

RHYBUDD O GYFARFOD / NOTICE OF MEETING



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Snowdonia National Park Authority

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Cyfarfod: Awdurdod Parc Cenedlaethol Eryri

Dyddiad: Dydd Mercher 3 Chwefror 2021

Amser: 10.00 y.b.

Anfonir cyfarwyddiadau ymuno at yr Aelodau ar wahân

Meeting: Snowdonia National Park Authority

Date: Wednesday 3 February 2021

Time: 10.00 a.m.

Joining instructions will be sent to Members separately

Aelodau wedi'u penodi gan Gyngor Gwynedd
Members appointed by Gwynedd Council

Y Cynghorydd / Councillor :

Freya Hannah Bentham, Elwyn Edwards, Alwyn Gruffydd,
Annwen Hughes, Judith Mary Humphreys, Edgar Wyn Owen,
Elfed Powell Roberts, John Pughe Roberts, Gethin Glyn Williams;

Aelodau wedi'u penodi gan Gyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Conwy
Members appointed by Conwy County Borough Council

Y Cynghorydd / Councillor :

Philip Capper, Wyn Ellis-Jones, Ifor Glyn Lloyd;

Aelodau wedi'u penodi gan Llywodraeth Cymru
Members appointed by The Welsh Government

Mr. Brian Angell, Ms. Tracey Evans, Mrs. Sarah Hattle,
Mr. Tim Jones, Mr. Neil Martinson, Mr. Owain Wyn.

A G E N D A

1. **Apologies for absence and Chairman's Announcements**
2. **Corporate Update**
To receive an oral update from the Chief Executive.
3. **Public Question Time**
The Authority has allocated up to 20 minutes at the start of its meeting to allow members of the public the opportunity to ask specific questions that relate to the work of the Authority (apart from planning applications) that is relevant to the Park's duties and purposes.

Questions must be submitted in writing (by post or e-mail) to the Head of Legal and Corporate Services at least 7 days prior to the meeting.
4. **Declaration of Interest**
To receive any disclosure of interest by members or officers in respect of any item of business.
5. **Minutes**
The Chairman shall propose that the minutes of the Authority meetings held on the 18th November and 9th December 2020, be signed as true records. (Copies herewith)
6. **Matters for Information arising from the minutes**
7. **Action Log**
To submit the Action Log for information and decision. (Copy herewith)
8. **Audit of Snowdonia National Park Authority's Assessment of 2019-20 Performance**
To receive the following report by the Wales Audit Office. (Copy herewith)
9. **Authority Budget and Levy on Constituent Authorities 2021/2022**
To submit a report by the Chief Finance Officer. (Copy herewith)
10. **Capital Strategy 2021/2022**
To submit a report by the Chief Finance Officer. (Copy herewith)
11. **Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) 2020/21 – 2023/24**
To submit a joint report by the Chief Executive and the Chief Finance Officer. (Copy herewith)
12. **Yr Ysgwrn Annual Report**
To submit a report by the Head of Cultural Heritage. (Copy herewith)
13. **Working Group Reports**
To submit the report of the Members' Working Group meeting held on the 2nd December 2020. (Copy herewith)
14. **Meetings of other Organisations**
To receive oral reports from Members on any recent meetings which they have attended as representatives of the Authority.
15. **To submit the following minutes for information**
Minutes of the Celyn, Tegid and Tryweryn Advisory Conference held on 15th October 2019. (Copy herewith)

**SNOWDONIA NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY
WEDNESDAY 18th NOVEMBER 2020**

Councillor Wyn Ellis Jones (Conwy) (Chairman)

PRESENT:

Members appointed by Gwynedd Council

Councillors Elwyn Edwards, Alwyn Gruffydd, Annwen Hughes, Judith Humphreys, Edgar Wyn Owen, John Pughe Roberts, Gethin Glyn Williams;

Members appointed by Conwy County Borough Council

Councillors Philip Capper, Ifor Glyn Lloyd;

Members appointed by the Welsh Government

Mr. Brian Angell, Ms. Tracey Evans, Mrs. Sarah Hattle, Mr. Tim Jones, Mr. Neil Martinson, Mr. Owain Wyn;

Officers

Mr. Emrys Williams, Mr. G. Iwan Jones, Mr. Dafydd Edwards, Mr. Emrys Roberts, Mrs. Anwen Gaffey;

In attendance

Matthew Edwards, Audit Wales;

1. Apologies

Councillors Freya Bentham, Elfed Powell Roberts.
Mr. Jonathan Cawley, Director of Planning and Land Management.

2. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of personal interest were made in respect of any item.

3. Statement of Accounts 2019/20

Submitted – A report by the Chief Finance Officer for Members to:-

- i) receive and note the “ISA 260” report presented by Audit Wales
- ii) approve the post-audit Statement of Accounts, and
- iii) authorise the Chairman and the Chief Finance Officer to certify the Final Letter of Representation.

Arising thereon, the Chairman reminded Members that a report on the “Review of Reserves” would be presented to the next meeting of the Members’ Working Group or to the Authority meeting in December 2020, at which time Members would have the opportunity to consider the allocation of reserves in detail.

Reported – The Chief Finance Officer presented the report, the Statement of Accounts and the Final Letter of Representation. He advised that the Authority had received an unqualified audit opinion, as outlined in paragraph 10 of the Audit of Accounts Report.

Members considered the reports and made the following observations:-

- officers were asked to correct a typographical error in the Statement of Accounts (English report) on page 7, paragraph 9, which should read £8,039K.
- officers were asked to confirm, under para. 17 of the Audit of Accounts Report, which lists areas for improvement, what actions were being put in place to address these issues for the future and the proposed timescale. In response, the Head of Finance agreed that working practices had been affected by the

challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic, alongside the additional complication of recent staff changes and limited availability of support to check the financial statements before releasing to Audit Wales. The Head of Finance stated he was confident the situation would improve over the next 12 months, adding that more time than usual had been spent addressing issues at Plas Tan y Bwlch. As the business model for Plas had now been simplified, this would not be the case in future. He also stated that he was happy to continue with two fixed asset registers, which on a practical basis, he felt worked adequately.

Mr. Matthew Edwards, Audit Wales, apologised for the delay in joining the meeting owing to connectivity problems. He proceeded to present the Audit of Accounts report and advise upon key issues. He confirmed that the Auditor General would be presenting the Authority with an unqualified audit report and thanked the Authority's finance team for their assistance and co-operation under very difficult circumstances this year due to Covid-19 and the need for social distancing. He drew Members' attention to Note 36 of the financial statements, which referred to the effects of Covid-19 on the Authority's pooled property pension fund valuations, and advised that modifications had not been made in respect of this in the final accounts, although he suspected the effect would be substantial. Mr. Edwards also confirmed that Audit Wales would work with the Head of Finance over the coming months to develop clearer working papers and clarify audit requirements going forward.

The Chief Finance Officer thanked Mr. Edwards for his report and for Audit Wales' assistance during the audit. With regard to the pooled property pension fund valuation, he advised that almost all pension funds have property investments and since trading resumed in September, the value of the funds were back to where they were in March 2020.

In response to a question on the significance of not merging the two Fixed Asset Registers, Mr. Edwards confirmed that this matter had been included in last year's audit report, and whilst it did not present a risk in itself, in his opinion, maintaining two separate asset registers was unusual and in order to drive efficiencies this should be addressed.

Arising thereon, Members agreed following Audit Wales' offer to work with the Authority/Head of Finance to develop clearer working papers and clarify audit requirements, that a report should be presented to the Authority, or to the Assets Sub-Group, to provide Members with the opportunity to monitor progress.

The Chairman thanked Matthew Edwards for attending the meeting to present the report.

RESOLVED

- 1. to receive and note the “ISA260” report presented by Audit Wales.**
- 2. to approve the Authority’s post-audit Statement of Accounts for 2019/20.**
- 3. to authorise the Chairman and the Chief Finance Officer, to certify the Letter of Representation.**
- 4. that officers should work with Audit Wales to develop clearer working papers and clarify audit requirements and that the Chief Finance Officer/Head of Finance should present a report to a future meeting for Members to monitor progress.**

The meeting ended at 9.40

SNOWDONIA NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY
WEDNESDAY 9th DECEMBER 2020

Councillor Wyn Ellis Jones (Conwy) (Chairman)

PRESENT:

Members appointed by Gwynedd Council

Councillors Freya Bentham, Elwyn Edwards, Alwyn Gruffydd, Annwen Hughes, Judith Humphreys, Edgar Wyn Owen, Elfed Powell Roberts, John Pughe Roberts, Gethin Glyn Williams;

Member appointed by Conwy County Borough Council

Councillor Philip Capper;

Members appointed by the Welsh Government

Mr. Brian Angell, Ms. Tracey Evans, Mrs. Sarah Hattle, Mr. Tim Jones, Mr. Neil Martinson, Mr. Owain Wyn;

Officers

Mr. E. Williams, Mr. G.I. Jones, Mr. J. Cawley, Mr. D. Edwards, Mr. E. Roberts, Mrs. Elliw Owen, Mrs. A. Gaffey.

Apology

Councillor Ifor Glyn Lloyd.

1. Chairman's Announcements

- (1) The Chairman advised that the meeting was subject to the new Covid-19 Regulations on how the Authority conducts its business, and that:-
 - a Notice of the Meeting had been published and the Agenda and reports were available on the Authority's website.
 - the meeting was not open to the public.
 - the meeting was being recorded to assist in verifying the minutes.
- (2) The Chairman commented upon the successful launch of Cynllun Eryri and thanked all those involved for their work. He also advised on the launch of the new ambassador scheme, celebrating the National Park's Special Qualities, and that a report will be presented to Members in due course.
- (3) The Chairman reported that, following the Parking and Transport Review of Yr Wyddfa and Ogwen areas, staff were continuing to make good progress with the work.
- (4) The Chairman advised upon recent meetings attended: with the Chairs of National Parks UK, with Julie James MS, Minister for Housing and Local Government, and the annual meeting with the Country Landowners Association.
- (5) The Chief Executive provided a brief summary of current corporate business and the Chairman confirmed that in future, the Authority Agenda would include an oral update from the Chief Executive on corporate matters.

2. Public Question Time

Members were informed that no public questions had been received.

3. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of personal interest were made in respect of any item.

4. **Minutes**

The minutes of the Authority meetings held on 23rd September and 23rd October 2020 were accepted and the Chairman signed them as true records.

5. **Matters for Information arising from the minutes**

Item No. 3 (2) – Conferences and Seminars

Mr. Tim Jones advised that he had been unable to attend the entire Europarc (remote) Conference, due to unforeseen circumstances.

Item No. 14 – Annual Report and Improvement Plan 2019-2020

Members were advised that Member role descriptions were available on the Authority website.

Arising thereon, officers agreed to ascertain whether the decision taken by the Performance and Resources Committee on 18th November 2020, had resolved to invite all Members to attend the Traffic Management Task and Finish Group. The Chief Executive advised that the newly established Governance Group, which would be convened early in the new year, would consider issues such as live webcasting and timetable of meetings, protocol for drafting minutes, committee membership etc.

6 (1) **Notice of Motion**

Submitted – A Notice of Motion by Councillor Elwyn Edwards recommending that the Authority should call on the Welsh Government to change planning rules to address the extremely damaging housing situation that exists in the National Park and throughout Wales. Arising thereon, the Chair of the Planning and Access Committee thanked the Policy Officer for providing him with the information on holiday homes, which was previously circulated to Members.

Members and officers considered the statement and discussed the following in detail:-

- the Director of Planning and Land Management advised that upcoming meetings between the WLGA and Welsh Government might provide an opportunity to influence discussions.
- whether the motion would make a difference and assist young people to obtain mortgages. A member stated that the Authority had failed to meet its own affordable housing target and had approved only one application over the last 12 months. In addition, the Planning and Access Committee had recently refused applications for affordable homes on policy grounds. In response, the Director of Planning and Land Management advised that the specific application referred to in Dinas Mawddwy was for an open market dwelling and not an affordable home.
- the Authority should use its powers to stimulate employment opportunities, possibly outside of the tourism sector.
- officers were asked to ascertain the average salary levels in the Snowdonia National Park, which was suggested to be less than £20k in Meirion/Dwyfor, and was one of the lowest in Europe.
- the unwillingness of mortgage companies to provide loans to young people, including the Principality Building Society, which was based in Wales.
- Members noted that rural villages might benefit from a recent appeal decision, which had refused an application to convert a barn into holiday accommodation on the grounds there was already a high percentage of holiday homes in the area.

- a Member asked whether allowing people who could afford to pay a commuted sum to secure approvals should be considered a human rights issue.
- the Authority should learn from areas such as Newquay in Cornwall, where new builds were restricted to local persons, and Exmoor National Park, who were looking at sustainable economic development proposals for local people.
- the Director of Planning and Land Management agreed there was potential for the planning system to control change of use from a dwelling to holiday accommodation but as this was not currently possible it would need to be changed at a national level. The Director of Planning and Land Management also advised that the Localism Act did not apply in Wales. Whilst there were opportunities to create new policies similar to planning obligations used in the past - to allow homes for a local person who lived or worked within a certain radius of the proposed development - this again would be subject to a change in national policies.
- council tax issues in relation to second homes and holiday homes were discussed in detail and it was agreed this was an area which could benefit from better planning control.
- a Member, whilst generally supportive, asked whether it would be useful to further discuss this matter further and come to an evidence based decision as Gwynedd Council were presenting a report on this subject to their Scrutiny Committee and to the Cabinet in the very near future.
- Members thanked Councillor Elwyn Edwards for the Notice of Motion and supported its contents.

RESOLVED

1. **subject to confirming the average annual salary in the Snowdonia National Park, to approve the Motion, as submitted.**
2. **to bring the matter to the attention of Julie James, MS, Minister for Housing and Local Government.**

6 (2) Notice of Motion

Submitted – A Notice of Motion by Councillor John Pughe Roberts proposing that:- “As the Sandford Principle puts Biodiversity first, ahead of people, language etc., to ask the Welsh Government to change this to putting language and indigenous people first and biodiversity second”.

Members and officers considered the Motion in detail and made the following observations:-

- the Chief Executive provided Members with background to:-
 - the Sandford Principle, established to avoid any conflicts between the first and second purposes of the National Park, where the first purpose had primacy.
 - the Edwards Report 1991: “Fit for the Future”
 - the Environment Act 1995, which established National Parks did not reference the Sandford Principle.
 - that the Snowdonia National Park Authority never had cause to rely on this principle as balanced decisions had been made over the years when such issues arose.
 - the Marsden Report 2015: “Review of Designated Landscapes in Wales”.
- the Member who presented the motion stated that he was happy for ‘biodiversity’ and ‘the language and people’ to have equal status.
- some Members felt the motion did not improve upon what was already safeguarded as part of National Park purposes and were against giving more status to one over the other.

- some Members took issue with the phrase “indigenous people” as the National Parks belong to everybody.
- Members further discussed and agreed to amend the statement as follows:-
“To propose that the Authority asks the Welsh Government to amend Welsh National Parks purposes to include the recommendations of the Review of Designated Landscapes in Wales (Marsden report) and to include purposes that promote people's well-being and the sustainable forms of economic and social development of our communities as well as protecting and enhancing the special qualities of our landscapes and biodiversity”.

RESOLVED

1. **to endorse the amended statement as outlined.**
2. **to bring the matter to the attention of Leslie Griffiths, MS, Minister for the Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs.**

7. **Action Log**

Submitted – A log of strategic actions arising from decisions taken during meetings of the Authority, for information and action.

Authority Meeting 10.04.19

Action Item 12 – Europarc Youth Manifesto

A Member asked for this action to be progressed as a matter of urgency.

Authority Meeting 22.05.19

Action Item 4 – Annual Governance Statement

This action was now complete and could be removed from the Action Log.

Authority Meeting 25.09.19

Action Item 8 – Budget Update (Property Section)

Officers advised that a meeting of the Assets Sub Group was being convened in early January 2021.

Action Item 10 – Working Group Reports (Project Management Toolkit)

This action was now complete and could be removed from the Action Log.

Authority Meeting 11.12.19

Action Item 14 – Meetings of other Organisations

This action was now complete and could be removed from the Action Log.

Authority Meeting 23.09.20

Action Item 8 (2) – Notice of Motion by Councillor John Pughe Roberts

This action was now complete and could be removed from the Action Log.

Action Item 11 – Appointment of Members to serve on Committees, Panels, Working Groups and External Representation

This action was now complete and could be removed from the Action Log.

Action Item 19 – Update on Plas Tan y Bwlch

This action was now complete and could be removed from the Action Log.

Authority Meeting 23.10.20

Action Item 6 – Business Case for continuing with B & B type accommodation at Plas Tan y Bwlch

This action was now complete and could be removed from the Action Log.

RESOLVED to note the Action Log and remove the actions as outlined.

8. Committee Vacancies

Submitted – A Report by the Director of Corporate Services to appoint Members to further vacancies on the Authority's Committees, Panels and Working Groups for the forthcoming year.

Reported – The Director of Corporate Services presented the report and background.

RESOLVED to appoint Members to the vacancies as follows:

- (i) Standards Committee – Sarah Hattle
- (ii) Local Joint working Group – Sarah Hattle
- (iii) Task and Finish Groups
 - (a) Learning Strategy – Sarah Hattle
 - (b) Communication – Tim Jones

9. Treasury Management – Interim Report 2020/21

Submitted – An oral report by the Chief Finance Officer, for information.

