

<b>MEETING</b>	Snowdonia National Park Authority
<b>DATE</b>	23 <sup>rd</sup> September 2020
<b>TITLE</b>	<b>UPDATE ON PLAS TAN Y BWLCH</b>
<b>REPORT BY</b>	Director of Corporate Services
<b>PURPOSE</b>	To receive an update with a view to agreeing a Special Authority Meeting in October to consider options for Plas Tan y Bwlch

## 1 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 At the last Authority meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> Jul 2020 when considering options for the future of Plas Tan y Bwlch the Authority resolved as follows:
- 1.1.1 In view of the number of staff potentially affected that the Authority do start the process of formal consultation with staff and Trade Unions on the future of Plas Tan y Bwlch.
- 1.1.2 That the Plas Board working jointly with the Authority Chairs and the Vice Chair of the Authority do over the next three months consider alternative business models (including working with other organisations) to consider how many posts can be saved. That the Authority do further consider the matter at its Authority meeting in September unless a special Authority meeting is called prior to that date to discuss the matter.
- 1.1.3 In the meantime that the proposed improvements previously sanctioned by the Authority do proceed so as to place the centre in the best possible position to continue with some form of alternative business model or partnering with others.

## 2 DELIBERATIONS OF THE PLAS TAN Y BWLCH BOARD

- 2.1 Since that meeting the Plas Tan y Bwlch Board has met on two occasions with the Authority Chairs and the Vice Chair of the Authority.

- 2.2 At the first meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> August 2020 the Board considered the staff responses to the formal consultation on the future of Plas Tan y Bwlch as well as the scoping of possible scenarios for some form of resumption of business. At that meeting, it was also reported that discussions with potential partners had taken place on an informal basis. There was concern that any works undertaken to the property might not add value to any potential partner and that it may be better to delay investing in the property until the situation was clearer. The Board accordingly resolved to recommend to the Authority that the redevelopment work should not go ahead at present. As a result the redevelopment works have been put on hold pending consideration of this report.
- 2.3 On the question of scenarios on the resumption of business at Plas the Board considered options ranging from business as usual to full closure. Agreement was reached that a further meeting of the Board was required to discuss a possible business case for establishing a Bed and Breakfast type business in the interim as this was felt to be an option that had merit in that it would retain some staff whilst minimising risk to the Authority.
- 2.4 In the meantime, following consultation with the Chairman of the Plas Tan y Bwlch Board the decision was taken to attempt the re-opening of the Centre on this basis so as to establish the potential for demand for such accommodation. The accommodation has been let through Airbnb only at this time and initial reports show that there is substantial demand with Plas full to capacity at the first weekend's trading being the weekend of 11<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> September and at the time of writing this report also fully booked for the weekend of 18<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> September.
- 2.5 The Plas Tan y Bwlch Board met once more on Friday 11<sup>th</sup> September to further discuss future business. At that meeting they were presented with a business case for operating the centre as a Bed and Breakfast type accommodation, which showed that there was potential for running the same at little cost to the Authority and within the budget set by the Authority for the running of Plas.
- 2.6 The Plas Tan y Bwlch Board considered however that the figures presented might not accurately assess the true risk of running the Centre on this basis particularly on the occupancy figures quoted. The Board requested that a range of occupancy figures be prepared to enable the Authority to consider the risk from a worst case to a best-case scenario. There was however insufficient time to prepare such a report for this meeting and so it is proposed that a Special Authority Meeting be held in October to further discuss this matter. By October there will of course be more information to hand on how successful Plas has been in its new endeavour and so may enable the Authority to be able to gain a better understanding as to what occupancy figure is likely to be accurate.

- 2.7 Given recent developments regarding the deteriorating situation with the Covid pandemic the Board also considered it prudent that thought should be given as to how Plas can deal with another potential complete lockdown and loss of business and it is proposed that this matter also be dealt with at a Special Meeting of the Authority in October.
- 2.8 Moving to a Bed and Breakfast type accommodation in the short to medium term may be achievable but there will undoubtedly be some element of risk that needs to be assessed fully by the Authority. Undertaking this level of activity will involve a simplified business model and as such it is inevitable that there will be an element of staff restructuring which will be discussed at the Authority meeting in October.

### **RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

This report in itself does not have significant resource implications at this stage.

### **3 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 Not to proceed with the redevelopment work at present in view of developments since the Authority last met.
- 3.2 To consider a further report at a Special Authority Meeting in October to further consider options for Plas Tan y Bwlch such a report to contain a range of scenarios as to occupancy as well as options for Plas in the event of a further full lockdown.

### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**