

Carmarthenshire Local Access Forum

Thursday 15th February 2018

Carmarthen Leisure Centre, Carmarthen, 6pm

Present:

Members:

Mark Hadley (MH) – LAF Chair
Karen Burch (KB) – LAF vice Chair
Jillie Gardiner (JG)
Caroline Evans (CE)
Geoff Williams (GW)
Richard Leggett (RL)

Secretary (interim)

Lucy Pugh (LP) - CCC Acting Countryside Access Officer)

Advisors/ Observers/Speakers/Members of the Public

Cliff Cleaton (CC) - CCC Acting Countryside Access Manager
Martin Murray (MM) - CCC Maint Rep
Cllr. Peter Hughes-Griffiths (PHG) – CCC Executive Board Member
Paul Barrett (PB) – Llanelli Ramblers
Glyn Lloyd-Jones (GLJ) - NRW

Apologies:

Members:

Jane Evans (JE)
David Stacey (DS)
Ed Percy (EP)

Advisors/Observers:

Sam Palmer (SP) - CCC
Ian Jones – CCC
Neil Thomas – CCC

Absent:

Glyn Evans (GE)
Keith Morgan (KM)

*CCC in these minutes refers to Carmarthenshire County Council

ITEM	ACTION
Items 1 - Welcome & Introduction MH welcomed all to the meeting.	
Item 2 - New Members/Resignations None.	
Item 3 - Apologies Apologies were taken and recorded.	

<p>Item 4 – CCC Countryside Access Maint and Legal Teams</p> <p>CC: Stephen Pilliner has signed off the Countryside Access Assistant post today, and it has now gone to the Director for approval.</p> <p>MH: It is disappointing that it has taken so long – legal issues are mounting up.</p> <p>KB: Concerned that the delay may lead to staff leaving.</p> <p>RL: Does PHG scrutinise the effectiveness of the department?</p> <p>MH: Staff budget is there and available. Concerned that budget will be reduced next year. Will raise again in next HoS meeting.</p>	MH
<p>Item 5 – PROW Network Issues Report</p> <p>LP: Reports now also show issues by route status and by year logged.</p> <p>RL: 33% of issues are over 5 years old, therefore even with a full complement of staff, the department was not meeting its obligations.</p> <p>Significant number of signposting issues – people are reluctant to walk non-signed routes.</p> <p>GW: Many Highway Signposts get damaged by hedge-cutting – would it be worth considering smaller signposts or road markings. Check if there is a minimum height for signposts or another effective way of marking the route.</p> <p>MM: Note that the Council does not signpost routes that are not open.</p> <p>RL: Number of Maintenance Issues has gone down in the last 12 months, but Legal Issues have gone up. Comparison of figures to be circulated by MH (done 16/02/18).</p> <p>Pathwatch reports have not been input into CAMS yet, so total number of issues is currently being under-reported.</p> <p>MM: Circulated list of routes worked on since last LAF. There was a discussion about planned bridge works and MM clarified that the Council wouldn't spend money on replacing a bridge without ensuring the rest of the path is available.</p>	MM
<p>Item 8 – ROWIP Update</p> <p>CC: Feedback from the LAF members is being considered by Martin Dolan. Meeting with Carys Drew (NRW) is booked for 2nd March.</p> <p>MH: Did Capita consult with NRW – no record of it. RL & PB also do not recall receiving the consultation through the Ramblers.</p> <p>KB: It was not very clear that the consultation was in fact a consultation.</p> <p>JG: Low number of respondents to the consultation – makes it look as though people weren't interested, but may not be the case.</p> <p>CC: There wasn't a huge response to the first ROWIP consultation either.</p> <p>MH: Maybe email is not the right vehicle for consultations.</p> <p>RL: Agree – invitation to a consultation event seems to work better.</p> <p>Generally agreed no benefit to consult again – better to go ahead anyway.</p>	