Reported – The Chief Finance Officer presented an oral report on Treasury Management and advised there were no major changes to report since the last update. He confirmed that the Authority's funds and investments continued to be secure and that there had been no defaults by any counterparty (bank) where the Authority had deposited cash, and that those counterparties' credit ratings currently remained healthy. He further advised that the continuing low interest rates meant the Authority would not achieve its target of £23k in 2020/21 and the interest earned would be nearer £13k. He confirmed that the Treasury Management Strategy for 2021/22 would be presented to the Authority meeting in February 2021.

Arising thereon, a Member asked officers to consider whether the Authority should borrow for its own purpose rather than seeking grants to respond to Welsh Government requirements. The Chief Finance Officer advised that this matter could be further discussed at the Authority's meeting in February.

RESOLVED to note the report, for information.

10. Base Revenue Budget 2021/22

Submitted – The Chief Finance Officer's report for Members to note the Base Budget as estimated for 2021/22 and projected funding position, and to review the level of the Authority's general balances and specific reserves.

Reported – The Chief Finance Officer presented the report and background and Members made the following observations:-

- a Member raised concerns with regard to the balance of £190k in the Section 106 Reserve, which contributes towards affordable housing and which was subject to a time restriction for spending the monies. The Director of Planning and Land Management agreed to provide Members with an update on Affordable Housing Commuted Sums Expenditure.
- following a proposal to amalgamate the Specific Risk Reserve, the Staff Resilience Reserve, the Commercial Risk Reserve and the General Revenue Reserve. Members resolved not to support the proposal as this reporting framework had been recommended by Members some two years previously.

- the Chief Finance Officer noted that the Working Group on 2nd December had agreed it would be reasonable to reconsider the reserves when details of the Welsh Government Settlement for 2021/22 was known.

RESOLVED

1. **to note the report and the planned baseline budget for 2021/22 as outlined.**
2. **to approve the use of the Specific Risks Reserve to finance the estimated deficit for 2021/22 as outlined in paragraph 2.2 of the report.**
3. **to approve the levels of the Authority's reserves.**

11. 2020/21 Budget Update

Submitted – A report by the Head of Finance to inform members of the revised budgets for 2020/21 and report on significant virements. The report also provided Members with an update on progress against revenue and capital budgets and the projected final position for the financial year.

Reported - The Head of Finance presented the report, summarising the revised revenue and capital budgets for the first seven months of the financial year, and provided further information on the detailed figures.

Arising thereon, following a request from a Member, the Head of Finance agreed to forward details on the use of monies transferred into the 2020/21 budget from the Authority reserves prior to presenting a report to the Authority in February 2021.

The Chairman thanked the Chief Finance Officer and his staff for their work.

RESOLVED

1. **to note the contents of the report.**
2. **to confirm the use of the specific risks reserve to meet the deficit of £228,600, as outlined in paragraph 4.2 of the report.**
3. **to await details of the monies transferred into the 2020/21 budget from Authority reserves.**

12. Consultation Documents relating to Corporate Joint Committees:

- 1) **Regulations to establish Corporate Joint Committees (CJC's)**
- 2) **The Town and Country Planning (Strategic Development Plan) (Wales) Regulations 2021: Regulations establishing the procedure for the preparation of Strategic Development Plans and Associated Matters.**

Submitted – A report by the Director of Planning and Land Management to allow Members to comment on the draft response prepared by officers from the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority on behalf of the three National Park Authorities of Wales relating to the two Welsh Government consultation documents.

Reported – The Director of Planning and Land Management presented the report and background and introduced Elliw Owen, Principal Planning Officer (Policy) to the meeting. Members were advised that their observations would be forwarded to the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority for inclusion in the draft response, which will be submitted to the Welsh Government by 4th January 2021.

The Director of Planning and Land Management advised that the first consultation sought Members' views on the draft regulations, referred to as the Establishment Regulations for the CJC's, and the second consultation, was more procedural in nature and proposed that the production of Strategic Development Plans by the CJC's should follow the same process as the existing Local Development Plans.

The Director of Planning and Land Management advised that officers in Brecon were concerned that the North Wales CJC would not have the power to implement National Park purposes and would depend on Section 62 of the Environment Act 1995 which places the duty on other bodies to have regard to the purposes for which National Parks were designated.

The Director of Planning and Land Management outlined his concerns on the second consultation paper, which were in addition to those already included in the draft response prepared by Brecon Beacons:-

- the new regional body was another layer of government being established at a time when resources were limited. This could also include the availability of planning staff, who may be seconded from Local Authorities and as Members were aware, the Authority already has capacity and recruitment issues.
- the Regulations were scheduled to be in place by early summer, with the first meetings of the regional bodies to be held in September. Work on the Strategic Plan for North Wales would also commence at this time.
- the relationship between the Strategic Development Plan and the Local Development Plans was unclear.
- the timetable for reviewing the Local Development Plan and establishing the Strategic Development Plan was very ambitious.
- the Director of Planning and Land Management did not object to establishing Regional Development Plans but felt the National Parks should have some influence on their content.

Members considered the draft consultation response in detail and made the following observations and additional points for inclusion:-

- the Chairman stated that at a recent meeting between himself, the Chief Executive and Julie James MS, Minister for Housing and Local Government, the Minister had acknowledged their concerns and agreed that National Park interests should be safeguarded.
- as the Welsh Government were determined to proceed with CJC's, a Member felt that the tone of the response should be more constructive. The principle had already been established and there was now a need to work together to respond to the details.
- a Member felt that National Park Authorities should be members of the Corporate Joint Committees or should at least be allowed to endorse the content of Strategic Development Plans.
- Consultation Question 15 – the penultimate paragraph should include that the National Park Authorities should also retain their existing function of preparing Local Development Plans.
- para. 3.3 of the second consultation – the guidance should include reference to the duration of the SDP.
- with regard to the preferred strategy a Member felt it should be made clear that the Local Development Plan retains the right to decide on the scale of any developments.
- the National Parks should have sight of the delivery agreement mentioned in paragraph 4.7.
- paragraph 4.13 – the Deposit Plans should also include a sustainability appraisal and language impact assessment as is proposed within the preferred strategy.
- minor typographical errors were pointed out.
- a Member noted his concerns that the role and importance of National Parks would be diminished over time and subsumed within a regional context as has happened to AONB's who have lost their influence within Local

Authorities. The Member suggested that both documents should be strengthened by outlining the legislative basis for the existence of the National Parks both in Wales and in the United Kingdom as a whole. Their primary purpose and the planning emphasis were in danger of being lost in the way the document was drafted and National Park purposes should be robustly defended. The National perspective and duty should also be strengthened in the consultation response as the Member felt that details of SDP and LDP principles was secondary.

- a Member felt that this overriding document undermined local democracy. In terms of regional co-operation, there was nothing similar between Gwynedd and Flintshire and this new regime was contrary to local accountability.
- Members agreed that National Park Purposes should not to be lost and should be included within the document. This also provided an opportunity to look at what was happening in Scotland and could be a positive way for the National Parks to look towards the future.
- the Chief Executive advised that whilst the Minister had shown support for the National Parks, it was not included here, and although the CJC's had a duty 'to have regard' to the purposes for which National Parks were designated (Section 62 of the Environment Act 1995) this may not be strong enough. For this reason, the Welsh Government should be reminded of the importance of the Edwards report, which outlines the strategic importance of the Planning role within Wales' National Parks.
- the Chief Finance Officer raised a question on the financial perspective and as it was not clear whether the charge on constituent Authorities would include National Park Authorities, he asked officers to include that the proposed funding timetable and procedure was impractical.
- a Member asked that the word "veto" be removed from the consultation response.

RESOLVED

1. **to note the report.**
2. **to authorise the Director of Planning and Land Management to forward Members' comments for inclusion in the draft response being prepared by Brecon Beacons NPA.**
3. **that a copy of the Authority's response should be circulated to Members, for information/comment.**

13. Working Group Reports

Submitted – The reports of the Members' Working Group meetings held on 2nd September and 21st October 2020.

RESOLVED to note the reports.

14. Meetings of other Organisations

Submitted – Oral reports on recent meetings of organisations, which Members had attended as representatives of the Authority.

Mr. Owain Wyn – Joint Council for Wales

- a Forum where Local Authority Employers in Wales and the relevant Trade Unions meet to discuss workforce issues of mutual concern and interest.
- there were 95 delegates at the October meeting and discussions focussed on:-
 - o Local Authority staffing levels
 - o Response to the Covid-19 Pandemic
 - o Health and Safety
 - o Local Government Measure update
 - o Local Government finance update

- Pay levels for 2021/22
- Ethical employment in supply chains – code of practice

Councillor Alwyn Gruffydd – Energy Island Programme Strategic Forum

- there was nothing to report since Hitachi's announcement suspending work on the Wylfa Newydd Project, although Members who were in support of nuclear energy were still hopeful following the Chancellor's aim for the UK to become Carbon Neutral by 2050. Members were continuing to look for sponsors.
- the energy white paper was still awaited, as was an announcement on Nuclear power, which was due on the last day of the year.
- discussions were continuing on underground turbines and wind turbines and the small turbines project at Trawsfynydd was still waiting for the technology to be developed.

RESOLVED to thank the Members, and note the reports.

15. Minutes

The following minutes were submitted for information:-

- (1) Minutes of National Parks Wales Executive Meeting held on 7th May 2020.
- (2) Minutes of the Performance and Resources Committee held on 15th July 2020.
- (3) Minutes of the Standards Committee held on 16th October 2020.

16. Europarc Conference 2020

Submitted – Oral reports on the recent Europarc Conference 2020, which Members had attended (virtually) as representatives of the Authority.

Mr. Brian Angell advised that there were over 200 delegates at the Conference and that the organisers had been able to deliver a very successful conference despite the restrictions. The Conference had focussed around the question “Our New Future: How ready are we?” with discussions on the new EU strategies on biodiversity and agriculture, the impacts of COVID-19 and what Protected Areas need to prepare themselves for the future. Some of the highlights had been sustainable tourism in the context of Covid and the role of peri-urban parks, which

had less status than AONB’s, and the suggestion that they had a role to play in response to the desire for green recreation for wellness purposes and whether we had a role to influence people who visit the National Parks from urban areas. Another topic was “communication” in relation to tensions that exist in the post COVID world and the changes arising from climate change, the biodiversity agenda and the need to communicate well with our local population to strengthen the positive benefits of living within a National Park.

Mr. Tim Jones, who had attended part of the Conference, had enjoyed a session led by Humberto Rosa from Italy who had spoken about connecting biodiversity to jobs and how they had been successful in creating more sustainable employment by doing this. Also, the eNatura 2000 App., specially designed to enable users to connect, discuss and learn in an innovative way, was launched at the Conference.

RESOLVED to thank the Members, and note the reports.

The Chairman thanked both staff and Members for their work and wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

The meeting ended at 13.10



TAFLEN WEITHREDU – ACTION SHEET

AUTHORITY MEETING – 25.04.2018

ITEM NO. AND TITLE	DECISIONS / OBSERVATIONS	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	UPDATE or COMPLETION DATE	REMOVE FROM ACTION LOG
6 – Annual Improvement Report 2017/18	RESOLVED to note the report and accept the proposals for improvement.	<p>Areas for improvement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - updating the Code of Corporate Governance and Park Plan to reflect and mainstream WFG principles; - strengthen how the Authority demonstrates its prevention principles and activity, in particular as to why action is taken to protect biodiversity, peat bog restoration work and ecology; 	CX	<p>Adopted – Authority Meeting 07.02.18</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ALL BEING IMPLEMENTED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ministerial targets of restored peatland areas by 2020. (<i>This remains but is likely to be missed</i>). - contribute to Future Generations Act and Natural Resource Management Policies. (<i>Actioned in all projects and decision making</i>). COMPLETE - Partner in new Life raised bogs project. - Recipient of £200k project fund NRW open call. (<i>2 x £100k projects completed</i>) COMPLETE - SMS Welsh Peatland (£1.2M) being led by SNPA. (<i>Ongoing</i>) - New SMS projects being developed with peatland component. (<i>Ongoing</i>) <p>Multiple projects developed and delivering on ecological and biodiversity targets. (<i>Ongoing and expanding</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National Grid (x 3) (+ 2 being developed) - Life (x 1) (+ further 3, 1 direct + 3 with partners) - SMS Projects (x 3 direct & 2 x associated) 	YES



TAFLEN WEITHREDU – ACTION SHEET

ITEM NO. AND TITLE	DECISIONS / OBSERVATIONS	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	UPDATE or COMPLETION DATE	REMOVE FROM ACTION LOG
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">- improve the online experience for visitors and the public; and - reduce inconsistencies and weaknesses in measures, metrics and evaluation – it is currently difficult for the Authority to consistently demonstrate how effectively it is meeting the sustainable development principle.		<p>Task & Finish Group established. Focus Group arranged for input on customer needs for website prior to preparing brief. Needs assessment now completed. Tender document being prepared for procurement. Procurement will commence following Task and Finish Group in February 2020.</p> <p>Tendering process has been completed and short list drawn. Presentations have been invited for the purpose of appointment end of January/early February 2021.</p> <p>New measures and indicators adopted with the new Wellbeing Objectives – adopted as part of the Corporate Plan for 2018/19.</p>	<p>YES</p> <p>COMPLETED</p> <p>COMPLETED</p>



TAFLEN WEITHREDU – ACTION SHEET

AUTHORITY MEETING – 04.07.2018

ITEM NO. AND TITLE	DECISIONS / OBSERVATIONS	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBL E OFFICER	UPDATE or COMPLETION DATE	REMOVE FROM ACTION LOG
3 – Life + Celtic Rainforest Project	RESOLVED 1. To note the report and formally accept LIFE+ funding on behalf of the partners. 2. To confirm use of identified reserves, revenue budgets and staff in kind contributions as specified, for the purpose of this project. 3. To provide training for Members on the Project and the Communication Strategy in due course, possibly in January 2019.	To accept the funding on behalf of the partners and use the identified reserves, revenue budgets and staff in kind contributions as specified. To arrange training for Members on the Project and the Communication Strategy in due course.	CX / RO RO / JW	Work undertaken, progressed and actioned COMPLETED Firm date set for the training at the Members' Working Group meeting on 4 th March 2020. Update - The LIFE Senior Project Manager was unable attend the meeting due to unforeseen circumstances and this item will now be presented to the next Member Development Day on 26.03.21.	NO



TAFLEN WEITHREDU – ACTION SHEET

AUTHORITY MEETING – 10.04.2019

ITEM NO. AND TITLE	DECISIONS / OBSERVATIONS	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	UPDATE or COMPLETION DATE	REMOVE FROM ACTION LOG
12. Europarc Youth Manifesto	RESOLVED to establish a Task and Finish Group to further the work and report to Authority in December 2019.	Officers to convene a meeting of the Youth Manifesto Task and Finish Group.	HP	Initial Task and Finish Group has been convened, further Task and Finish Group to be held in March 2020. Job description for Youth Officer being prepared as joint role between Head of Wardens and Head of Engagement. Officer will lead on developing local Youth Manifesto.	NO



TAFLEN WEITHREDU – ACTION SHEET

AUTHORITY MEETING – 25.09.2019

ITEM NO. AND TITLE	DECISIONS / OBSERVATIONS	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	UPDATE or COMPLETION DATE	REMOVE FROM ACTION LOG
8. Budget Update	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a report on the budgetary pressures faced by the Property Section to be presented to a future Working Group. - a report by Yr Ysgwrn Project Group to be presented to Members in the New Year. - to provide Members with a copy of the Aberdyfi judgement once it becomes available. 	<p>To present the reports.</p> <p>To email Members with the judgement.</p>	<p>EJ</p> <p>GIJ</p>	<p>Update - The Assets Sub Group met on 4 March 2020 and considered a report, which outlined budget pressures and recommendations to reinvest income from income generating sites in future maintenance budgets from 2021/22 onwards. A subsequent report to be prepared for Autumn Performance &Resources committee.</p> <p>Covid 19 was identified as a potential risk and has resulted in the report being postponed owing to wider financial pressures arising from the pandemic.</p> <p>The Assets Sub-Group was convened on 15th January 2021.</p> <p>Update - To agree the way forward with Yr Ysgwrn Board first then present a report to the Members' Working Group in January / February 2021. A report will be presented to the next Authority meeting in March 2021.</p> <p>Members were provided with a copy of the judgement on 28.11.19</p>	<p>NO</p> <p>COMPLETED</p>



TAFLEN WEITHREDU – ACTION SHEET

AUTHORITY MEETING – 15.07.2020

ITEM NO. AND TITLE	DECISIONS / OBSERVATIONS	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	UPDATE or COMPLETION DATE	REMOVE FROM ACTION LOG
6. Strategic and Wellbeing Objectives and Corporate Plan 2021-26	<p>RESOLVED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to approve the outcomes as the basis of informal consultation with stakeholders over the summer period. - to seek views of stakeholders as to what success looks like on such matters. - to delegate authority to the Performance and Resources Committee to agree the priorities and objectives at their meeting in November, prior to formal consultation with stakeholders. 	To start the informal consultation.	CX	<p>Stakeholder informal consultation was undertaken over the summer months ending on 18th September 2020. The outcome of which was reported to Members during a meeting of the Performance and Resources Committee in November 2020.</p> <p>Subsequently, the P&R Committee agreed on priorities and objectives for undertaking a formal consultation with stakeholders.</p> <p>Formal consultation undertaken with stakeholders and staff. The responses received will be reviewed and considered. Work will progress to develop objectives and outcomes further for presenting to next Member Working Group on 03.03.21.</p>	YES



