

ISLE OF ANGLESEY COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on 12 December 2016

- PRESENT:** Councillor Robert G Parry OBE FRAgS (Chair)
Councillor Richard Owain Jones (Vice-Chair)
- Councillors Lewis Davies, R Dew, Jim Evans, K P Hughes, Vaughan Hughes, Victor Hughes, W T Hughes, Llinos Medi Huws, A M Jones, G O Jones, H E Jones, R LI Jones, R.Meirion Jones, Alun W Mummery, Dylan Rees, J A Roberts, P S Rogers, Nicola Roberts, Alwyn Rowlands and Ieuan Williams
- IN ATTENDANCE:** Chief Executive,
Assistant Chief Executive (Partnerships, Community & Service Improvements),
Head of Function (Council Business)/Monitoring Officer,
Head of Regulation and Economic Development,
Head of Democratic Services,
Chief Planning Officer,
Lead Case Officer (National Grid) (AO),
Project Manager – Major Projects (LWJ),
Committee Officer (MEH).
- ALSO PRESENT:** None
- APOLOGIES:** Councillors John Griffith, Carwyn Jones and Dafydd Rhys Thomas

1. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

No declaration of interest received from any Member or Officer in respect of any item of business.

2. NATIONAL GRID NORTH WALES CONNECTION PROJECT CONSULTATION

Submitted – a report by the Chief Executive with regard to the Isle of Anglesey County Council's response to National Grid's Final Route Wide Consultation between Wylfa and Pentir (Section 42).

An amendment to the Welsh version of the report was cited, The first bullet point (last line) of the response letter of the Chief Executive at page 2 '**adnabod achosion ar gyfer tanddaearu**' in place of (*canfod ym mhle, o leiaf, y dylai rhannau eraill o'r llinell fod yn danddaearol*).

The Leader of the Council gave a presentation to the full Council and highlighted the following main points :-

- The National Grid is anticipated to submit a Development Consent Order (DCO) application to the Planning Inspectorate in October 2017;
- As part of the DCO the National Grid must undertake a Statutory Consultation; as a statutory consultee the Council is required to respond to National Grid's proposals;
- The formal Section 42(s42) pre-application consultation is a formal consultation which follows the non-statutory consultation carried out by National Grid in December 2015. The s42 consultation covers a period from 5th October, 2016 to 16th December, 2016.
- Section 42 seeks response on National Grid's final route (Wylfa to Pentir); Wylfa sub-station; New Overhead Line in Anglesey (Sections A, B, C, D & E); The Challenge of crossing the Menai Strait; New Overhead Line in Gwynedd (Section F) and Pentir substation extension.
- The key concerns are the approach to design evolution and mitigation; absence of a clear planning strategy for the consenting of the Connection Works; lack of clarity in the documentation as to the choice of location for the Menai Strait crossing and related tunnel heads and the cost of achievability of the engineering solution;
- The themes within the Strategic Report (Appendix A attached to the report) are the main themes identified in previous two responses which have been maintained and built upon. These include : Project Design & Mitigation, Consenting Strategy, The Menai Area, Costs, Welsh Language and Culture, Socio-Economic, Tourism, Traffic & Transport, Cumulative Impacts, Health, Wellbeing & Community Cohesion and Consultation;
- The structure of the Section 42 Response follows previous responses : Covering letter from the Chief Executive raising key issues, Detailed comments in high level Strategic Report (Appendix A), Comments on the PEIR (Appendix B), Review of all other Reports (Appendix C). The response is both strategic and constructive and based upon the information presented by National Grid, alternatives, amendments and proposed mitigation measures to over-come impacts/challenges);
- The Council will continue to build on the evidence base of the effects on Tourism & Landscape, Communities, Cumulative Impacts as a basis for changes to the Project and mitigation measures together with lobbying the Welsh Government for a Third Bridge over the Menai Strait;

Given the Isle of Anglesey County Council's position in respect of undergrounding electricity lines and the failure for this to be satisfactorily addressed by National Grid, the County Council will be contacting the Planning Inspectorate in this regard. Recognising the importance placed on the cost of undergrounding in respect of decision making the Council also intends to seek a joint meeting with Ofgem and the National Grid to discuss the approach and factors which influence the North Wales Connection.

The Committee considered the report and made the following comments :-

- The Member of Parliament, Assembly Member the County Council,

Town/Community Council, Unllais Môn and the residents of the Island are still of a strong opinion that no additional electricity transmission lines and pylon are constructed across Anglesey;

- The Island is dependent on the tourism sector and the erection of further pylons across Anglesey would have a detrimental effect on the key economic sector of the Island;
- The National Grid appears to rule out that transmission lines being undergrounded on the basis of extra costs;
- The electricity generated from the development at Wylfa Newydd will be for the benefit of the whole of the UK and would only add a few pennies on household bills;
- The erection of a second line of overhead pylons across Anglesey would have a detrimental impact on the landscape and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty together with severe social and environmental impacts on local residents and businesses;
- The health and wellbeing of residents of the Island is paramount;
- The effect of overhead cables near dwellings could have an effect on house prices;
- The lack of clarity regarding the choice of location for the Menai Strait crossing and the costs and achievability of such a project;
- The National Grid has not taken sufficient account of the traffic and transport implications of their proposals of overhead lines and pylons;
- The Welsh language and culture of the Island needs to be addressed by National Grid.

Members thanked the Officers for their work and agreed unanimously that the Council strongly maintains the established position that no additional electricity transmission lines and pylons are constructed across Anglesey and the Menai Strait and that the lines should be fully undergrounded.

Councillor A.M. Jones, whilst supporting the recommendations within the report, proposed an amendment that a twin track approach be undertaken to use the meetings with Ofgem and the National Grid to look at using the existing powerlines to Penrhos, Holyhead which would entail no additional pylons across the Island nor an additional tunnel under the Menai Strait.

Councillor A.M. Mummery seconded the amendment. In the subsequent vote the amendment was not carried.

Councillor A.M. Jones further suggested that an Officer be appointed to work with the local communities of Anglesey to prepare for the presentation to the national infrastructure commission. It was agreed that the Officers would consider the matter in due course.

It was RESOLVED :-

- **To unanimously approve the formal response to the Section 42(s42) and to delegate authority to the Chief Executive to carry out any minor amendments, variations or corrections which are identified and reasonably necessary prior to the formal issue of the response;**

- **To delegate authority to the Chief Executive to conduct negotiations on the overall obligations package which will be comprised of the respective planning obligation (S106) and related agreements for the DCO.**

The meeting concluded at 3.20 pm

**COUNCILLOR BOB PARRY OBE FRAgS
CHAIR**