<p>MH: Would like the final draft to be circulated to the LAF. Has PHG been asked to write the Introduction for the ROWIP?</p> <p>PHG: No, it may go to Cllr. Hazel Evans.</p> <p>RL: Queried the finances described in the ROWIP. Are the figures put forward actually available?</p> <p>MH: The LAF should provide a report on the ROWIP prior to Exec Board sign-off. Will need to meet to discuss once the final draft is available.</p>	
<p>Item 6 - Consideration and Approval of Minutes from Last Meeting</p> <p>The minutes were checked and agreed with amendments.</p> <p>LP will send for translation and publish on website.</p>	LP
<p>Item 7 - Matters Arising from Minutes</p> <p>N/A – all to be covered under Agenda Items.</p>	
<p>Item 9 – Tywi Valley Path</p> <p>MH: Response has been received from Simon Charles. The Tywi Path is being developed to fulfill a requirement of the Regional Transport Plan. Noted that the report provided was over 4 years old, and some of the figures did not seem to tally. Surfacing: had thought that it would be a cinder style surface, but now appears that it will be sealed bitumen?</p> <p>PB: The Council website has been updated and now gives more details of the path, including the plan to give it a sealed bitumen surface: http://www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/home/business/development-investment/tywi-valley-path.aspx</p> <p>MH: The LAF still have reservations about the cost of the project and how much use the path will get.</p> <p>KB: Many people don't appreciate that the TVP comes from a separate funding pot to roads for example.</p> <p>MH: Please can Simon Charles and Sam Palmer be invited to the next meeting at 7pm.</p> <p>LP: Will provide links to Good Practice Guidance and Case Studies of Shared Use paths.</p>	JL LP
<p>Item 10 – Project Updates</p> <p>10a) Brechfa Wind Farm</p> <p>MH: Read out Jason Lawday's update. Queried who the "stakeholders" were and if they included the LAF? JL to ask.</p>	JL

<p>Will the new Environmental and Ecology Manager have anything to do with PRowS? JL to clarify.</p>	JL
<p>What are “demised” areas?</p>	JL
<p>Can further detail be provided on the NRW funding interface? GLJ to check.</p>	GLJ
<p>Maps are being updated and additional “you are here” panels are to be installed. Will check progress.</p>	MH
<p>JG: The turbines don’t meet the guidelines for topple distance onto the forestry tracks which are part of the Open Access land. Concerned about liability.</p>	
<p>GLJ: Will check with NRW and report back to MH. Will also forward the NRW funding newsletter.</p>	GLJ
<p>10b) County Walks Review</p>	
<p>MM: Recently had a meeting with Huw Parsons to discuss Promoted Routes. The Discover Carmarthenshire website has now been updated and shows good info. Work is ongoing to complete other routes.</p>	
<p>Carmarthen Fans route is still being promoted. This needs to either come off or be edited. MM to arrange with Huw Parsons.</p>	MM
<p>JG: A new Tourism leaflet is being promoted by Discover Carmarthenshire (“Days Out”) which has a poor quality map that doesn’t show roads.</p>	
<p>MH: Agenda item for next meeting: look at the Tourism leaflet / map.</p>	
<p>Will raise the poor quality of the mapping with PHG (done 16/02/18).</p>	
<p>Read out Huw Parson’s Marketing and Media update.</p>	
<p>Shame that cycling is a priority for the department and walking and horse-riding get overlooked.</p>	
<p>CE: WG themed years - 2018 is “Year of the Sea”. 2019 is “Year of Discovery”.</p>	
<p>10c) Morfa Bychan</p>	
<p>MH: Read out Jason Lawday’s update.</p>	
<p>What are the future plans for the TRO? Will be discussed further at the Byways User Group Meeting. Keep on agenda for update at next LAF meeting.</p>	
<p>Will email John McEvoy asking to be kept up to date with developments and giving support for permanent seasonal TRO (enforceable between the months of April and Sept inclusive each year) (done 16/02/18).</p>	
<p>10d) Nant Gronw</p>	
<p>No progress since last LAF. JL to provide update at next LAF meeting.</p>	
<p>10e) Gelli Aur</p>	
<p>GW: Not yet open. Llandeilo Civic Society visit to be rescheduled.</p>	
<p>RL: Contact number: 01558 669020. Should be reopened soon.</p>	