TAFLEN WEITHREDU – ACTION SHEET

ITEM NO. AND TITLE	DECISIONS / OBSERVATIONS	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	UPDATE or COMPLETION DATE	REMOVE FROM ACTION LOG
10. Plas Tan y Bwlch Options	<p>RESOLVED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - in view of the number of staff who could potentially be affected, that the Authority should start the process of formal consultation with staff and Trade Unions on the future of Plas Tan y Bwlch. - the Plas Tan y Bwlch Management Board, together with the Chairs and Vice Chair of the Authority, to consider alternative business models over the next three months (including working with other organisations), to assess how many posts could be saved. - that the Authority should further consider the matter at its meeting in September, unless a special Authority meeting is called prior to that date. - in the meantime, to agree in principle, that the proposed improvements, previously sanctioned by the Authority, should proceed, in order to place the centre in the best possible position to continue with some form of alternative business model or for partnering with others. This is subject to a decision by the Plas Tan y Bwlch Board together with the Chairs and Vice Chairman on which elements of the re-development should proceed. 	To proceed as resolved.	CX/GIJ	<p>A consultation process has been completed with relevant staff members and the outcomes discussed with Authority Members.</p> <p>An alternative business model has been discussed. Further discussions with Members will take place during meetings of the Plas Tan y Bwlch Board.</p> <p>Update: An alternative business model has been agreed and is in the process of being implemented.</p>	YES COMPLETED



TAFLEN WEITHREDU – ACTION SHEET

AUTHORITY MEETING – 09.12.2020

ITEM NO. AND TITLE	DECISIONS / OBSERVATIONS	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	UPDATE or COMPLETION DATE	REMOVE FROM ACTION LOG
6 (1) Notice of Motion by Cllr Elwyn Edwards	RESOLVED - to confirm the average annual salary in the Snowdonia National Park, and - to bring the matter to the attention of Julie James, MS, Minister for Housing and Local Government.	To proceed as resolved.	CX	Average salary confirmed. Matter brought to the attention of WG Ministers in a letter sent on 21.12.21 to the Minister for Housing and Local Government and copied for information to the Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs. COMPLETED	YES
6 (2) Notice of Motion by Cllr John Pughe Roberts	RESOLVED - to endorse the statement and bring the matter to the attention of Lesley Griffiths, MS, Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs.	To proceed as resolved.	CX	Letter sent to the Minister for the Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs. COMPLETED	YES
7 Action Log	Authority Meeting 10.04.19 Action Item 12 – Europarc Youth Manifesto	To progress this action as a matter of urgency.	GIJ/HP	No progress to report.	NO



TAFLEN WEITHREDU – ACTION SHEET

ITEM NO. AND TITLE	DECISIONS / OBSERVATIONS	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	UPDATE or COMPLETION DATE	REMOVE FROM ACTION LOG
10. Base Revenue Budget 2021/22	The Director of Land Management agreed to provide Members with an update on Affordable Housing Commuted Sums Expenditure.	To present the update report.	JC	To be reported to Members during Planning and Access Committee meeting in March or April 2021.	NO
12. Consultation Documents relating to Corporate Joint Committees.	RESOLVED that a copy of the Authority's response should be circulated to members, for information/comment.	To provide Members with a copy of the response.	JC	Authority's response circulated to members. COMPLETED	YES



Reference: 2182A2020-21

Date issued: December 2020

Audit of Snowdonia National Park Authority's assessment of 2019-20 performance

Certificate

I certify that I have audited Snowdonia National Park Authority's (the Authority) assessment of its performance in 2019-20 in accordance with section 17 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 (the Measure) and my Code of Audit Practice.

As a result of my audit, I believe that the Authority has discharged its duties under sections 15(2), (3), (8) and (9) of the Measure and has acted in accordance with Welsh Government guidance sufficiently to discharge its duties.

Whilst the Authority has discharged its performance reporting responsibilities under the Measure, it should improve how it demonstrates the effectiveness of its services by further reporting on how its performance compares with others and how it is performing across a range of years. This will help citizens and partners to judge how well services are working.

Respective responsibilities of the Authority and the Auditor General

Under the Measure, the Authority is required to annually publish an assessment which describes its performance:

- in discharging its duty to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of its functions;
- in meeting the improvement objectives it has set itself;
- by reference to performance indicators specified by Welsh Ministers, and self-imposed performance indicators; and
- in meeting any performance standards specified by Welsh Ministers, and self-imposed performance standards.

The Measure requires the Authority to publish its assessment before 31 October in the financial year following that to which the information relates, or by any other such date as Welsh Ministers may specify by order.

The Measure requires that the Authority has regard to guidance issued by Welsh Ministers in publishing its assessment.

As the Authority's auditor, I am required under sections 17 and 19 of the Measure to carry out an audit to determine whether the Authority has discharged its duty to publish an assessment of performance, to certify that I have done so, and to report whether I believe that the Authority has discharged its duties in accordance with statutory requirements set out in section 15 and statutory guidance.

Scope of the audit

For the purposes of my audit work I will accept that, provided an authority meets its statutory requirements, it will also have complied with Welsh Government statutory guidance sufficiently to discharge its duties.

For this audit I am not required to form a view on the completeness or accuracy of information. Other assessment work that I will undertake under section 18 of the Measure may examine these issues. My audit of the Authority's assessment of performance, therefore, comprised a review of the Authority's publication to ascertain whether it included elements prescribed in legislation. I also assessed whether the arrangements for publishing the assessment complied with the requirements of the legislation, and that the Authority had regard to statutory guidance in preparing and publishing it.

The work I have carried out in order to report and make recommendations in accordance with sections 17 and 19 of the Measure cannot solely be relied upon to identify all weaknesses or opportunities for improvement.



Adrian Crompton

Auditor General for Wales

CC: Julie James AM – Minister for Housing and Local Government

Nick Selwyn – Manager

ITEM NO. 9

MEETING	Snowdonia National Park Authority
DATE	3 February 2021
TITLE	THE AUTHORITY'S BUDGET & LEVY ON CONSTITUENT AUTHORITIES 2021/22
REPORT BY	Chief Finance Officer
PURPOSE	To approve the 2021/22 revenue and capital budget and the levies on constituent authorities on the basis of the Welsh Government draft grant allocation figure for the Authority.

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report details the Authority's revenue budget for 2021/22 based on the draft National Park Grant settlement for 2021/22. The final grant settlement will be confirmed in March 2021, so there is potential for change in the meantime.
- 1.2 This report also contains details of the levy apportioned between the two constituent authorities of Gwynedd Council and Conwy County Borough Council on the basis of the indicative grant figure.
- 1.3 The budgets presented in this report are based on a standstill budget. That is, an unavoidable level of expenditure to continue with the current level of services in 2021/22, with no developmental additions.

2. Revenue Budget 2021/22

- 2.1 Information on the draft settlement was received late on 21 December, stating: "there is a 10% increase in the Welsh Government's core revenue budget for NPAs in 2021-22. Therefore, SNPA's draft allocation is £4,119,789 - up from £3,745,263 in 2020-21." This encouraging news means that the information in the report on the "Base Revenue Budget 2021/22" presented to the Authority's meeting on 9 December 2020 needs to be updated.
- 2.2 The draft settlement means that the Authority has a surplus of £476,251 available for 2021/22, but there is no guarantee that this level of funding will be maintained in the 2022/23 settlements and beyond. Therefore, the surplus of £476,251 is designated as a "one-off" expenditure line allocated to the Management Team in the 2021/22 budget, with usage options to be discussed with Authority Members in the March 2021 working group.

- 2.3 Additional revenue (£275,214) and capital (£314,530) funding was received in 2020/21 for use over the two years 2020/21 and 2021/22. The revenue funding has already been allocated to various projects with most of the money included in the 2021/22 budget. The capital was not committed in case there would be a cut in the grant settlement. The capital sum is also included as a "one off" capital line under the care of the Management Team, and used for further discussion in the Member working group.
- 2.4 Some adjustments have been made, and a revised version of the budget change details presented in December is presented here in Appendix 1.

3. Revenue Budget Analysis 2021/22

- 3.1 Based on the draft grant figure (10% increase), Appendices 2 and 3 contain information on the Authority's budget for 2021/22, analysing the net revenue budget at key service area level (Appendix 2) and based on standard subjective headings (Appendix 3).
- 3.2 Appendix 4 contains a more detailed breakdown of the revenue budget at a level relating to each individual department in each key service area. The analysis and net cost of services also include estimates for capital costs.
- 3.3 Individual grant schemes increase the Authority's gross revenue "cash" expenditure (£11,006,059) by £4,200,718 for 2021/22 of which the LIFE scheme accounts for £1,003,440 and £1,301,218 in capital.

4. Capital Budget 2021/22

- 4.1 Gross capital expenditure is estimated at £1,636,048 funded from capital grants, together with contributions from the Authority's revenue budget and reserves. (see Appendix 5 for details).

The £1,636,048 is funded from:

Welsh Government capital grants received in advance	£1,301,218
The Authority's Baseline and Reserves	<u>£334,830</u>
	<u>£1,636,048</u>

5. Use of Reserves

- 5.1 At the time of writing it is anticipated that the 2021/22 budget will comprise a net contribution of £2,164,358 from the Authority's funds. This figure includes £1,722,738 of Welsh Government grants received in advance and transferred to a reserve. A summary is provided below, full details are in Appendices 6 and 7.

The above £2,164,358 includes:	£	£
Welsh Government grants - revenue	421,520	
Other grants - revenue	107,150	

SNPA - revenue	<u>182,960</u>	711,630 (Appendix 6)
Welsh Government Grants – capital	1,301,218	
APCE – capital	<u>151,510</u>	<u>1,452,728</u> (Appendix 7)
		<u>£2,164,358</u>

6. Levy on Constituent Authorities

- 6.1 Section 71 of the Environment Act 1995 and the National Park Authorities Levy (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations prescribe the method of levy setting, and the Authority is required to approve the levies before they can be claimed by the relevant constituent authorities.
- 6.2 The levies are awarded on the basis of one third of the National Park Grant received by the Welsh Government. The levy is apportioned between the constituent authorities in accordance with the “relevant proportions” set out in Regulation 5 and the Schedule to the above Act.
- 6.3 The table below shows the distribution of the levy based on the grant figure received from the Welsh Government and the “relevant proportions” of the Schedule to the Act.

2021/22	(£)	Proportions	(£)
Government Grant	4,119,789		
Total Levies	1,373,262		
Funding Total	5,493,051		
Levy Apportionment :	Gwynedd Council	77.1%	1,058,785
	Conwy County Borough Council	22.9%	314,477
	Total	100%	1,373,262

- 6.4 How the budget of £7,607,409 is funded (see appendices 2-4) is summarised as follows:

Government Grant	£4,119,789
Total Levies	£1,373,262
Contribution (net) from Reserves	<u>£2,164,358</u>
Budget 2021/22	<u>£7,657,409</u>

7. RECOMMENDATION

- 7.1 To approve the Snowdonia National Park Authority's revenue and capital budget for 2021/22, and to note the intention to discuss the revenue surplus of £476,251 together with the uncommitted capital sum at the March Working Group meeting.
- 7.2 To approve the levies on billing authorities, as set out in section 6.3 above.

		(£)	(£)
1	Final Base Budget 2020/21		5,652,267
2	"One time" costs		
	- reversing 2020/21 costs		
	Management Team "One time" projects line	-21,000	
	Reservoirs Inspections (once every 10 years)	2,000	
	Snowdon Interpretation Plan	-8,880	
	Electric charging points (grant LI.C.)	-2,500	
	- including 2021/22 costs		
	Property valuations in 2021/22	25,000	
	Additional cleaning re Covid-19 requirements	20,000	
	Additional domestic cleaning e.g. sanitisers, re Covid-19 requirements	5,000	
	Hafod Eryri rent lost due to the intention to stay closed	55,000	
	Asbestos review	10,000	
	Leasing vehicles for seasonal wardens	10,000	
	"One time" revenue line (surplus on the increase in grant settlement)	476,251	
	"One time" line - capital	<u>314,530</u>	885,401
3	Change in staff costs		
	Effect of reducing staffing at Plas Tan y Bwlch	-295,280	
	Salaries inflation (extra £250)	12,470	
	Provision for salaries inflation (1%)	38,000	
	Grant schemes	165,735	
	Other movements	<u>22,303</u>	-56,772
4	Change in expenditure		
	Increase		
	Ysgwrn	16,460	
	Cyber security	3,000	
	Capital schemes	36,560	
	Decrease		
	Plas Tan y Bwlch	-314,340	
	Transfer to the Planning payroll budget	-2,000	
	Schemes		
	Capital grant schemes	804,178	
	Dolgellau Townscape Heritage Scheme	1,340	
	Carneddau Landscapes Partnership	28,250	
	National Grid grant scheme	-3,260	
	Contribution towards the Sherpa scheme	10,000	
	Youth Manifesto Scheme	-25,000	
	Harlech and Arduwry scheme	24,000	
	Ysgwrn (HLF scheme)	<u>-3,365</u>	575,823
5	Change in income		
	Increase		
	ERAMMP scheme contribution (ends March 2023)	-17,000	
	Decrease		
	Dark Skies (income received in advance and utilised in 2021/22)	25,500	
	Bank interest	15,000	
	Plas Tan y Bwlch	<u>567,190</u>	590,690
6	General Inflation Provision		10,000
7	Base Budget 2021/22		<u>7,657,409</u>
8	National Park Grant and Levy 2021/22		-5,493,051

9 Net Contribution from Reserves

Revenue Grants reserve (Welsh Govt. 20/21) - Engagement Officer (Digital Communications)	-29,670
Revenue Grants reserve (Welsh Govt. 20/21) - increasing support for volunteers	-12,170
Revenue Grants reserve (Welsh Govt. 20/21) - seasonal wardens	-58,210
Revenue Grants reserve (Welsh Govt. 20/21) - Ecologist	-35,850
Revenue Grants reserve (Welsh Govt. 20/21 £31,810 and Others £15,990) - Dark Skies	-47,800
Revenue Grants reserve (Welsh Govt. 20/21) - extending the Peatlands Officer employment	-45,190
Contribution to the LIFE scheme	-35,450
Carneddau - revenue	-25,000
Contribution to Carneddau (Data Lidar)	-17,590
Contribution to Carneddau (Paths)	-32,500
Harlech and Arduwy scheme (revenue)	-61,110
Harlech ac Arduwy scheme (capital)	-40,000
Dolgellau Townscape Heritage scheme	-82,910
Snowdon Interpretation Plan	-50,000
Snowdon Partnership Plan	-47,780
Management Team "one time" line (capital grant reserve)	-314,530
Dark Skies - capital (Welsh Govt.)	-25,000
Water Refill Stations (Welsh Govt. grant)	-12,040
Vehicle Electric Charging Points	-13,040
Hafod Eryri	-226,230
Betws Y Coed Information Centre	-77,780
Penmaen Brith (circular route)	-25,000
Llyn Cynwch, Dolgellau circular route	-30,000
Snowdon Circular route : Bwlch Maesgwn to Brithdir	-50,328
Snowdon Circular route : Brithdir to Pen Ceunant	-40,000
Information for walkers and other groups at Ogwen	-30,000
Gorseddau site	-50,000
Nant Gwynant Crossing Point	-45,000
Cadair Idris Upland Paths	-50,000
Llyn Llywelyn, Drws y Coed, Rhyd Ddu path	-30,000
Lon Gwyrfai	-30,000
Snowdon Partnership (videos)	-15,000
Grant schemes exit costs	-8,000
Snowdon Partnership Officer	-35,850
Contribution to Sherpa service (Welsh Govt. grant 20/21)	-10,000
Contribution to the Youth Manifesto scheme	-20,010
Contribution to the Snowdon Partnership Plan	-30,000
Contribution to the Well Being Paths scheme	-40,000
Contribution to the new Website	-42,760
Contribution to the Property Officer (fixed term appointment)	-34,460
Financing new Planning System	-60,000
Contribution to National Grid scheme	-91,160
Contribution to the Ysgwrn (additional finance to the £17k base budget committment)	-31,940
Document Management System from 19/20 Slippage	-50,000
Contribution towards the cost of Valuation of the Authority's land and buildings	-25,000
	<u>-2,164,358</u>

