



City and County of Swansea

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

St Madoc Centre - St Madoc Centre, Llanmadoc, Swansea

Monday, 11 December 2017 at 7.00 pm

Present: Stephen Heard (Vice Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

M C Child
P Lloyd

Councillor(s)

P R Hood-Williams

Councillor(s)

L James

Co-opted Member(s)

Roger Button
Rod Cooper
Stephen Crocker

Co-opted Member(s)

Sue Hill
Gordon Howe
Hamish Osborn

Co-opted Member(s)

Barbara Parry
Deborah Vine

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

Councillor(s): J P Curtice and A H Stevens

Independent Member(s): Keith Marsh and Paul Tucker

25 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.

26 Minutes.

Resolved that the Minutes of the Gower AONB Partnership meeting held on 25 September 2017 be accepted as a correct record.

27 Matters Arising from the Minutes.

Minute No.24 – Membership of the Steering Group

It was proposed that Keith Marsh, Bishopston Community Council be co-opted onto the Steering Group for the duration of discussions on Future Landscapes Wales.

Resolved that Keith Marsh is co-opted onto the Steering Group for the duration of discussions on Future Landscapes Wales.

28 Future Landscapes Wales - Governance Principles Report.

The Gower AONB Team Leader provided an update regarding the governance principles for designated landscapes.

He outlined that since the Steering Group meeting, it had become apparent that the Wye Valley AONB were also preparing to undertake the same exercise. The Working Group had therefore agreed to work collaboratively with Wye Valley AONB on a joint exercise.

It was added that the Working Group would undertake this exercise in the New Year and would report back to the next scheduled meeting in March 2018.

Howard Sutcliffe, Clwydian Range AONB had also offered to assist the process and share his experiences of the same procedure.

Resolved that the contents of the report be noted.

29 Gower Landscape Partnership - Update Report.

The Gower AONB Team Leader reported that the Gower Landscape Partnership (GLP) Board last met on 16 October 2017 and the Finance report / update provided at that meeting was provided for information.

It was added that the GLP Board meeting was held on 7 December 2017 and included a workshop on the legacy of the GLP programme. GLP Board members provided feedback regarding the workshop. The following was discussed: -

- The legacy of the GLP and how it will be looked at in the future;
- The end of Heritage Lottery Fund funded programme;
- GLP is a good example of real partnership working;
- Examining alternative sources of funding for the future;
- The future role of the GLP, its remit and how it could possibly fund projects;
- The future role of the Steering Group in relation to the GLP and whether the GLP becomes a permanent group / sub-group of the Steering Group.

The Gower AONB Team Leader stated that the proposals would be informed by the FLW governance principles, and that the proposals for the future governance of the AONB Partnership were likely to include GLP.

Resolved that: -

- 1) The contents of the report be noted;
- 2) The Gower AONB Team Leader clarifies the governance principles with the Welsh Government and reports back to the next meeting.

30 Swansea Public Service Board - Draft Local Well-Being Plan Consultation.

The Gower AONB Team Leader reported consultation on the Draft Well-being Plan 2018 by the Swansea Public Service Board as required by the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

It was explained that in 2016, Swansea's Public Services Board (PSB) started a conversation about well-being in the local area. Their Assessment of Local Well-being (published in March 2017) informed that Swansea was a great place to live but that there was a need to work harder together to make sure everyone can live well, benefit from and be proud of Swansea.

Swansea's draft Local Well-being Plan was now out for consultation, using information from the Assessment and by listening to people, a draft Local Well-being Plan was drafted and which was designed to improve well-being in the local area. Views were being sought to make sure the right information was included in the plan and a series of events had been arranged.

The Group discussed the following: -

- The importance of well-being to society;
- How different organisations / departments within organisations and individuals respond to the consultation;
- Methods of responding to the consultation, including vocalise;
- The importance of responses being made especially regarding the natural environment, which is one of the four priorities of the PSB;
- The importance of taking part in the consultation process.

Resolved that the contents of the report be noted.

31 Light Pollution / Dark Skies.

The Gower AONB Team Leader reported that light pollution/dark skies had been discussed at recent Steering Group meetings and provided a summary / update to the current situation.

It was added that current available evidence was provided by pan-Wales studies based on satellite imagery and GIS data. The most recent of these studies was published for the Countryside Council for Wales in 2009, which was an update to a study undertaken in 1997. The current AONB Management Plan included Objective 17: Assess current levels of tranquillity, noise and light pollution, with an action to 'Develop and undertake baseline/monitoring approaches for tranquillity/dark sky.

In that context, Gower AONB Team Leader had recently met and had discussions with Welsh Government, Dark Skies Wales and Natural Resources Wales. It was outlined that empirical data was required as baseline data to inform any further work or development of Gower AONB as a dark sky area / designation. Swansea Council had asked Dark Sky Wales to undertake the required fieldwork and reporting. The Gower AONB Team Leader would issue the report for discussion at the next Steering Group meeting.

The following were discussed: -

- Involving Swansea Astronomical Society in discussions;
- Comparing with other areas of Wales and the possibility of business opportunities related to dark skies;
- Concern regarding not being able to control lighting, the positive impact of environmentally friendly street lighting and the negative effect of some lighting e.g. the golf range at Machynys, Llanelli;
- The different levels of dark sky classification, the need to formulate a plan and encouraging people to appreciate dark skies.

Resolved that the contents of the report be noted.

32 Sustainable Development Fund Report.

The Gower AONB Officer presented the Sustainable Development Fund (SDF) report.

It was reported that the Welsh Government had confirmed the SDF budget for 2018/19 as £55,000. There were currently 14 projects with SDF funding for 2017/18, with another application in progress. A further application was also anticipated for 2017/18.

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

Total Funds available	£ 55,000.00
Committed Funds	£ 41,810.00
Uncommitted Funds	£ 13,190.00
Applications under consideration	£ 1,000.00
Other Applications anticipated	£ 12,000.00

In addition, most of the funds for 2018/19 were already committed.

The Gower AONB Team Leader stated that the National Assembly for Wales were very happy with the manner in which the Fund had been managed in Swansea and would like other bodies to follow a similar example. It was added that the National Assembly for Wales had undertaken a site visit to the Authority a few months ago and were very impressed with the local projects supported by SDF funding.

Resolved that the contents of the report be noted.

33 National Association for AONB's - Feedback from Chairs meeting on 23 November 2017. (Verbal)

Councillor P Lloyd, Chair of the Steering Group provided a verbal report on the National AONB's Chairs meeting that took place in London in October 2017. He stated that the meeting built upon the themes discussed at the Conference, particularly Brexit, legislation effecting the historic environment and UK designated landscapes.

He provided details of the speakers and the topics they highlighted. These included the situation post-Brexit, particularly how DEFRA would provide support.

The Group discussed the issues raised in the report and highlighted the importance of farming to AONB's and National Parks.

Resolved that the contents of the report be noted.

The meeting ended at 8.25 pm

Chair