

**P-06-1447 Stop Natural Resources Wales closing the visitor centre at Ynyslas National Nature Reserve - Correspondence from the Petitioners to the Committee, 29 October 2024**

Dear Petitions Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments once again.

At this time I would ask that the committee continue impress upon NRW the importance of engaging actively with the community groups involve in all 3 centres and to progress at speed with their consultation processes with clear communications about what is happening and when.

It is imperative that there is no closure of any of the centres and that NRW express explicitly that they will work to retain staff and facilities in any hand over process to community running of the centres.

I would also ask that the committee asks NRW to share not just the financial records for the 3 centres but also its visitor management plans and ecological impact assessments for public access.

There remains a large discrepancy between what NRW are saying to Welsh Government that they are doing and what is actually happening in the communities of the centres. There has yet to be any meaningful engagement or announcements as to when this will be happening.

Thank you for your continued involvement in this issue and your help to amplify the voices that have so far being ignored.

Diolch

Kim

---

Dear Kayleigh

I think Kim has covered off most I wanted to say.

However, I want to ensure that the Committee is aware that NRW has received substantial pay and pension benefit rises in a year when they say there is no money. Also, there have been significant write-offs. (images attached). This does not seem fair or just (particularly considering the Welsh Government has recently had to bail NRW out for a considerably huge IR35 tax bill).

## Executive Team's remuneration

| Executive Team Member                           | Salary         |         | Benefits in kind |         | Pension benefits <sup>1</sup> |          | Total          |         |
|-------------------------------------------------|----------------|---------|------------------|---------|-------------------------------|----------|----------------|---------|
|                                                 | (£5,000 range) |         | (nearest £100)   |         | (nearest £1,000)              |          | (£5,000 range) |         |
|                                                 | 2023/24        | 2022/23 | 2023/24          | 2022/23 | 2023/24                       | 2022/23  | 2023/24        | 2022/23 |
| Clare Pillman <sup>1</sup><br>(Chief Executive) | 150-155        | 145-150 | 0                | 0       | 40,000                        | (10,000) | 190-195        | 135-140 |
| Rachael Cunningham <sup>1</sup>                 | 125-130        | 115-120 | 0                | 0       | 46,000                        | 21,000   | 170-175        | 140-145 |
| Ceri Davies <sup>1</sup>                        | 125-130        | 115-120 | 0                | 0       | 37,000                        | (2,000)  | 160-165        | 115-120 |
| Prys Davies <sup>1</sup>                        | 105-110        | 100-105 | 0                | 0       | 30,000                        | 10,000   | 135-140        | 110-115 |
| Sarah Jennings <sup>1</sup>                     | 130-135        | 120-125 | 0                | 0       | 51,000                        | 49,000   | 180-185        | 170-175 |
| Gareth O'Shea <sup>1</sup>                      | 115-120        | 110-115 | 0                | 0       | 32,000                        | (48,000) | 145-150        | 60-65   |

## Losses and special payments by category

The table below provides the number of write offs and special payment requests approved in the year.

| Category or type of loss                                                       | 2023/24<br>Number | 2023/24<br>£'000 | 2022/23<br>Number | 2022/23<br>£'000 |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| Write-off of irrecoverable debts                                               | 70                | 80               | 161               | 222              |
| Loss of assets                                                                 | 3                 | 16               | 10                | 44               |
| Other losses (cash losses, fruitless payments, unenforceable claims, or gifts) | 15                | 241              | 5                 | 49               |
| Special payments                                                               | 7                 | 71               | 8                 | 63               |
| <b>Total</b>                                                                   | <b>95</b>         | <b>408</b>       | <b>184</b>        | <b>378</b>       |
| Waiver of income*                                                              | 9                 | 164              | 0                 | 0                |
| <b>Total</b>                                                                   | <b>104</b>        | <b>572</b>       | <b>184</b>        | <b>378</b>       |

\*Waiver of income mostly relating to future sales and does not relate to credit notes to be raised against historical invoices.

In addition, I would like the Petitions Committee to be aware that NRW did just close the visitor center at Cadr Idris, and there seem to be no plans to reopen it, despite

this being an essential place for tourism and where visitors might need assistance and refreshments. We cannot allow this to happen at Ynyslas. I reiterate that this is precisely what they planned to do when they notified staff of the planned closure of Ynyslas Visitor Centre in writing last November.

Finally, on behalf of our group and supporters at Bwlch Nant yr Arian and Coed y Brenin, we would like to understand why so much credence was given to NRW's assurances by the Minister during the Senedd debate when all the evidence points to them saying one thing and doing another?

Thank you for your continued attention on this matter

Best regards

Polly