10 Surplus

0

Atodiad 2 / Appendix 2

**CRYNODEB O'R GYLLIDEB REFENIW 2021/22
REVENUE BUDGET SUMMARY 2021/22**

PRIF FEYSYDD GWASANAETH / KEY SERVICE AREAS

Gwasanaeth / Service :	Cyllideb Net / Net Budget 2021/22	
	£	%
Cynllunio a Rheolaeth Tir/ Planning and Land Management	2,728,270	41.2
Corfforaethol / Corporate	3,844,141	58.1
Balansau, Arian Wrth Gefn a Darpariaethau / Balances, Reserves & Provisions	48,000	0.7
Cyllideb Net Gwasanaethau / Net Services Budget	6,620,411	100.0
LLog ar Arian Dros Ben / Interest Earned on Surplus Funds	-8,000	
Cyllido Gwariant Cyfalaif / Financing of Capital Expenditure	1,636,048	
Addasiad Taliadau Cyfalaif / Capital Charges Adjustment	-591,050	
Cyfanswm Cyllideb Cyfrif Refeniw / Total Revenue Account Budget	7,657,409	
Daw'r Arian O / Financed by :-		
Cronfeydd wrth gefn / Reserves (prosiectau/projects)	2,164,358	28.3
Grant y Parc Cenedlaethol / National Park Grant	4,119,789	53.8
Dyriadaid Lefi Rhwng Cynghorau Lleol / Levy Allocation between Constituent Authorities :-		
Cyngor Gwynedd Council	1,058,785	13.8
Cyngor Conwy Council	314,477	4.1
	7,657,409	100.0

Atodiad 3 / Appendix 3

**CRYNODEB O'R GYLLIDEB REFENIW 2021/22
REVENUE BUDGET SUMMARY 2021/22**

LEFEL ODDRYCHOL / SUBJECTIVE ANALYSIS

	Cyllideb / Budget 2021/22 %	
	£	
Gweithwyr / Employees	4,692,840	47.1
Tir ag Adeiladau / Premises & Grounds	1,791,780	18.0
Cludiant / Transport	169,160	1.7
Cyflenwadau a Gwasanaethau / Supplies & Services	2,668,231	26.8
Taliadau Cyfalaif / Capital Charges	591,050	5.9
Arian Wrth Gefn a Darpariaethau / Reserves & Provisions	48,000	0.5
Cyllideb Gros Gwasanaethau / Gross Services Budget	9,961,061	100.0
Incwm / Income	-3,340,650	
Cyllideb Net Gwasanaethau / Net Services Budget	6,620,411	
LLog ar Arian Dros Ben / Interest Earned on Surplus Funds	-8,000	
Cyllido Gwariant Cyfalaif / Financing of Capital Expenditure	1,636,048	
Addasiad Taliadau Cyfalaif / Capital Charges Adjustment	-591,050	
Cyfanswm Cyllideb Cyfrif Refeniw / Total Revenue Account Budget	7,657,409	

Atodiad 4 / Appendix 4					
CYLLIDEB REFENIWI 2021/22 REVENUE BUDGET 2021/22					
	Costau Gweithwyr a Chostau Rhedeg	Costau Cyfalaif	Cyllideb Gros 2021/22	Gwerthu, Ffioedd ac Ircwm Grant	Cyllideb Net 2021/22
	Employee Costs & Running Expenses	Capital Charges	Gross Budget 2021/22	Sales Fees & Grant Income	Net Budget 2021/22
	£	£	£	£	£
Cynllunio a Rheolaeth Tir / Planning and Land Management					
Archeoleg / Archaeology	60,340	0	60,340	0	60,340
Treftadaeth Diwylliannol / Cultural Heritage	70,480	0	70,480	0	70,480
Cynllun Treftadaeth Trefun Dolgellau / Dolgellau Townscape Heritage scheme	43,290	0	43,290	-20,780	22,510
Harlech ac Ardudwy	61,110	0	61,110	0	61,110
Ysgwm	109,130	45,250	154,380	-60,190	94,190
Cynllun Partneriaeth Tirwedd Carneddau - Carneddau Landscape Partnership Scheme	496,290		496,290	-471,290	25,000
Cynllunio/ Planning Cadwraeth a Maaethyddiaeth / Conservation and Agriculture	707,830	3,320	711,150	-176,500	534,650
Cynllun Rheoli Cynaladwy Mawndiroedd Cymru / Welsh Peatlands Sustainable Management Scheme	426,850	10,580	437,430	-19,220	418,210
Cynllun Rheoli Cynaladwy Dalgylch Afon Eden / Eden River Catchment Sustainable Management Scheme	45,190	0	45,190	0	45,190
Cynllun Rheoli Cynaladwy Uwch Gwyrfa / Uwch Gwyrfa Sustainable Management Scheme	0	0	0	0	0
LIFE-Coedwigoedd Celtaidd / LIFE - Celtic Rainforests	1,003,440	0	1,003,440	-928,580	74,860
RhMMAMG / ERAMMP	347,250	0	347,250	-347,250	0
Awyr Dywyll / Dark Skies Cynllun Grid Cenedlaethol (Maentwrog-Dwyrafn) / National Grid Scheme (Maentwrog - East)	47,800	0	47,800	0	47,800
Cynllun Grid Cenedlaethol (Maentwrog-Gorlewin) / National Grid Scheme (Maentwrog - West)	124,840	0	124,840	-33,680	91,160
Mynediad i'r Cyhoedd / Public Access Wardeinaiad, Gweithwyr Stad a Gwirfoddolwyr / Wardens, Estate Workers and Volunteers	110,820	4,640	115,460	-3,730	111,730
Plas Tan Y Bwlch	1,019,790	62,220	1,082,010	-10,970	1,071,040
4,674,450	126,010	4,800,460	-2,072,190		2,728,270
Corfforaethol / Corporate					
Gweinyddol / Administration	219,470	0	219,470	-300	219,170
Cyflid / Finance	166,320	1,250	167,570	0	167,570
Technoleg Gwybodaeth / Information Technology	293,800	24,980	318,780	0	318,780
Cyfreithiol / Legal	52,290	0	52,290	0	52,290
Personel / Personnel	108,250	0	108,250	0	108,250
Cyflithu / Translation	109,350	1,430	110,780	0	110,780
Pencadlys / Headquarters	112,720	121,690	234,410	-12,000	222,410
Cymorth i Aelodau a'r Awdurdod / Members & Authority Support	188,320	0	188,320	0	188,320
Rheoli Corfforaethol / Corporate Management	608,150	0	608,150	-18,000	590,150
Prosiectau "un tro"	476,251	0	476,251	0	476,251
Plas Tan Y Bwlch	299,530	225,540	525,070	-238,620	286,450
Eiddo / Property	259,330	0	259,330	0	259,330
Cyflusteriau Ymwelwyr / Visitor Facilities	229,600	67,280	296,880	-16,160	280,720
Meisydd Parcio / Car Parks	303,350	3,090	306,440	-730,020	-423,580
Llyn Tegid	34,150	2,030	36,180	-56,120	-19,940
Casglu Ysbwriel / Litter Collection	15,000	4,510	19,510	0	19,510
Ymgysylltu / Engagement	453,030	7,300	460,330	-4,130	456,200
Prosiect Safle Gwe / Website project	42,760	0	42,760	0	42,760
Manifesto Ieuengt / Young People's Manifesto	20,010	0	20,010	0	20,010
Llwybrau Llesiant / Well Being Routes	40,000	0	40,000	0	40,000
Mynydda Diogel / Mountain Safe Cynllun Rheolaeth a Phartneriaethau / Park Management Plan and Partnerships	30,000	0	30,000	0	30,000
Canolfannau Gwybodaeth / Information Centres	250,330	0	250,330	0	250,330
Traffic a Thrafniadaeth / Traffic and Transport	330,550	5,940	336,490	-193,110	143,380
	5,000	0	5,000	0	5,000
4,647,561	465,040	5,112,601	-1,268,460		3,844,141
Balansau, Arian wrth Gefn a Darpariaethau / Balances, Reserves & Provisions					
Darpariaeth Chwyddiant Cyffredinol / General Prices Inflation - Provision	10,000	0	10,000	0	10,000
Darpariaeth Chwyddiant Cyflogau / Payroll Inflation Provision	38,000	0	38,000	0	38,000
	48,000	0	48,000	0	48,000
Cyfanswm Cyflid Gwasanaethau / Total Services Budget	9,370,011	591,050	9,961,061	-3,340,650	6,620,411
LLog ar Arian Dros Ben / Interest Earned on Surplus Funds	0	0	0	-8,000	-8,000
Cyflido Gwariant Cyfalaif / Financing of Capital Spend	1,636,048	0	1,636,048	0	1,636,048
Addasiad Taliaid Cyfalaif / Capital Charges Adjustment	0	-591,050	-591,050	0	-591,050
Cyfanswm Cyflid Cyfrif Refenwi / Total Revenue Account Budget	11,006,059	0	11,006,059	3,348,650	7,657,409

Description	(£)
Cultural Heritage Schemes	113,080
Dolgellau Townscape Heritage Scheme	96,810
Access - projects	10,000
Wardens - vehicles	14,000
Dark Skies	25,000
New Planning System	60,000
Document Management System	50,000
Vehicle Electric Charging Points	13,040
Water Refill Stations	12,040
Hafod Eryri	226,230
Betws y Coed Information Centre	77,780
SMS grant scheme exit costs	8,000
Information Technology Replacement Programme	22,340
Carneddau - Data Lidar	17,590
Carneddau - Llwybrau	32,500
Penmaen Brith (circular route)	25,000
Llyn Cynwch, Dolgellau circular route	30,000
Snowdon Circular Route : Bwlch Maesgwn to Brithdir	50,328
Snowdon Circular Route : Brithdir to Pen Ceunant	40,000
Harlech and Arduudwy	40,000
Information for Walkers and other groups at Ogwen	30,000
Gorseddau Site	50,000
Nant Gwynant Crossing Point	45,000
Cadair Idris - Upland Paths	50,000
Llyn Llywelyn, Drws y Coed and Rhyd Ddu path	30,000
Lôn Gwyrfaï	30,000
Snowdon Partnership (Videos)	15,000
Management Team "one-time" projects line	314,530
Snowdon Interpretation Plan	50,000
Snowdon Partnership Scheme	47,780
Website Project	10,000
	1,636,048

Revenue Reserves Utilised for 2021/22

Appendix 6

Project	Reserve	(£)	(£)	(£)
Ysgwrn	Match Funding Reserve	31,940		
Celtic Rainforests (LIFE)	Match Funding Reserve	35,450	67,390	67,390
Harlech and Ardustry	Projects Reserve	61,110		
Carneddau Landscape Scheme	Projects Reserve	25,000		
Property Officer	Projects Reserve (10% SLSP)	4,460	90,570	90,570
Property Valuation	Asset Management Reserve	25,000	25,000	25,000
Dark Skies	Revenue Grants (Local Authorities)	15,990	15,990	
National Grid Scheme (East Maentwrog)	Revenue Grants (National Grid)	91,160	91,160	
Ecologist	Revenue Grants (Welsh Government)	35,850		
Peatlands	Revenue Grants (Welsh Government)	45,190		
Dark Skies	Revenue Grants (Welsh Government)	31,810		
Seasonal Wardens	Revenue Grants (Welsh Government)	58,210		
Property Officer	Revenue Grants (Welsh Government)	30,000		
Contribution towards Sherpa Scheme	Revenue Grants (Welsh Government)	10,000		
Engagement Officer (Digital Communications)	Revenue Grants (Welsh Government)	29,670		
Increase hours for the Volunteers Co-ordinator	Revenue Grants (Welsh Government)	12,170		
Website	Revenue Grants (Welsh Government)	42,760		
Youth Manifesto	Revenue Grants (Welsh Government)	20,010		
Well-being Routes	Revenue Grants (Welsh Government)	40,000		
Mountain Safe - Snowdon Partnership	Revenue Grants (Welsh Government)	30,000		
Snowdon Partnership	Revenue Grants (Welsh Government)	35,850	421,520	528,670
				<u>711,630</u>

Capital Reserves Utilised for 2021/22

Appendix 7

Project	Reserve	(£)	(£)
Dolgellau Townscape Heritage Scheme	Match Funding Reserve	82,910	82,910
Planning System	Capital Grants (Welsh Government)	41,400	
Gorseddau Site	Capital Grants (Welsh Government)	50,000	
Harlech and Arduddy	Capital Grants (Welsh Government)	40,000	
Carneddau (Data Lidar)	Capital Grants (Welsh Government)	17,590	
Carneddau (Paths)	Capital Grants (Welsh Government)	32,500	
Sustainable Management Schemes exit costs	Capital Grants (Welsh Government)	8,000	
Dark Skies	Capital Grants (Welsh Government)	25,000	
Snowdon Circular Route : Bwlch Maesgwn to Brithdir	Capital Grants (Welsh Government)	50,328	
Snowdon Circular Route : Brithdir to Pen Ceunant	Capital Grants (Welsh Government)	40,000	
Penmaen Brith (circular route)	Capital Grants (Welsh Government)	25,000	
Nant Gwynant Crossing Point	Capital Grants (Welsh Government)	45,000	
Llyn Llywelyn, Drws y Coed, Rhyd Ddu path	Capital Grants (Welsh Government)	30,000	
Lôn Gwyrfai	Capital Grants (Welsh Government)	30,000	
Llyn Cynwch, Dolgellau circular route	Capital Grants (Welsh Government)	30,000	
Cadair Idris Upland Paths	Capital Grants (Welsh Government)	50,000	
Management Team	Capital Grants (Welsh Government)	314,530	
Vehicle Electric Charging Points	Capital Grants (Welsh Government)	13,040	
Water Refill Stations	Capital Grants (Welsh Government)	12,040	
Hafod Eryri	Capital Grants (Welsh Government)	226,230	
Information for Walkers and other groups at Ogwen	Capital Grants (Welsh Government)	30,000	
Snowdon Interpretation Plan	Capital Grants (Welsh Government)	50,000	
Snowdon Partnership Plan	Capital Grants (Welsh Government)	47,780	
Snowdon Partnership Plan (Videos)	Capital Grants (Welsh Government)	15,000	
Betws y Coed Information Centre	Capital Grants (Welsh Government)	77,780	1,301,218
Planning System	2018/19 Slippage	18,600	
Document Management System	2019/20 Slippage	50,000	68,600
		<u>1,452,728</u>	

ITEM NO. 10

MEETING	Snowdonia National Park Authority
DATE	3 February 2021
TITLE	CAPITAL STRATEGY 2021/22
REPORT BY	Chief Finance Officer
PURPOSE	To approve the Capital Strategy for 2021/22 and the Chief Finance Officer's recommendations with reference to the Prudential Code.

1 BACKGROUND

1.1 The Capital Strategy report gives a high-level overview of how capital expenditure, capital financing and treasury management activity contribute to the provision of National Park services along with an overview of how associated risk is managed and the implications for future financial sustainability.

1.2 The Strategy covers:-

- Capital Expenditure and Financing,
- Treasury Management including debt-free status,
- Investments for Service Purposes,
- Commercial Activities,
- Liabilities,
- Revenue Budget Implications, and
- Knowledge and Skills.

2 CAPITAL EXPENDITURE AND FINANCING

2.1 Capital expenditure is where the Authority spends money on assets, such as property or vehicles that will be used for more than one year. For the National Park Authority this includes spending on assets owned by other bodies, and grants to other bodies enabling them to renovate listed buildings. The Authority has some limited discretion on what counts as capital expenditure, for example assets costing below £10,000 are not capitalised and are charged to revenue in year.

- 2.2 In 2021/22 the Authority is planning capital expenditure of £1,636k as summarised below:

Table 1: Prudential Indicator: Estimates of Capital Expenditure in £ thousands

	2019/20 actual (£'000)	2020/21 forecast (£'000)	2021/22 budget (£'000)	2022/23 budget (£'000)	2023/24 budget (£'000)
General Fund (Corporate Services)	874	409	793	105	36
General Fund (External to the Authority)	515	314	843	459	202
Capital Investments	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	1,389	722	1,636	565	238

- 2.3 The main general fund capital projects for 2020/21 include £1.3m worth of Welsh Government funded capital schemes (£743k estimated programmed on corporate services). The single main Authority contribution is to the Cultural Heritage schemes (£113k) – this contribution varies between individual financial years due to the required contribution towards the Dolgellau Townscape HLF scheme. This scheme will finish in 2022/23 and the cultural heritage schemes budget will return to £149,490.

It is expected that circa £1m of Sustainable Landscapes, Sustainable Places (SLSP) monies will be allocated by Welsh Government to the Authority in 2021/22. The detail on individual projects is not available at the time of writing, so it's excluded from the tables in this report.

- 2.4 **Governance:** The allocation from the annual revenue budget tends to stand unrevised, and is usually supplemented by unspent budgets carried over from the previous financial year.
- 2.5 All capital expenditure must be financed, either from
 - external sources (government grants and other contributions),
 - the Authority's own resources (revenue, reserves and capital receipts) or
 - debt (borrowing, leasing and Private Finance Initiative).

The planned financing of the above expenditure is as follows:

Table 2: Capital financing in £ thousands

	2019/20 actual (£'000)	2020/21 forecast (£'000)	2021/22 budget (£'000)	2022/23 budget (£'000)	2023/24 budget (£'000)
External sources	1,129	497	1,301	350	43
Own resources	260	225	335	215	196
Debt	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	1,389	722	1,636	565	238

The “external sources” noted in the table above represents grants and contributions. The Authority is “debt free” and at present there is no intention of incurring debt. One potential scenario where short-term borrowing might be required is during the last 3 years (2023/24 – 2025/26) of the LIFE – Celtic Rainforest project, where there will be a significant negative cash-flow due to the last grant payment being withheld until the project is completed and audited. The present profile for the scheme shows a negative cash flow of £449,814 in 2023/24

- 2.6 The Authority has a capital receipts reserve which is forecasted to stand at £163,790 on 31/3/2021.
- 2.7 The Authority’s capital financing requirement therefore stands at zero and the Authority is expected to stay debt-free in 2021/22.
- 2.8 **Asset Management:** To ensure that capital assets continue to be of long-term use, the Authority has an asset management plan in place and it is currently being reviewed to determine the level of financial commitment required over the coming years.
- 2.9 **Asset Disposals:** No disposal of land and buildings is currently foreseen. Otherwise, the proceeds from disposals of vehicles and heavy plant are ring-fenced for financing replacements.

