

Park apologises for its handling of saga

FAILINGS surrounding the saga of a controversial Newport house are 'unlikely' to reoccur according to the National Park's chief executive, who issued an apology last week.

Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority chief executive Tegryn Jones discussed the authority's handling of Bettws Newydd, when he attended Newport Town Council's meeting.

Planning permission for a large replacement dwelling on the Parrog was granted in 2006, but the house was built bigger than the original plans.

In 2010 a Welsh

By Anwen Humfrey

Government planning inspector granted an appeal to allow the building to remain, following a public hearing.

Mr Jones told councillors the way the authority had acted was "not of a standard expected of a public body".

He said there had been significant improvements in procedures to make sure the errors were not repeated, but the case "did not leave the Authority in a very positive light in many ways".

He added: "Hopefully I can reassure you that changes to procedures and ways of working of the Authority

mean that the chances of something like this happening again are extremely unlikely."

Referring to a letter from The Bettws Newydd Opposition Group, Mr Jones said: "It highlights the fact that the way the National Park conducted business with yourselves was not appropriate."

He added: "The planning inspector made the inference that it was probably the wrong decision to award the permission in the first place."

Councillor Peter Harwood was chairman of the town council's planning committee when councillors made

their initial comments on the proposed development.

He said a number of recommendations were made, and councillors questioned the design, which seemed to "get lost in the midst of time".

He added: "Thank you for the apology, it was something we dearly wanted at the time."

Mr Jones said: "You are the democratically elected representatives of the people of Newport, and as an Authority we should treat you with the respect you deserve."

anwen.humfrey@westerntelegraph.co.uk