

Report of the Vice-Chair of the Gower AONB Partnership Steering Group

Gower AONB Partnership Steering Group – 8 December 2014

PLANNING MATTERS WITHIN THE GOWER AONB

We are repeatedly told that this Group cannot discuss any matter that has in any way a planning aspect. In my opinion this does not allow the Partnership to express any sort of collective view on many issues that affect the long term viability of the AONB.

We have a Committee that is chaired by an elected City and County of Swansea Councillor (CCC) and has a total of 6 other elected CCC Members on it. All of these members are not allowed to be seen to 'predetermining' any planning issue. As a consequence, in my opinion, some issues that affect the AONB are neither discussed nor commented upon by the whole Committee. On one occasion the CCC members did leave the room and the remaining Members of the Steering Group were able to make an observation on a particular point. However this procedure was not comfortable and it was procedurally difficult.

I would like to discuss this matter.

Another aspect concerns the perceived lack of requested input from the AONB Officers into the weekly Planning process. As I understand it the officers are rarely consulted on what are often key planning issues that can affect the AONB. I note that Mark Winder is recorded as very often having an input into planning applications (environmental, barn owl, bats and the like) and the effect upon the AONB is minor in comparison with key planning issues.

I would like to know why the AONB Team are not consulted and have an input to planning issues that affect the AONB.

Gordon R Howe

Representative of the Gower Society
and Vice Chair of the Partnership Group