3 TREASURY MANAGEMENT

- 3.1 Treasury management is concerned with keeping sufficient but not excessive cash available to meet the Authority’s spending needs, while managing the risks involved. Surplus cash is invested until required, while a shortage of cash may be met by borrowing, to avoid excessive credit balances or overdrafts in the bank current account.
- 3.2 **Borrowing strategy:** It was agreed on discussing the Authority’s Policy on Borrowing in the Performance and Resources Committee (9/11/2016) that any future borrowing should be for a specific project with a sound business case. No

significant changes have occurred since, hence that policy stands. **Therefore, the Authority will, commence the 2021/22 financial year with no outstanding debt and is regarded for treasury management purposes as being debt-free.**

- 3.3 **Affordable Borrowing Limit:** The Authority is legally obliged to set an affordable borrowing limit (also termed the authorised limit for external debt) each year. In line with statutory guidance, a lower “operational boundary” is also set as a warning level should debt approach the limit.

Table 3: Prudential Indicators: Authorised limit and operational boundary in £ thousands

	2020/21 limit	2021/22 limit	2022/23 limit	2023/24 limit
Authorised limit - borrowing	500	500	500	500
Authorised limit - PFI and leases	0	0	0	0
Authorised limit - total external debt	500	500	500	500
Operational boundary - borrowing	100	100	100	100
Operational boundary - PFI and leases	0	0	0	0
Operational boundary - total external debt	100	100	100	100

While the recent improvement in the Authority’s funding position could suggest a reduced need for the ‘authorised borrowing limit’ and the ‘operational boundary’, no reduction is recommended, in order to retain flexibility, in the context of uncertainties with Brexit and volatility in Government funding.

- 3.4 Treasury investments arise from receiving cash before it is paid out again. Investments made for service reasons or for pure financial gain are not generally considered to be part of treasury management.
- 3.5 The Authority’s policy on treasury investments is to prioritise security and liquidity over yield; that is to focus on minimising risk, rather than maximising returns. Cash that is likely to be spent in the near term is invested securely, for example with the government, other local authorities, or selected high-quality banks, to minimise the risk of loss. The Authority, presently, does not hold investments for longer terms (these would be invested more widely, including in bonds, shares and property, to balance the risk of loss against the risk of receiving returns below inflation).
- 3.6 The contract with the Authority’s bankers, Barclays Bank Plc., allows free banking as long as the Authority holds a credit balance of £1,250,000 in the bank accounts. All cleared balances in excess of the £1,250,000 limit are transferred automatically at the end of each working day into the bank’s business reserve (interest earning) account, and maintaining a credit balance forms part of the investment strategy.

Where a Barclays bank branch is not easily available, establishments may pay in monies to Santander UK, via the Post Office.

- 3.7 The Authority's day to day cash flow will be monitored carefully throughout the year. Any surplus funds will be deposited with one or more of the following institutions:

- Bank of Scotland
- HSBC
- Santander UK
- Barclays Bank
- Lloyds Bank
- Nationwide Building Society
- UK Debt Management Office ("DMO")

- 3.8 Amounts invested will be dependent on the prevailing credit status and required minimum balances, whilst also maintaining sufficient balances to satisfy the Authority's cash flow requirements. The main emphasis is on safeguarding the Authority's monies and to this end finance officers arrange as even a spread as practically possible between the approved establishments (other than Barclays).

In lieu of the economic effect of the Covid-19 pandemic, and the requirement to adhere to the main principle of safeguarding the Authority's monies, term deposits have been limited to one month only. The situation is regularly reviewed.

- 3.9 At the time of writing the banks noted above have the appropriate credit rating (Fitch short-term credit rating F1 or better for holding short term deposits).

- 3.10 An exception to the requirement for banks to have the appropriate credit rating may be Barclays Bank in respect of the Authority's current account, where (should credit ratings fall) the Authority may continue to deposit surplus cash overnight.

Credit or debit card payments made for parking and received through the pay and display machines are processed through Allied Irish Bank which has an F2 rating. The risk is mitigated by the fact that these monies transfer over to Barclays within 3 working days.

- 3.11 Also, the Authority deposits cash with unrated building societies e.g. Nationwide Building Society where independent credit analysis shows them to be suitably creditworthy.

- 3.12 Should the approved financial institutions' credit ratings fall generally, the Authority will consider depositing cash with the UK Debt Management Office ("DMO"), to ensure security, but minimal interest receivable.

- 3.13 The Authority's investments are for treasury management purposes only i.e. there is no investment property held and no investment to support services.

Table 4: Treasury management investments in £ thousands

	31.3.2020 actual (£'000)	31.3.2021 forecast (£'000)	31.3.2022 budget (£'000)	31.3.2023 budget (£'000)	31.3.2024 budget (£'000)
Near-term investments	7,000	6,700	5,302	5,087	4,532
Longer-term investments	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	7,000	6,700	5,302	5,087	4,532

The table above reflects the fact that significant sums of “one-off” grants have been paid to the Authority in recent years, and are in the process of being spent. Other than the S.L.S.P. grant which is paid on expenditure incurred in the same financial year, there is no expectation of receiving other grants through Welsh Government over the next few years. Regarding the LIFE scheme, the profile shows income exceeding expenditure up to 2022/23 and then reverses until the scheme’s final year in 2025/26 (according to the present profile) when the final grant installment is received. Formal confirmation of the National Park Grant settlement for 2021/22 will not be received until March 2021. National Park grant settlements are unknown for 2022/23 and 2023/24. The above table excludes those monies required to maintain the Authority’s day to day solvency and the £1,250,000 required by Barclays.

3.14 **Governance:** Decisions on treasury management investment and borrowing are made daily and are therefore delegated to the Head of Finance and Finance staff,

as advised by, and in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer where necessary. The Head of Finance and Finance staff must act in line with the Treasury Management Strategy approved by the Authority in February each year. Reports on treasury management activity are presented to the Authority as follows:

- An interim report on the treasury management operation for 2021/22 will be submitted to the Authority before the end of the 2021 calendar year (written or oral as deemed appropriate).
- That the annual report on the treasury management operation for 2021/22 will be submitted at the June 2022 Authority meeting.

4 INVESTMENTS FOR SERVICE PURPOSES

The Authority does not undertake such investments, rather it provides assistance by means of grants through e.g. the Commissioning Fund, small grants fund, listed buildings budget.

5 COMMERCIAL ACTIVITIES

- 5.1 The Authority currently does not have investments in property purely for financial gain.
- 5.2 The Authority does engage in other commercial activity, such as bed & breakfast at the Plas Tan y Bwlch Centre, sales in the three Information Centres and at the Ysgwrn property. The proceeds contribute to the costs of running the individual services. As noted in the 2019/20 Statement of Accounts - £2,513k generated from fees and other service based income. The main components are as follows :
- Car Park fee income £884k
 - Study Centre course fees £496k
 - Planning Fees £185k
 - Information Centre sales £159k
 - Rent £141k
- 5.3 The risks involved are managed through the Plas Tan y Bwlch management board, Ysgwrn management board and budget monitoring reports to Authority members. Plas Tan y Bwlch and Ysgwrn are also included on the Corporate Risk Register.

6 LIABILITIES

- 6.1 Whilst the Authority is debt-free, it is committed to making future payments to cover its pension fund deficit (valued at £4,589k as at 31/3/2020). The Authority has received substantial amounts of “one-off” revenue and capital grants paid in advance over recent years – most of these have been transferred to the revenue and capital grants reserves whilst others (including grants relating to the ERAMMP and LIFE schemes) have been recorded under creditors.
- 6.2 The Authority reviews its reserves annually.
- 6.3 **Governance:** The pension fund position is reported annually to members as part of the Annual Statement of Accounts. The position regarding utilisation of grants and progress against profile is reviewed by the Head of Finance as part of the budget monitoring process which feeds into reports to members every September, December and March, and the Authority outturn report in May.

7 Revenue Budget Implications:

- 7.1 As the Authority is debt free, there are no debt interest charges to the revenue budget.
- 7.2 **Sustainability:** The Chief Finance Officer is satisfied that the proposed capital programme is prudent, affordable and sustainable because it does not require external debt financing.

8 KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

- 8.1 The Authority employs professionally qualified and experienced staff in senior positions with responsibility for making capital expenditure, borrowing and investment decisions. For example, the Chief Finance Officer is a qualified accountant with 40 years' relevant experience (17 years' experience as a statutory finance officer) with daily access to specialist treasury management advice, while the Head of Finance is also part qualified with 13 years' experience in the present post.
- 8.2 Where Authority staff do not have the knowledge and skills required, it is possible to use external advisers and consultants that are specialists in their field. Presently, the Authority's Treasury Management operations are comparatively straight forward, hence external expertise is not required, other than consultation as necessary with the Authority's Chief Finance Officer.

9 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 Note that there is no intention to borrow monies for capital purposes, but the limitations below are recommended on a prudent level as a precautionary measure in case of an emergency or need for expenditure at short notice.
- 9.2 To approve no change in:
 - (i) the Authorised Borrowing Limit of £500,000 for 2021/22, and an Operational Boundary of £100,000, and
 - (ii) no limit on the proportion of interest payable at a variable rate.
- 9.3 To adopt the Capital Borrowing Strategy for 2021/22 as outlined in paragraph 3.3 of the report, and to note the content relating to the Prudential Code (see tables under paragraphs 2.2, 3.3 and 7.1).
- 9.4 To adopt the Investment Strategy for 2021/22 as outlined in paragraphs 3.5-3.14 of the report, and note the institutions listed in paragraph 3.7.

MID TERM FINANCIAL PLAN : 2021/22 – 2024/25

SNOWDONIA NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 This is an overview document outlining the main financial matters that will affect the Authority over the coming years. The document is supported by a number of technical papers prepared by the Authority's Finance service, and with the Authority's Section 151 Officer advising on strategic forecasts.
- 1.2 This document explains the situation in compact form, and specifically to enable Authority Members and staff to gain further understanding in relation to:
 - Modelling scenarios,
 - Principles adopted when allocating resources,
 - Reaching a decision regarding the importance of any financial challenges / opportunities,
 - Principles for tackling funding pressures.

2. MID TERM FINANCIAL PLAN (MTFP) REQUIREMENT

- 2.1 This Mid Term Financial Plan (MTFP) illustrates the Authority's strategic approach towards managing its finances, and outlines a range of financial situations that could face the Authority over the next four years. The task of accomplishing the strategy depends on the resources available through Welsh Government (WG) settlements and how successful the Authority will be in balancing resources with service priorities.
- 2.2 The MTFP notes the general condition of the Authority budget and outlines a model of the financial resources required by the Authority for the service levels it hopes to provide in the mid term. This provides a framework which will enable Members and officers to develop detailed annual budget allocations.
- 2.3 The MTFP will be a key instrument for proactive financial management. It will be used as a basis for the process of setting the annual budget and ensuring that the resource requirements of the Authority for the coming year are sufficiently met and in line with the correct services, but will also allow for setting future financial needs far enough in advance so that plans can be set in motion for the appropriate steps to be taken to deal with the anticipated funding levels.
- 2.4 A new annual budget has to be prepared each year. The MTFP is updated each year as part of the annual budget planning cycle. Members will still be informed about the developments in the MTFP at Authority meetings (prior to the allocation of budgets by Members at the March Working Group this year), and the services will discuss the options regarding cost and savings and / or income generation as part of the annual budget planning cycle.
- 2.5 Following the 10% increase in the National Park Grant allocation for 2021-22 that has been received by Welsh Government, for the purposes of this report we assume that this core funding has not been confirmed for the following years, as approval has

only been given to the funding for a year. There will be a new government in place during the year, which could mean that priorities change.

- 2.6 Further to this, as Welsh Government have offered substantial capital funds, acting upon them could prove troublesome due to insufficient staff resources to support the achievement of those significant capital projects over an extended period.

3. MID TERM PRIORITIES AND AIMS OF THE AUTHORITY:

- 3.1 The MTFP will need to accomplish mid to long term priorities, together with the statutory aims and purposes of the Authority. The Authority's statutory purposes are defined in the Environment Act of 1995 as follows:

- Protect and enhance the natural beauty, wild life and cultural heritage of the area,
- Promote opportunities for the public to understand and enjoy the special characteristics of the area;

And in pursuing these purposes, the Authority should try and enhance the economic and social wellbeing of the local communities (of course this aspiration was confirmed in the Authority meeting on the 9th of December 2020).

- 3.2 The following documents are key to guiding the Authority during this period:

- The National Park Management Plan,
- The Local Development Plan,
- Our Vision,
- Business and Improvement Plan,
- Service Priorities,
- Corporate Work Programme,
- Welsh Government (WG) priorities in the document "Valued and Resilient" ("Gwerthfawr a Chydnerth").

- 3.3. The Covid-19 pandemic has meant coping with the situation in terms of protecting the public and the Authority's officers; accordingly grant funding from the 'hardship fund' has been claimed from Welsh Government during 2020/21 when available. The measures taken mean a very significant income loss for the Authority which must be considered in this MTFP along with the uncertainty of similar grant funding being available from Welsh Government for 2021/22 and further.

4. THE FINANCIAL CHALLENGE

- 4.1 Since the national park authorities were established in 1996, the Authority has been empowered to manage its own budget, but has endured a prolonged period of financial restrictions. The Covid-19 pandemic has added to this despite the financial support received to alleviate the financial effects.

However, 2020/21 has seen additional grant funding through Welsh Government, namely:

- £275,214 (revenue) and £314,530 (capital) to be used in the 2020/21 and 2021/22 financial years.
- £1,541,600 from “Sustainable Landscapes, Sustainable Places” (S.L.S.P.) to be spent in the 2020/21 financial year. It is expected that further grant funding allocation will be available in 2021/22, but the amount is not yet known to us.

In addition, it is noted that there will be an increase of 10% in our National Park Grant and associated levy in 2021/22. At the time of writing this report, the use of the budget surplus is yet to be decided. It is intended that discussions be held in the Members’ Working Group in March regarding this.

4.2 The Welsh Government (WG) has not published indicative figures for subsequent years 2022/23 – 2024/25, and it is expected that Westminster Government’s Chancellor will hold a far reaching ‘Comprehensive Spending Review’, which will mean a shakeup to the Welsh Government’s funding streams before 2022/23.

4.3 **Authority Basic Budget:**

Here is a summary of the situation regarding the initial budget of the Authority over the last 5 years:

Year	2020/21 £'000	2019/20 £'000	2018/19 £'000	2017/18 £'000	2016/17 £'000
Gross Revenue Expenditure	10,385	11,165	7,430	7,160	6,733
Revenue Income	-5,201	-6,307	-2,907	-2,299	-1,849
Net Revenue Expenditure	5,184	4,858	4,523	4,861	4,884
Net Capital Expenditure	1,795	998	184	222	351
Original Budget Total	6,979	5,856	4,707	5,083	5,235
Grant	3,745	3,745	3,550	3,745	3,745
Levy	1,248	1,248	1,183	1,248	1,248
Contingency Funds	1,986	863	-26	90	242
Budget Total	6,979	5,856	4,707	5,083	5,235

* The above table does not include cuts made during the year, the additional grants received or amendments made to the budget during the year.

4.4 **Annual Budgets:**

The Authority is obliged to set its budget in a timely manner. To set a levy on constitutional local authorities, this Authority needs to agree on a balanced budget by 11 February in any year. As Welsh Government will not be confirming the final grant settlement figure for 2021/22 before March, this could change in the meantime.

Should the settlement be higher than expected, the Authority will have to forego the additional levy. Should the settlement be lower, the Authority can seek agreement with the constituent Authorities to stay with the levy as approved in the Authority meeting on the 3rd of February. In the absence of any indicative budgets beyond 2021/22 the Authority is in a difficult position with regards to planning for these years. Whilst requesting that Welsh Government continues with the 2021/22 grant level for 2022/23 (with the 10% increase), it would not be prudent to plan on this basis.

4.5 Annual Financial Pressure on the Authority:

Each year the Authority incurs financial pressure. This pressure is the cumulative impact of:

- Inflation pressure
- Unavoidable commitments
- Planned efficiency measures / Income streams

The estimated cumulative financial pressure on the Authority over the next 4 years are summarised below:

Year	Expenditure (£)	Income (£)	Transfers from reserve (£)	Net additional expenditure (£)
2021/22	1,359,452	146,322	-1,505,774	0
2022/23	-458,251	444,368	0	-13,883
2023/24	89,000	0	0	89,000
2024/25	90,000	0	0	90,000

Note that the above figures for 2021/22 includes the grant funding effect on 'one-off' expenditure lines. A further analysis of the other above figures will be provided in this paper.

