with educational work with schools / groups being identified.

**Resolved** that the contents of the report be noted.

#### **42 Dates of Future Meetings 2018-2019.**

The dates of meetings in 2018-2019 were provided. It was added that the Annual Meeting scheduled for 25 June 2018 would be held at Down To Earth, Little Bryngwyn Site.

The meeting ended at 8.20 pm

**Chair**