<p>Item 11 – Network Rail Crossing Closures</p> <p>MH: Read out Jason Lawday’s update.</p> <p>KB: Could our suggestion to NR be that they provide bridges rather than closures?</p>	
<p>Item 12 – Equestrian Strategy</p> <p>KB: There are differences of length of bridleways between ROWIPs, that aren’t easily explained. Have created a spreadsheet of the anomalies.</p> <p>There is currently no easy way of seeing which routes are open.</p> <p>The Equestrian Strategy is to be included in the ROWIP.</p> <p>Would like to do promoted equestrian routes, maybe with the involvement of Huw Parsons. There are two routes in Brechfa that would lend themselves to promotion.</p> <p>MH: Would it be possible to apply for funding from the Brechfa Community Fund?</p> <p>GW: Could we have a leaflet for the promoted route? With parking info?</p> <p>MH: Does the LAF support the idea of there being an Equestrian Strategy? – YES</p> <p>KB: Would like to do a survey to see how much money equestrian tourism may bring in to the local economy.</p>	
<p>Item 13 – Volunteering</p> <p>MM: MM and PB recently met to discuss volunteering. Some issues still to be ironed out, e.g. provision of PPE, but generally positive.</p> <p>GW: Dinefwr Ramblers would like to be included too. Light vegetation clearance and surveying would be ideal work for volunteers.</p> <p>KB: And horse-riders would be interested.</p> <p>MH: Might be worth looking into sponsorship deals – e.g. approach Charlies.</p> <p>JG: A volunteering Open Day has been organised in BBNP. JG to forward details to MM.</p>	JG
<p>Item 14 – BBNP Delegation Agreement</p> <p>CC: Has been to Legal and is now waiting signing.</p> <p>MH: Will ask in the HoS meeting why the LAF haven’t been involved in the Agreement, and will also ask Eifion Jones (BBNP) if their LAF has.</p>	MH
<p>Item 15 – Draft LAF Annual Report 2017</p> <p>MH: Any further comments from LAF members should be sent to MH.</p> <p>Update 18/02/18: Final report now sent to CCC for publishing on website.</p>	

<p>Item 16 – Re-election of LAF Members</p> <p>It was agreed that the existing LAF Members should stay in situ to deal with unfinished issues whilst the recruitment process is underway.</p> <p>MH: Please can the recruitment process be started ASAP?</p> <p>CE: Suggested to pass LAF invite onto “Walking Well” rep, and will do so.</p>	<p>CC CE</p>
<p>Item 17 – Heads of Service Meeting</p> <p>MH: Next meeting arranged for 16th April.</p>	
<p>Item 18 – Future Agenda Items</p> <p>Next meeting to be split into two meetings: A – election of members. B – normal meeting.</p> <p>MH: <u>LAF Chairs meeting</u> - 7th Dec. Will circulate notes and discuss at next LAF meeting.</p> <p>RL: <u>BOATS</u> - Byways Open to All Traffic are not being looked after as well as they should – put as agenda item. MH to bring map and list of BOATs.</p> <p>MH: <u>“Days Out” Tourism leaflet.</u></p>	<p>MH MH</p>
<p>Item 19 – AOB</p> <p><u>Cambrian Mountains</u> - Looking into Nature Park status. MH to circulate notes.</p> <p><u>Brechfa Mountain Bike Trails</u></p> <p>CE: Trails are in poor condition and need work. NRW is responsible for maintenance.</p> <p>GLJ: Will query with NRW and report back to MH.</p>	<p>MH GLJ</p>
<p>Item 20 – Next meeting</p> <p>14th June 2018 – Twyi Centre, Llandeilo</p> <p>Venue, date & time published on website: http://www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/home/council-services/public-rights-of-way/local-access-forum/</p>	