4.6 Pressures from Inflation:

As a rule a report is presented to the Authority on pressures resulting from inflation; these are the pressures stipulated for the next four years:

Year	2021/22 (£)	2022/23 (£)	2023/24 (£)	2024/25 (£)
Wages Inflation	50,440	78,000	79,000	80,000
General Inflation	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000

At the time of compiling the report, the Chancellor has recommended freezing salaries (with the exception of an additional £250 to everyone on a salary of less than £24,000) for 2021/22, but neither the employers nor the unions have agreed, as yet. Therefore, a provision equivalent to 1% (£38,000) has been included "in reserve" in the 2021/22 budget. A forecast of 2% for salary inflation has been inputted for the following year.

The general inflation figure has been retained at £10,000.

4.7 **Unavoidable Pressures:**

The following have been identified as pressures which the Authority cannot avoid:

- 2021/22 The draft settlement is an increase of 10% (£499,368) which gives a budget surplus of £476,251.

The income target for the Information Centres and car parks have been maintained at the same level as the 2020/21 budget. Flexibility has been built into the Plas Tan y Bwlch income budget, but Yr Ysgwrn has been retained at the usual yearly level. It is inevitable that there will be a reduction in income due to Covid-19 restrictions despite the expectation that more people will holiday within the UK. It is expected that a percentage of the budget surplus be kept to offset this reduction, which could be as much as £500,000 over the year.

- 2022/23 There is no indicative grant settlement. The only other known pressures are inflation based, although salary inflation is not known. The "one-off" costs (£70,000) for 2021/22 will be reversed and the rent income budget for Hafod Eryri (£55,000) will be re-established.

As previously noted, for the purposes of this paper consideration is given to the possibility that the increase of £499,368 in the National Park Grant for 2021/22 will not be permanent; therefore this is reversed for 2022/23, as well as the "one-off" expenditure line of £476,251.

- 2023/24 There is no indicative grant settlement. The only known pressures are inflation based. There will be a new actuarial valuation (3 year cycle) on the pension fund and therefore a revised employer pension contribution rate applicable for this financial year. The pension contribution can either increase or decrease, but this will not be known before the autumn of 2022.

- 2024/25 There is no indicitative grant settlement. The only known pressures are inflation based.

Whilst recognising the Authority's responsibility to maintain the listed building and gardens at Plas Tan y Bwlch, the current "service provision" arrangements are temporary, as running a bed and breakfast business which is likely to involve the use of public funds is not within the scope of the Authority's work objectives. No timetable has been set for the situation.

4.8 **Planned Efficiency Measures / Income :**

In terms of spending, implications of the Covid-19 pandemic has meant an increase in cleaning costs for at least 2021/22. The costs have been identified as "one-off" until the situation becomes clearer.

In terms of income, Hafod Eryri is expected to re-open in 2022/23 which will mean an additional £55,000 for the income budget.

4.9 Authority Reserves:

A review of the Authority's reserve funds is presented annually to the December meeting of the Authority. This year's review has been included in the 2021/22 Baseline Budget report, which was on the agenda at the Authority's December meeting.

The Authority has 14 reserves, namely:

Reserves	31/3/2020	Current	31/3/2021 (approx)
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Usable Capital Receipt Reserve	164	143	164
Section 106 Reserve	240	240	220
Revenue Grants Reserve	1,720	1,385	1,898
Capital Grants Reserve	2,257	917	2,267
Asset Management Reserve	234	205	234
Public Inquiry Reserve	225	225	225
Match Funding Reserve	1,063	803	837
Slippage Reserve	373	323	373
Projects Reserve	404	404	485
Snowdon Infrastructure Reserve	56	56	56
Specific Risks Reserve	424	424	457
Staff Resilience Reserve	120	120	120
Commercial Risks Reserve	100	100	100
General Revenue Reserve	659	659	264
Total	8,039	6,004	7,700

We are still awaiting a decision on the Hillside, Aberdyfi case, therefore the above does not include any estimate of the result.

As a result of the additional lockdown and the restrictions being extended further than that foreseen at the time of the December Authority meeting, an estimated further loss of £166,000 has been added to the deficit of £228,600 forecasted for 2020/21 in December.

The Authority formally reviews its reserves each year in order to ensure that appropriate resources are available.

4.10 National Park Grant Settlements:

As noted above the National Park Grant settlement figure is expected to show an increase of 10% for 2021/22, which gives a grant and levy total of £5,493,051, with the caveat that this is a draft figure, and may be subject to change. This is an increase of £499,368 on the £4,993,683 in 2020/21.

In the absence of indicative figures from the Welsh Government, the following are possible figures for the three subsequent years:

Change in funding from National Park Grant and levy	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
	(£)	(£)	(£)
+10%	549,310	494,370	444,940
+5%	274,650	260,920	247,870
+2.5%	137,330	140,760	144,280
+1%	54,930	55,480	56,030
0%	0	0	0
-1%	-54,930	-55,480	-56,030
-2.5%	-137,330	-140,760	-144,280
-5%	-274,650	-260,920	-247,870
-10%	-549,310	-494,370	-444,940

4.11 Cumulative effects:

The table below shows the cumulative effect of all factors as well as the change in the grant, namely: inflation pressures, unavoidable commitments, planned efficiency measures and income production against various funding scenarios for a period of 3 years:

Change in grant and levy	2022/23 (£)	2023/24 (£)	2024/25 (£)	Total (£)
+10%	600,188	515,240	574,660	1,690,088
+5%	325,536	199,390	212,800	737,726
+2.5%	188,213	51,760	54,280	294,253
+1%	105,813	-33,520	-33,970	38,323
0%	50,883	-89,000	-90,000	-128,117
-1%	-4,047	-143,380	-143,840	-291,267
-2.5%	-86,447	-222,890	-220,550	-529,887
-5%	-223,767	-349,920	-337,870	-911,557
-10%	-498,427	-583,370	-534,940	-1,616,737

Note that the current projection for 2020/21 shows an overspend against budget due to the Plas Tan y Bwlch redundancy cost and implications of the pandemic.

For the future, the wide range of possibilities above cannot be totally ruled out in the context of Westminster Government's 'Comprehensive Spending Revue' before 2022/23; but it is expected that the outcome would most probably be towards the centre path.

5. SERVICE PRIORITIES AND OPERATING PRINCIPLES:

5.1 Service Priorities:

The Authority has reviewed and adopted its service priorities and operating principles to help it in a challenging financial climate. The Authority's service priorities are as follows:

- Ensure that the aims in the Park Management Plan are successfully achieved by ourselves, our partners and our stakeholders in order to improve the condition of the Park;
- Ensure that the statutory planning function has sufficient resources and is efficiently managed to meet the demands of national policies, that it meets customer expectations and supports sustainable communities;
- Find new income sources to support the purposes of the Park and the Authority.
- Ensure that we are familiar with the demands of the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Environment Act (Wales) 2016 and deliver them;
- Demonstrate the advantages of the National Park Authority both locally and nationally in terms of managing such a special place as Snowdonia, for now and for future generations.
- Defend our staff, residents, users and the National Health Service from the spread of Covid-19 at a local, regional and national level.
- Ensure that staff and Members have sufficient support in their work arrangements during this situation, and that staff welfare is being supported.
- To address the operational needs and financial pressures arising from the constraints and challenges of operating in a challenging environment and the measures required when dealing with Covid-19.

5.2 Operating Principles:

The Authority has adopted the following operating principles (in accordance with part 3 of the current Corporate Work Programme):

- Enabling role with less emphasis on ownership and management;
- Avoid embarking on projects with long term maintenance commitments;
- Encourage and enable local communities to manage and take responsibility for providing services in their areas;
- Use electronic media as the main means of providing services and information;
- Strategic approach to sustainable tourism, environmental education and wardening;

- Finding new income sources to support the purposes of the Park and the Authority.

The Authority should ensure that each activity it plans is consistent with the above, and that this is the first parameter to use when setting the annual budget.

The way that the Authority carries out its duties during these hard economic times is just as important and in this context the Authority will adopt the following operating method:

- Incorporate even deeper sustainable development as a core principle to follow in pursuing all our duties;
- By working with our partners, adopt an enabling and facilitating role as we achieve our purposes;
- Evaluate all long term financial commitments and other commitments for every possible project;
- Work with our communities to achieve the Authority vision;

5.3 Financial Strategy:

The Authority has received additional grant funding in 2020/21 (£275,214 revenue and £314,530 capital) to be spent by 31/3/2022 as well as S.L.S.P grant funding (£1,541,600), and according to present information, an increase of 10% on the National Park Grant Settlement for 2021/22. In addition, further additional S.L.S.P grant funding is expected in 2021/22, to be spent within that financial year.

In general, the income targets for 2021/22 have been maintained on the same level as 2020/21. With Covid-19 restrictions likely to be in place for some months in 2021/22 and the possibility of re-introducing restrictions during the winter, provision needs to be made against loss of income (net from expenditure savings).

As there are no assurances that the 10% increase in the national park grant settlement is permanent, we will have to wait until next autumn / winter before receiving confirmation of this. As a result, we must be wary of committing to additional permanent expenditure in the meantime.

The additional money brings with it additional administrative work, therefore consideration needs to be given to the additional work pressure on some of the Authority's services.

5.4 Relevant Steps for the Future:

- Review the MTFP as relevant information becomes available to the Authority;
- Work in co-operation with Welsh Government (WG) Ministers and officials to ensure the continuation of the 10% increase in the National Park Grant for 2022/23 and beyond;

- Work in co-operation with Welsh Government (WG) Ministers and officials to develop commitment on indicative budgets in the future;
- Ensure that the Authority achieves its statutory implications;
- Establish “one-off” lines in the 2021/22 budget for use of the surplus budget in the 2021/22 budget (£476,251) and the additional capital grant for 2020/21 (£314,530), allocated to the Management Team;
- Ensure that capacity matters to deliver capital allocations are addressed.
- Ensure full use of the additional resources offered by Welsh Government through the S.L.S.P. funding allocation for 2021/22. It is expected that the allocation will be approximately £1m for Snowdonia National Park.

Working Document

ITEM NO. 12

MEETING	Snowdonia National Park Authority
DATE	3 February 2021
TITLE	YR YSGWRN ANNUAL REPORT
REPORT BY	Head of Cultural Heritage
PURPOSE	To update Members on progress at Yr Ysgwrn

1.0 OVERVIEW

- 1.1 2020 was an extremely difficult year due to impact of the Covid 19 pandemic and a whole program of activities had to be postponed.
- 1.2 The site was closed during lockdown and the Authority participated in the Job Protection Scheme. In mid-August, the site was re-opened on a part-time basis, on Fridays and Saturdays to up to two households per day. A successful online booking system was put in place however visitor numbers had to be restricted in order to follow the Welsh Government rules for reducing the spread of Covid 19 and site rules had to be changed as the national guidance and rules changed. Visitor feedback indicated that visitors felt safe onsite during their visit to Yr Ysgwrn.
- 1.3 Volunteers were invited back to the site but understandably (given the demographic and higher risk Covid 19 poses to older age groups), they all decided not to return straight away. Officers continue to engage with volunteers and in December we were able to hold screenings of the 2020 Carol Evening film for volunteers.
- 1.4 The Welsh Government's rules to prevent the spread of Covid 19 and protect public health have understandably led to a fundamental change in the practice of visiting sites such as Yr Ysgwrn. The National Lottery Heritage Fund warns that visitor practices won't fully stabilize until April 2022.
- 1.5 Current information indicates that museums and indoor attractions won't be allowed to reopen until restrictions fall to Tier 2. There is no forecast for when that will happen yet.
- 1.6 The pandemic situation continues to change regularly and although vaccinations are now being distributed, it is appropriate to plan prudently for 2021.

2.0 THE NATIONAL LOTTERY HERITAGE FUND

- 2.1 The Fund has been extremely supportive in the wake of the Covid 19 pandemic and the scheme was extended until February 28th, 2021.

- 2.2 Work on the project and final claim to the Heritage Lottery Fund is nearing completion.
- 2.3 As part of the project, two reports were commissioned, namely an Evaluation Report and an Audience Development Plan, both of which were presented to Yr Ysgwrn's Board in November 2020. The Evaluation report is required as part of the Heritage Fund project and is useful for reflecting on the successes and lessons of the project and in order to plan for the future. It is regrettable that the Covid 19 pandemic happened so soon after the commissioning of the Audience Development Plan. Despite the high standard of the work, the report has dated quickly but sets a useful framework for planning, although the reality is likely to be quite different, for a time at least.
- 2.4 The Heritage Fund scheme ends on 28.2.2021. The approved purposes have already been achieved and the project is projected to complete within budget.

3.0 ACTIVITY

- 3.1 A full activity program was organised for 2020, including a day of activities for families and young people, activities targeted at the local community, themed walks, arts and well-being workshops and seasonal activities. Although most events were being cancelled, some digital activities and projects were delivered:
- Participation in broader social media campaigns, e.g. #museumsuncovered and Digital Takeover Day.
 - Creating a virtual version of Hedd Wyn's In Character show with the Welsh History Festival. The new version is a bilingual education and BSL resource
 - Yr Ysgwrn Carol Evening film supported by Art Fund and the Welsh Government. Within 18 hours of the film being broadcast on social media at the beginning of December, over two thousand people had watched it. By 20.1.21, it had been viewed by 17,000 people.
 - Meirionnydd Place Names Session by Myrddin ap Dafydd and an All Hallows' Eve stories film by Siwan Llynor, supported by the Welsh Museums Festival. There were 49 attendees to the place names event.
 - Christmas events included, the 'Welsh Christmas' folk evening with Arfon Gwilym and Sioned Webb (35 people attended, 'Heriau Hud' Christmas show (36 children attended) and Siwan Llynor's Christmas story film.
 - Over the winter, Siwan Llynor will continue her film series with stories for St Dwynwen and St David's Days. These are funded through the Welsh Government's Sustainable Landscapes, Sustainable Places (SLSP) grant.
 - At the end of February, Lincoln Conservation will deliver a Zoom talk on Yr Ysgwrn's decorative finishes (paint and wallpaper).

4.0 DATA

- 4.1 In 2019, a plan was put in place to increase Yr Ysgwrn entry prices for 2020. Due to the extremely low visitor numbers this year, the price increase helped to increase income slightly.
- 4.2 Yr Ysgwrn visitor numbers from April-October 2020 were 96.97% lower than the same period in 2019-20 and sales in the same period were 97.95% lower than the same period last year.

5.0 FINANCE

- 5.1 The financial position of 2020-21 has been challenging. As officers, we are proud that the site was successfully re-opened in mid-August, coinciding with some the National Museum of Wales and National Trust sites and faster than some of these sites and other museums.

We are confident that this is a constructive step in terms of maintaining staff morale, marketing and trying to build public confidence in Yr Ysgwrn's ability to prepare, adapt and cope with the threat of Covid-19. However, it must be accepted that the move to re-open the site was not financially lucrative in the short term.

- 5.2 Yr Ysgwrn has been fortunate of financial support through various sources, which is likely to mean that we end the financial year within budget.

6.0 GRANTS

- 6.1 Yr Ysgwrn successfully submitted a series of successful grant applications during 2020/21 to the following funds:

Grant name	Awarded by	For what purpose?	Sum awarded	Completed?
Culture Recovery Fund	Welsh Government	Cost of reopening Yr Ysgwrn	£2,980	✓
Culture Resilience Fund	Welsh Government	Recovering some of Yr Ysgwrn's operational costs and projects and activities over the winter of 2020/21.	£30,740	Ongoing, To be completed by 31.3.21
Covid-19 Recovery Grants	Art Fund	Meeting audience needs and developing a sustainable offer. The grant was available to local government museums that weren't eligible for other emergency funding. An application was submitted for support to hold a virtual carol evening.	£1,000	✓
SNPA Covid-19 Aid Grant	Welsh Government	Loss of income	£11,690	✓
Welsh Museums Festival	Federation of Museums and Art Galleries in Wales	Holding events during the festival (October half term week) – a place names talk by Myrddin ap Dafydd and a film of traditional All Hallows' Eve stories by Siwan Llynor.	£600	✓

Sustainable Landscapes, Sustainable Places	Welsh Government	Sustainable tourism including infrastructure improvements and activities. Expenditure includes a back up LPG boiler, improvements to the servery upgrading the snug, promoting a mindfulness trail, creating an activity programme, improving signage, providing an events space and an external play area.	£155,000	Ongoing. To be completed by 19.3.21.
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7.0 2021 AND BEYOND

7.1 STAFFING

- 7.1.1 When Yr Ysgwrn re-opened in June 2017 until 2020/21, jobs were funded through a Heritage Lottery Fund grant. The staffing model was modified during this period but further review is required to ensure that staffing costs are sustainable.
- 7.1.2 An opportunity to do this now arose following the departure of the Site Manager in November 2020. Prior to the Covid 19 pandemic, the Head of Cultural Heritage had drawn up draft plans for possible staffing models that would change the emphasis from maintaining the site to engaging with target audiences and increase income.
- 7.1.3 This would be achieved by appointing a Visitor Experience Manager who would be responsible for engaging with and coordinating group visits, volunteers and supporting a freelance Marketing Manager to develop the annual events programme. The front of house team would be led by a Supervisor who would assume responsibility for rotas, ordering goods and coordinating general visits.
- 7.1.4 This staffing structure has been costed and included in the budget for 2021/22. However, as there is no suggestion at present that group travel (schools, societies and travel groups) will soon be permitted, as target audiences for Yr Ysgwrn, the appointment of an officer to the Visitor Experience Manager role cannot be justified. the time.
- 7.1.5 Nevertheless, in order to protect Yr Ysgwrn's future staffing budget post-Covid 19, Members' permission to retain the budget must be sought, with the understanding that it will not be spent until the situation stabilizes and production is complete. adequate income is more likely. That will mean a short-term cost saving, to make up for a lack of income.

