

INFORMATION REPORT BY THE HEAD OF PLANNING AND PUBLIC PROTECTION

INTRODUCTION OF CYFOETH NATURIOL CYMRU (CNC)/NATURAL RESOURCES WALES (NRW)

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform Members of the introduction of Cyfoeth Naturiol Cymru (CNC)/Natural Resources Wales (NRW) on 1st April 2013. This single body will replace Environment Agency Wales, Countryside Council for Wales and the Forestry Commission Wales. The report will inform Members of the arrangements which have been put in place for necessary consultation with the single body in relation to planning applications

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Welsh Ministers decided to create a Single Environmental Body for Wales back in 2011. Since then work has been advanced to bring together the organisations mentioned in paragraph 1.1 above. From the 1st April 2013 this single body has been operational.
- 2.2 One of the reasons for the creation of the single body was to streamline services and make it easier for customers, suppliers and partners of the legacy organisations to deal with relevant issues. This includes liaison with Local Planning Authorities (LPA).
- 2.3 As such, the idea is to enable a single consultation with CNC/NRW on certain types of planning application and for a single response to be received covering the relevant issues. This response should give an “overall” opinion weighing up possibly conflicting issues and providing a clear recommendation to the LPA.
- 2.4 As the new body has only recently become operational many of the established links between relevant Officers of the legacy organisations will remain. For the purposes of input into planning applications and the likely responses from CNC/NRW, Officers are hopeful that responses can still be provided as normal on planning Committee reports covering the relevant issues.

- 2.5 CNC/NRW has stated that its aim is to meet the statutory response times on planning consultations and for this “one voice” response to be provided. Officers of the LPA will ensure that the responses received are presented as normal within relevant Committee reports.
- 2.6 A guidance note which has been produced by CNC/NRW is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

3 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That Members note the new arrangements as set out above.