7.2 ACTIVITIES

- 7.2.1 A programme of activities has been arranged for the current calendar year.
- 7.2.2 Should the pandemic permit, there is an option to carry out the activities onsite from the summer onwards, with an online contingency plan for each activity to avoid the need to cancel due to the pandemic.
- 7.2.3 Monthly volunteer sessions will be held on site, in accordance with Welsh Government rules. Due to the pandemic, these have been postponed for the time being.
- 7.2.4 We will undertake a series of activities and projects that will specifically engage with the local community in order to re-establish and build upon that relationship. These include a virtual drama project, a St David's Day fun day for schools and the Trawsfynydd Christmas Tree Festival.

8.0 BUDGET 2021/22

- 8.1 The table below shows the proposed budget for 2021/22.
- 8.2 The budget assumes staffing costs of opening an average of five days a week between Easter and the end of the October half term and that Yr Ysgwrn will meet its existing income targets.

	2020/21	2021/22
STAFF	(Part of the staffing costs for this year were paid by the Heritage Fund grant)	
Salaries	£37,080	£43,470
National Insurance	£1,740	£1,310
Pensions	£7,350	£8,620
Professional Fees	£0	£0
Workers Insurance	£0	£0
BUILDINGS AND LAND MAINTENANCE	0	0
Repairs and Maintenance	£2,100	£2,310
Land maintenance	£1,500	£1,650
Fire and intruder alarm	£2,260	£2,480
Electricity	£5,860	£7,030
Rates	£1,860	£1,930
Commercial waste	£650	£710
Heating cost – wood chip	£5,700	£3,840
Heating costs – coal	£570	£630
Emptying sewage tank	£0	£0
Water rates	£720	£800
Cleaning materials	£400	£600
Rates	£0	£0
LPG Boiler	£0	£2,000
TRANSPORT	£0	£0
Car allowances	£1,000	£1,100
Yr Ysgwrn vehicle maintenance	£1,040	£1,200

SUPPLIES AND SERVICES	£0	£0
Bought in services (freelance marketing manager)	£0	£9,000
Furniture and equipment	£350	£390
EPOS equipment maintenance	£100	£950
Retail goods for resale	£5,500	£6,050
Coffee shop goods for resale	£3,500	£3,850
Pest control	£480	£530
Post	£50	£50
Telephone	£1,410	£1,600
Various	£600	£600
Bank charges	£620	£680
Collection conservation	£750	£750
Membership subscriptions	£160	£180
Subsistence	£300	£330
Schools transport fund	£1,000	£1,000
Marketing	£1,000	£1,000
Public Relations	£300	£1,430
Activities	£560	£620
Total Costs (£)	£86,910	
Donations	£110	£0
Retail sales	£11,700	£11,700
Renewable Heating Incentive	£4560	£600
Electricity tariff (bungallow)	£790	£790
Coffee shop income	£10,550	£10,550
Entry fees	£32,750	£32,750
Land Rent	£4,000	£3,800
Total Income	-£64,460	-£60,190
Net budget	£22,450	£48,940

9.0 OPENING HOURS

- 9.1 Prior to the threat of the pandemic, the plan for 2020 was to open 7 days a week from Easter until the end of October and open by appointment to groups during the winter.
- 9.2 The situation remains unstable so it is impossible to plan at this stage for the exact structure of the opening of the site.
- 9.3 Employing two seasonal staff will cost £196.95 per day, equivalent to the income of selling 27 adult tickets, which means running three trips with ten people a day, just to cover the staffing costs. Cafe and shop income will be additional to this.

10.0 CONCLUSION

- 10.1 The year has been challenging due to the impact of the Covid pandemic 19. The low commercial income reflects the impact of restrictions on the running of the site as it has not been possible to welcome people in groups of normal size, whether family, friends or friends or are formal groups.

- 10.2 This shows how important formal groups, namely schools, societies and group travel companies are as an audience segment.
- 10.3 It is certain that some general visitors have stayed away because of the pandemic and nervousness from a personal and public health perspective.
- 10.4 Thanks to financial support through the job protection scheme and successful bids to various grant funds, the outlook is better than forecast at the start of this financial year when the first lockdown took hold.
- 10.5 The response to virtual activities – from the public and schools - has been positive and that bodes well for the future and the desire of the public to engage with Yr Ysgwrn.

11.0 RECOMMENDATION:

- 1. **For Members to discuss the contents of the paper.**
- 2. **For Members to contribute any ideas or perceptions of the current situation at Yr Ysgwrn and how we can prepare for the future, post-Covid 19.**
- 3. **For Members to express views and discuss options for opening models for 2021.**

ITEM NO. 13

REPORT OF THE MEMBERS' WORKING GROUP HELD ON 2nd DECEMBER 2020

PRESENT:

Members appointed by Gwynedd Council

Councillors Elwyn Edwards, Alwyn Gruffydd, Annwen Hughes (Chair), Judith Humphreys, Edgar Owen, John Pughe Roberts;

Members appointed by Conwy County Borough Council

Councillors Philip Capper, Wyn Ellis Jones;

Members appointed by the Welsh Government

Mr. Brian Angell, Ms. Tracey Evans, Mrs. Sarah Hattle, Mr. Tim Jones, Mr. Neil Martinson, Mr. Owain Wyn;

Officers

Emyr Williams, G. Iwan Jones, Jonathan Cawley, Dafydd Edwards, Emyr Roberts, Helen Pye, Angela Jones, Adam Daniel, Edward Jones, Catrin Glyn, Geraint Evans, Anwen Gaffey;

1. Apologies

Councillors Freya Bentham, Ifor Glyn Lloyd, Elfed Roberts, Gethin Williams;

2. Declaration of Interest

No declarations of personal interests were made in respect of any item.

3. Minutes

The minutes of the Members' Working Group held on 21st October 2020 were accepted and the Chair signed them as a true record.

4. Review of Reserves

Submitted – A report by the Chief Finance Officer to consult Members on the adequacy of the Authority's various specific reserves and to consider opportunities for drawdown from those reserves and/or to re-allocate between them.

Reported – The Chief Finance Officer presented his report and background, including details of the general principles and the current policy for reserves as adopted in October 2019.

Members and Officers discussed the report in detail and made the following observations:-

- the Chief Finance Officer advised that the Authority's Financial Regulations include a requirement for virements of over £30,000 to be reported to a meeting of the Authority or the Performance and Resources Committee. Members recommended that the requirement should also be included in the Authority's Policy for Reserves.
- the Head of Finance reported that although an inflationary pay increase had been included in the budget for 2021/22 it may no longer be required. He anticipated there would still be a deficit of approximately £228K in the 2021/22 budget, and this would be funded from the General Balances Reserve.
- in response to a question, the Head of Finance provided further clarification on the Revenue and Capital Grant reserves on lines 3 & 4 and confirmed that the Match Funding Reserve on line 8 was fully allocated. The Chief Finance Officer advised that the manner in which Welsh Government targets funds for Authority projects requires the Authority to hold large amounts in reserve (lines 3 and 4) and the Match-Funding Reserve was the Authority's contribution (line 8).

- a Member asked whether the Welsh Government included staff exit costs within grant schemes. The Chief Executive advised that very few of the Welsh Government funded projects include exit costs due to the short nature of the projects, although officers evaluate these costs prior to the start of any project. The Member felt the Authority should continue to press the Welsh Government on this.
- a Member asked about the uncertainty over costs at Plas Tan y Bwlch and the Director of Corporate Services advised that whilst some redundancies had been finalised, officers were currently preparing a job description for the new House Manager role. Following this appointment, and to allow the new House Manager to have an input into the appointment process, the revised staff levels at Plas Tan y Bwlch will be determined, and the redundancy/pension release costs will be identified.
- a Member proposed that £250k should be allocated from the reserves to address anticipated visitor management problems which the Authority will face from Easter onwards. He considered there was a need to start discussions today, allocate resources to support staff in the field and provide economic support for the area. The Chief Executive advised that Welsh Government had approved a further £275k for the Authority in additional revenue funds, 80% of which will be used to create a further communications officer post, to support volunteers, to engage five additional seasonal wardens, provide additional revenue funding for the Sherpa bus service, and to employ an additional officer for the property service.
- in response to a question about lines 5, 12, 13 and 14 in the reserves table which the Member felt should all come under General Reserves, the Chief Executive explained that the reporting method had been agreed following a request by Members to provide a detailed breakdown.
- Members considered the proposal to allocate £250k from reserves and concluded that any decision should be based on need, and that the cost of any proposal should be established prior to committing a specific amount. In response, the Member stated that this was not the case for other reserves e.g. the Asset Management Reserve, and asked Members to approve the allocation without delay.
- the Chief Executive believed the next two agenda items would provide more detail and asked Members to note that whilst the Authority had been successful in securing additional funding from the Welsh Government, there was a need for partners to contribute also.
- Members agreed that the level of the reserves was partly due to the way in which the Welsh Government provided funding for the Authority to deliver projects and that as the base grant settlement for 2021/22 was still awaited, the uncertainty was reason enough not to commit significant sums from the reserves as this time.
- the Chief Finance Officer agreed to note the request to re-allocate £250k to address visitor management concerns, and advised that there was no need to make a firm decision today, the matter could be revisited in the spring, by which time Members would be fully informed of any proposals and the funding required.
- in response to a question, the Chief Finance Officer advised there were no VAT implications for grant funds.

RESOLVED

- 1. to note the report.**
- 2. to recommend that the requirement with regard to transfer of funds over the value of £30,000 as outlined in the Authority's Financial Regulations, be included in the 'Policy for Reserves'.**
- 3. to note the position at this time and to further consider the proposal to allocate £250k from the reserves at a later date.**

5. **Report on Parking Issues in Snowdon and Ogwen**

Submitted – A joint report by the Director of Planning and Land Management, the Planning Policy Officer, the Partnerships Manager and the Snowdon Partnership Officer, in response to a motion raised by Councillor John Pughe Roberts in relation to parking issues at Snowdon and Ogwen.

Reported – The Director of Planning and Land Management introduced the officers who would be presenting the joint report. He also provided background and context to the report and outlined the Authority's role and its reliance on other partners to help address this matter. The Director of Planning and Land Management reminded Members that planning permission was required for any new car park development and also read out the Local Development Plan Policy 25: Visitor Car Parking. Members were also asked to note under Permitted Development Rights (para. 5) that landowners are allowed to create a small number of car parks, which could operate for 28 days or less.

The Snowdon Partnership Officer presented the background to Martin Higgitt Associates' report and the timeline for implementing the strategy (Annex 2) which was sent to Members under a separate cover. The Snowdon Partnership Officer advised that officers had presented all the partners with updates and their response to the vision had been very positive.

The Partnerships Manager presented a summary of the projects currently ongoing and confirmed that engagement with residents and businesses in the gateway villages of Llanberis, Betws y Coed, Beddgelert and Bethesda would be undertaken early in the New Year. The project to establish a mid-term, automatic pre-booking system for Pen y Pass and the project to develop a monitoring system for traffic on approaches into the National Park area and in car parks would also be set up by March 2021.

The Head of the Warden Service presented a summary of the work undertaken by the Warden Service and confirmed that the successful bid to fund five new seasonal warden posts would benefit the service in 2021.

The Head of Engagement presented details of the multi-agency communication approach being developed for 2021 and advised that work was continuing to develop communication for the future as recommended by Martin Higgitt Associates, both in the short and long term.

Arising thereon, Members made the following observations:-

- a Member asked the Authority to agree to a simple solution and allow landowners to create small car parks for tourists in order to avoid the scenes witnessed over this year's summer months. Many things had changed since the Authority's policy was adopted, and the pandemic meant it was no longer practical to expect tourists to pack onto buses to be transported to Snowdon and Ogwen. Landowners should be allowed to create small temporary car parks for periods of around 4 to 5 years, and charge the users £10 per vehicle. In return, the landowners would be expected to reimburse the Authority, e.g. 20% of the fee, to invest in footpaths, additional Wardens etc.
- officers were concerned that granting permission for short-term parking would undermine the strategic long-term plans recommended by Martin Higgitt Associates. Martin Higgitt had recommended that parking should be moved away from the local areas to the gateway villages in the hope that this would change the current mindset. In addition, it has been proven that creating more parking capacity attracts even more vehicles, which would not address the issue.
- Members were advised that discussions were underway with Gwynedd Council to ascertain whether Glyn Rhonwy in Llanberis could provide a short-term solution to

parking problems at Pen y Pass and Ogwen. A Gwynedd Council Member stated that this might not be an option as the site was already occupied.

- in response to a question, Members were advised that engagement with communities was scheduled for early January/February 2021 and that user groups were included as part of the Community Masterplanning work.
- officers advised that a “resource light monitoring system” was currently being scoped by consultants, recently engaged by Transport for Wales, to scope Projects 3 and 4 as outlined. The Partnerships Manager confirmed that these projects are due to be ready by March 2021.
- a Member felt the report did not address the question of how the Authority will address this issue from Easter 2021, there was no sense of immediacy. The Authority should take more robust measures for an interim period of one year. The Member stated that he would put some proposals on the chat feed, specifically for the Ogwen area, alongside further suggested measures such as pre-booking parking on A5 lay-byes and ensuring there was suitable signage in place etc. Martin Higgitt Associates had stated, 45% were first time visitors to the area, and the Authority had a role to manage this. The Authority Chairman was asked to prepare an Action Plan for the next meeting of the Authority to accelerate the actions proposed and to get the support of partners for this work.
- the Director of Planning and Land Management made clear that Members could override the Local Development Plan if they felt they had sufficient reasons to do so, but in his opinion, this was not the case, especially in the context of the work carried out by Martin Higgitt Associates.
- the Partnerships Manager felt that communities should have an input and that part of the Communities Master Plan includes putting short-term measures in place in time for the next tourist season.
- the Head of Engagement agreed to further discuss options for double yellow lines at Pen y Pass/Rhyd Ddu with Gwynedd Council to avoid any misunderstanding, and Members were advised that the Highways Agency had signs planned for Ogwen by the start of the next tourist season.
- a Member stated that cycle routes need access to private land and this was likely to take many years to achieve.
- the Authority Chairman thanked officers for the report and confirmed that the Chief Executive would present Members with an oral update at the start of every Authority meeting. Members were aware of parking problems prior to the pandemic, and now that a vaccine was approved, the Authority should provide a balanced response and be careful not to undermine the long-term vision for the future. As a start, there was a need to raise awareness of the provision for landowners to open their fields for parking for up to 28 days.
- the Chief Executive stated that the Traffic Management Task and Finish Group should further discuss these issues and the conclusion of today’s report should inform their terms of reference.
- the Head of Warden Service stated that the Warden Service had worked well with the Police Authority and Gwynedd Council over the summer months and were now in a better position to respond to future challenges.
- a Member suggested that the Authority should make use of ANPR technology to assist in monitoring visits and that creating more car parking did not solve the problem.
- the Chief Executive advised that early in the New Year, the steps being taken would become clearer and he reiterated that the Authority has only a marginal role in addressing the problem. The Authority’s main strength was to bring all the partners together.

RESOLVED

1. **to note the report including:-**
 - the role of the existing Local Development Plan policy in managing this issue.
 - the significance of Martin Higgitt Associates' Study and how it may inform future policy.
 - the other range of actions and measures that the Authority is taking to address this issue in the short and medium term.
2. **subject to noting Members' observations as outlined, to ask Members to forward any further observations/proposals to address parking issues to the Partnerships Manager for consideration by the Traffic Management Task and Finish Group.**
3. **that the Chief Executive provides Members with an oral update at every Authority meeting.**

6. Report on Campervans and Fly-Camping

Submitted – A joint report by the Director of Planning and Land Management, the Planning Policy Officer, the Partnerships Manager, the Head of Engagement, the Head of Property Services and the Head of Warden Service, in response to a motion raised by Councillor John Pughe Roberts in relation to Campervans and Fly-Camping.

Reported – The Director of Planning and Land Management presented the report and background. He advised Members on the current trends and the legislative context, as well as outlining the role of planning enforcement and planning policy.

The Property Manager presented further details on the Authority's role as a landowner and the limitations on the Authority. He reported that the Authority was unable to include a reference to penalty charges on signs erected to stop overnight camping, as costs need to be proportionate under the Protection of Freedoms Act. This was a problem in all of the UK National Parks and Members noted that physical barriers only move the problem of overnight camping to other locations.

The Head of Engagement advised upon the role of communicating and messaging and thanked the newly appointed Sustainable Tourism Officer for her work in preparing the attached Appendix 1 report, which highlighted the level of the problem. The Authority continues to work with its partners and the Sustainable Tourism Officer was preparing a summary document to clarify the issues and policies, and provide guidance on which of the partners dealt with specific issues. Further work was ongoing with Visit Wales on a National level and officers were also working with the other UK National Parks who have all experienced the same problems.

Members considered the report and made the following observations:-

- although the report seemed negative in tone, Members felt there were good examples and lessons to be learnt from the experiences of others. The Authority had been approached and asked to consider solutions such as the AIRES scheme in France. There were also good examples in New Zealand, and it was suggested that officers should contact the Europarc network to gain from their experience.
- one answer might be to allow overnight camping in National Park car parks with toilet facilities which would be less environmentally harmful. Members also suggested allowing use of village hall toilets and car parks, or, as was the case in Dyffryn Conwy, to permit hotels and public houses to allow campervans to remain overnight on condition that they had used their facilities and spent a stated amount. It was agreed

that if the current market did not provide what was needed, the Authority should consider every opportunity to work in partnership with the local communities to find positive outcomes.

- the Director of Planning and Land Management asked Members to bear in mind there were limits to these discussions as the Snowdonia National Park Authority was not a landowner or a developer and allowing overnight stays in National Park car parks would be contrary to policy. He would, if Members so wished, bring applications for any new facilities to the Planning and Access Committee for determination, and whilst he had sympathy for both sides of the argument, could not agree to anything which would be at the expense of local businesses.
- the Head of Property advised that the perception of local camping businesses was that the Snowdonia National Park Authority was undermining them by imposing restrictions on how their businesses are run, whilst not addressing overnight camping problems directly and not controlling what occurs on its own land. In addition, local camping and caravan sites had not been able to operate at full capacity due to Covid distancing measures, which may have added to the parking problems.
- Members further discussed the options for imposing parking fines and the current legislation. Officers advised that discussions were ongoing with Conwy and Gwynedd Councils on possible solutions.
- a Member noted his concerns that nothing would be done before the Easter tourist season and stressed the need to revisit the Local Development Plan policies on caravan and camping sites. The Director of Planning and Land Management advised that work was ongoing but changing development plan policies takes time.

RESOLVED to note the content of the report and the complexity of the issue and to support the following actions and any further agreed actions as outlined above:-

- 1. that officers continue to collect evidence on the issue, particularly with regard to whether or not there was a need to change policies within the Local Development Plan.**
- 2. to establish formal collaboration with other key organisations to address these issues.**
- 3. to establish a formal multi-agency approach to communications surrounding this issue.**
- 4. to ensure that any changes to National Park car parks (barriers, signage etc.) is carried out in collaboration with our partners.**
- 5. to source additional funding/resources to help address this matter.**

7. 70th Anniversary Celebrations - 2021

Submitted – A report by the Head of Engagement with an overview of ideas for celebrating the Snowdonia National Park's 70th Anniversary in 2021.

Reported – The Head of Engagement presented the report and existing plans. Members were asked to consider the further ideas as outlined in para. 4 and to present suggestions and observations.

Members considered the report and presented the following ideas:-

- to publish “70 things to do/70 days out in the park” which should be tailored to address issues such as making use of less busy areas and moving out of honeypots, creating environmentally friendly days out that were economically advantageous for communities etc.
- in terms of legacy projects, a Member felt the Authority should create rather than repair. In addition, with regard to celebrity invitations, these should be in the context of an

environmental or a landscape perspective with wide appeal and a balance between Wales, UK and International celebrities.

- any party should celebrate the external rather than internal context and in particular celebrate achievements such as environmental landscapes that have been enhanced.
- a Member reminded the Working Group that the Authority itself had been established since April 1996, which will be 25 years in 2021, and this should also be marked in some way. One suggestion was to invite former Authority Members and former members of staff to join in the celebrations either at Plas Tan y Bwlch or virtually, to record the Authority's achievements over the 25 years.
- a Member suggested using the occasion to celebrate the Welsh language and to refer to ourselves as "Parc Eryri" in future without using the bilingual name. He also felt it would be inappropriate to have a party under the current circumstances, and whilst Covid-19 may be resolved, its effect would be felt for many years. He suggested the Authority should establish a support scheme for children who live in the National Park to revive mental and physical health.
- a Member noted that a Task and Finish Group had already been established to look at use of Welsh place names etc.
- the idea of walking together as staff and Members, after spending the year apart, was also welcomed.

RESOLVED

1. **to note the report.**
2. **to support the recommendation that all the ideas are put to staff and members to vote on the most popular choices.**
3. **Members agreed to email any further suggestions to the Head of Engagement by the 11th December 2020.**

The meeting ended at 15.05

**MEETING OF THE CELYN, TEGID AND TRYWERYN ADVISORY CONFERENCE
HELD AT BALA LEISURE CENTRE ON THE 15th OCTOBER 2019**

Present:

Cllr. Elwyn Edwards (Chairman)	Snowdonia National Park Authority
Brian Angell	Snowdonia National Park Authority
Steve Davies	Bala Lake Railway
Sarah Lind	Bala Adventure and Watersports
Mark Lind	Bala Adventure and Watersports
Debbie Evans	Natural Resources Wales
Joel Rees-Jones	Natural Resources Wales
Matthew Jenkins	Natural Resources Wales
Rhodri Parry	Natural Resources Wales
Mared Llwyd	Gwynedd Council, Public Protection
Jo Cullen	Dwr Cymru
Gwenan Davies	Dwr Cymru
Steve Pooley	Bala Sailing Club
Paul Welsh	Bala Sailing Club
Huw Antur Edwards	Gwersyll Glan-llyn
Alan J. Evans	Llanuwchllyn & Llangower Community Council
Euros Puw	Llanycil Community Council / Farmers' Union of Wales
Huw Jones	Farmers' Union of Wales
Dafydd Roberts	Dol Fach Llanuwchllyn / Farmers' Union of Wales
James Baker	Pant yr Onnen Campsite
Trevor Edwards	Bala Angling Association / Upper Dee Anglers Federation
Rhys Edwards	Llechwedd Ystrad (landowner)
Beti Ffrancon	Bryn Hynod Llangower (landowner)

Officers:

Iwan Jones	Snowdonia National Park Authority
Adam Daniel	Snowdonia National Park Authority
Simon Roberts	Snowdonia National Park Authority
Edward Jones	Snowdonia National Park Authority
Naomi Jones	Snowdonia National Park Authority
Anwen Gaffey	Snowdonia National Park Authority

1. Election of Chairman

RESOLVED to elect Councillor Elwyn Edwards as Chairman of the Celyn, Tegid and Tryweryn Advisory Conference.

2. Apologies for Absence:

Cllr. Ifor Glyn Lloyd, Snowdonia National Park Authority
Cllr. Gethin Williams, Snowdonia National Park Authority
Arwel Morris, Snowdonia National Park Authority
Rhys Owen, Snowdonia National Park Authority
Ynyr Jones, Dwr Cymru
Alwyn Jones, Llandderfel Community Council
Harold Davies, Llanelltyd Community Council
Sue Davies, Bala Town Council
Gareth Evans, Triathlon Cymru
Dylan C. Hughes, Pentre Piod Llangower (Landowner)
Megan Pugh, Glanllyn Caravan Park (Landowner)

3. Minutes

The Chairman signed the minutes of the Celyn, Tegid and Tryweryn Advisory Conference held on the 10th October 2012 as a true record.

4. Matters for Information arising from the minutes

6. Any other business

3. Review of Assets

The Property Manager advised that agreements had been made to transfer ownership of some of the Authority's car parks for the benefit of their communities. Unfortunately, the pay and display machines had suffered damage and theft on a number of occasions and the trial was unsuccessful. The Authority then agreed to contribute towards the upkeep of the toilets, but this also proved unsuccessful and the assets were returned to the Authority as their responsibility.

In response to a question, the Senior Warden South stated that he was unable to update the meeting on Llyn Arenig at this time as he had not been involved in the project.

5. Annual Report and Work Programme 2018/19

Submitted – The Annual Report and Work Programme, for information.

Reported – The Senior Warden South submitted his report and provided a short presentation on the Warden Services' work.

The presentation provided:-

- a summary of the Warden Services' work at Llyn Tegid and an introduction to the present staff. Arising thereon, the Chairman, on behalf of members, asked officers to convey best wishes for a full and speedy recovery to Mr. Arwel Morris, Llyn Tegid Warden, following his recent surgery.
- an outline of the access work and the promoted footpath routes. Recent work had replaced the old stiles with new self-closing, stock proof gates at various access points.
- details of the training on land management and nature conservation given to local schools. The schools had also participated in designing the new signage along the lake shore.
- information on how the service promotes opportunities for improving the health and wellbeing of the public.
- details of how the lake shore is managed - issues with regard to litter discarded at the car park, and the safety measures undertaken were discussed. The Senior Warden thanked Yr Urdd and Bala Adventure Watersports for their willingness to assist the Warden Service all times.
- water recreation opportunities were also highlighted.

Arising thereon, Alan Evans, of Llanuwchllyn and Llangower Community Council thanked the Warden Service for all their work and for their readiness to assist the local community to resolve various issues.

RESOLVED to note the report, for information.

6. Tree Felling on the Lake Shore

Submitted – An update by the Natural Resources Wales Project Manager, Mr. Matthew Jenkins.

Members were provided with the background and a brief update on the Llyn Tegid Reservoir Safety project. The project was being developed following a safety inspection in 2014 which had raised long term safety concerns. As an environmentally sensitive area, one of the solutions was to strengthen the embankments without raising them and replace the slate with stone/granite. A draft artist's impression of the finished embankment works and SNPA car park improvements were provided showing accessibility advancements, work on the barriers to allow disabled access and gradient improvements where possible. The Project Manager advised that whilst there had been a lack of maintenance along the lake shore in the past, in future there would be an operational change and NRW would be maintaining the banks.

The Project Manager confirmed there would be some tree removal, although trees which were in good condition would be retained where circumstances allowed. There would be some loss of tree shelter, but the visual focus would be the lake and the stunning scenery. The NRW were fully committed to replanting and were currently in discussion with landowners with regard to enhancing hedgerows, planting trees to replace those lost and recreate some shelter.

The Project Manager advised that some areas had been under used in the past and the scheme would:-

- open access and provide for a circular walk
- provide seating areas and a new café
- improve linkages to the foreshore
- move some paths and improve disabled access
- include a draft proposal for the overflow car park.
- there was now a close working liaison between the NRW scheme and the Bala Railway extension.
- the embankments would be "track ready".
- the Project Manager confirmed that contractors were being encouraged to source materials locally.

Members were advised that Stakeholder Engagement had raised the following concerns:-

- tree removal
- phasing and disruption to tourism and the local economy
- the impact on events
- flooding – concerns that the scheme did not raise the banks or affect the way that the lake levels were managed.

In response, officers advised that about 270 trees would be felled and that NRW would be replacing at least as many trees as were removed, subject to landowner agreements etc. Also, the project would be undertaken in phases and would be moved around to minimise the impact. Officers assured the meeting that they would endeavour to allow large events to take place and that no areas would be closed off with access being maintained throughout. The project timeline anticipated that construction would start in the Autumn of 2020 and work would continue for a further 18-24 months.

Following the presentation, the following concerns were raised:-

- high lake levels were a major concern. Holding the level higher meant that flooding events would happen, as had occurred in the last 2 years.
- why was the lake level not lowered in response to weather forecasts?
- the NRW website had revealed that the lake level was higher than the highest levels recorded in 2011.
- a local landowner felt that NRW should be more pro-active. He stated that up to 8 feet of water comes onto his land affecting lime levels, which have been tested for the past 15 years, and resulting in having to lime the land again which is expensive.
- officers were asked why NRW were not working with Dwr Cymru to reduce the lake levels?
- the climate has changed, as have the lake levels, meaning the whole system needs dropping down.

Debbie Evans, Natural Resources Wales, advised that the project to improve and update the data was ongoing. She explained that rainfall was stored in Llyn Celyn and that water was held not only to protect Bala but the whole of the Dee Valley. There had been several events, such as storm Callum, whereby the sluice gates were completely raised out of the water and that NRW were not holding the lake level any higher. The aim was to try to keep a level for all users and although Llyn Celyn's level was high at the moment, there had been continuous controlled discharges for weeks. This year the lake level may possibly have been a bit higher but NRW were releasing water every day to try and reduce it and were not holding Llyn Tegid higher than at any other time. Climate change was having an effect and there were 2 very wet events in August 2019 where the gates were completely out of the water.

Arising thereon, Debbie Evans agreed to report the comments raised back to NRW and advised that a more detailed report would be presented to the next meeting of the Advisory Group.

RESOLVED

1. **to note the report and welcome the presentation.**
2. **to await a detailed report on lake levels to the next meeting.**
3. **to arrange a further meeting of the Celyn, Tegid and Tryweryn Advisory Conference every two years, and to consider establishing a sub-committee to focus on the work of the Warden Service at Llyn Tegid.**

7. Llyn Tegid Railway

Received – An oral report by Mr. Steve Davies on behalf of Bala Lake Railway. Mr. Davies introduced himself as a Trustee of the railway and provided the meeting with a summary of his personal background. He explained that the Trust had been established to raise £2.5 million in funds to construct the extension of the Bala Lake Railway to Bala Town Station. In heritage terms, it was a substantial project, which would have a significant economic impact on the area. The railway was currently exceeding growth expectations and had showed a sustainable increase in passengers and revenue. As a 2ft narrow gauge railway it was cheap to run and simple to operate and there was no risk the investment would not be realised.

He stated that a further benefit for the scheme was that Natural Resources Wales (NRW) were currently undertaking maintenance and repair of flood defences. The Trust had worked closely with the NRW and the respective timelines for the Railway scheme and the NRW Embankment scheme had now been aligned. Through collaboration, it was expected that NRW will carry out the civil engineering works and then the railway will lay the track as part of the extension which will run along the lake foreshore.

Mr. Davies advised that the project was supported by the Snowdonia National Park Authority. It was projected that the extension would raise the number of visitors to the railway to at least 55,000 per annum, which would increase the estimated annual spend in the local economy to over £1 million, and create a further 11 jobs.

The Railway Company had committed £250k of its own money to purchase the land for the main station site and to carry out ground preparation work. Also, work was continuing on purchasing land from Bala Rugby Club for the next section of the track bed extension. Mr. Davies outlined the proposed route and advised that a proposal for the railway to share the use of the existing bridge was underway. Mr. Davies, in response to a question, assured the meeting that no trees, other than the trees included on the NRW's embankment scheme, would need to be cut. He advised that some challenges remained, such as convincing one farmer to sell some land, securing planning permission etc., but he anticipated that an optimistic opening date would be some time during 2022. The scheme needed local support and Mr. Davies asked all those present to please promote the project.

RESOLVED to note the report and thank Mr. Davies for his presentation.

8. Caer Gai

Submitted – An update report by the Head of Cultural Heritage, for information.

Reported – The Head of Cultural Heritage presented the report and advised that she had only been in her new post for 7 weeks. Members were provided with the background to her role and were then updated on the current position at Caer Gai.

The Head of Cultural Heritage advised that as the Authority aims to conserve and enhance the cultural heritage of its areas, she would welcome any ideas for commemorating the cultural heritage of Caer Gai and agreed there was more work to do in Penllyn. For information, Members were advised that the local garage currently provides a map to record and register local names.

RESOLVED to note the report.

9. LIFE Scheme on the River Dee

Submitted – An update by Joel Rees-Jones, Senior Officer (Fisheries), Natural Resources Wales.

Received – The Senior Officer (Fisheries) provided a short presentation on the LIFE scheme and application on the River Dee. He advised that the river restoration was a priority for NRW and outlined the species for which the Llyn Tegid SAC was designated, such as Atlantic Salmon, Floating Water-plantain, sea, brook and river Lamprey, Bullhead and European Otter. The main issues were modified water courses (fish migration - weirs, canalisation) and water pollution (forestry and point source) and this was a 5year project worth £7m (60% of which was from the EU). The project

would have 9 full time posts and would also involve partnership working. An overview of proposed actions was discussed, which included fish migration weirs, river restoration, land management, forestry and conservation management.

RESOLVED to note the report and welcome the presentation.

10. Capel Coffa, Capel Celyn

Submitted – An oral update by Gwenan Davies of Dŵr Cymru, for information.

Reported – Members were provided with an update on Capel Celyn. The chapel was owned by Dŵr Cymru as part of their operation of the reservoir. Members were advised that there had been cases of vandalism at the chapel in recent years, and as a result, the chapel was no longer open to the public, and could only be visited by prior appointment. Steps had been taken to address the recent anti-social behaviour and a new gate erected to prevent vehicles from speeding. The fence in front of the chapel had been repaired, the grass was regularly mown and trees cut back to promote the view, with a handrail erected on the path down to the chapel. Members were advised that Dŵr Cymru would be very grateful if the local community could report any anti-social behaviour to them.

Capel Coffa was recently registered as a Grade II* Listed Building by Cadw, not only for its architectural value, but also for its cultural significance. Dŵr Cymru were now seeking the services of a Conservation Architect to deliver long term conservation and also address the problem of water getting into the chapel.

Members were advised that local schools, film companies etc., who require access to the chapel could contact Ynyr Jones, Dŵr Cymru, who works locally and has a key. Applications could also be made through Dŵr Cymru's Cardiff Office.

An interpretation panel and a seating area with tables will be provided as part of future developments at Capel Celyn and there was also an opportunity to work with Fron-goch Heritage representatives.

RESOLVED to note the report and thank Gwenan Davies for her presentation.

11. Any other business

A member expressed concerns that mud was continuing to accumulate in the bay at Glanlllyn, endangering water activities, and that a solution to the problem was needed. In response, the Chairman advised that this matter would be raised with the relevant officer.

There being no further business, the Chairman thanked all who had attended for their valuable contribution and the meeting closed at 12.25 p.m.