

**Carmarthenshire Local Access Forum (LAF)**

**Meeting Minutes**

**Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2020**

**Online via Microsoft Teams, 6pm**

**Present:**

**Members:**

Mark Hadley (MH) – LAF Chair  
Karen Burch (KB)  
Richard Leggett (RL)  
Mo Rapley (MR)  
Geoff Williams (GW)  
Jillie Gardiner (JG)  
Paul Barrett (PB)  
David Stacey (DS)

**Secretary (interim)**

Caroline Ferguson (CF) – Countryside Access Manager

**Advisors/ Observers/Speakers/Members of the Public**

Councillor Hazel Evans (HE)  
Steve Pilliner (CCC)

**Apologies: Members:**

None

**Advisors/Observers:**

None

\*CCC in these minutes refers to Carmarthenshire County Council

\*\*NRW in these minutes refers to Natural Resources Wales

ITEM	ACTION
<p><b>Items 1 - Welcome &amp; Introduction</b></p> <p>MH welcomed all to the meeting and outlined how meeting via MS Teams will work</p>	
<p><b>Item 2 – Apologies</b></p> <p>NRW Martin Murray – CA Maintenance Rep</p>	
<p><b>Item 3 - New Members/Resignations</b></p> <p>Jane Evans (BHS Rep)</p>	
<p><b>Item 4 – Covid19</b></p> <p>SP – Outlined the various work CCC have had to do to keep communities and staff safe as well as meeting new demands and bearing the financial implications of all of the changes.</p> <p>KB – not sure the public are aware of how much pressure the Authority are under.</p> <p>SP – Comms team have been very busy conveying Covid safety messages. Will feed back the point that the public may not have been informed as to how much the Authority have had to adapt.</p> <p>MH – Numerous concerns have been passed on re: the PROW network during lockdown via the LAF, increased use of the network likely led to this. Concerns passed on for information.</p> <p>SP – Maintenance team could only respond to critical incidents, legal team inundated with landowner issues and obstruction complaints. Aiming for a more strategic approach from next year to overcome long term issues with available funding. Recruitment is ongoing.</p> <p>HE – Not defending shortcomings but usage of network increased huge amount due to exercise message. Other services such as waste collection had to take precedent but can see both sides of issue.</p> <p>KB – understanding challenges helps to understand why certain services have not been able to deliver as normal.</p> <p>JG – will arranging volunteers be brought forward given the maintenance challenges?</p> <p>CF – Developing CAMS to help organise and manage volunteers from next year.</p>	<p><b>SP</b></p>

PB – do we still have 4 Rangers with one at Pembrey

CF – Yes, still have 4 dedicated Rangers

RL – problem with people only walking routes they know due to lack of signposting with other routes getting overgrown.

CF – will pick up signage in next item.

### **Item 5 – Funding**

CF – Additional funding secured following loss of ROWIP grant. COVID has delayed spending but project planning underway to spend the money strategically. Project ideas currently which are directed towards ROWIP goals and issue reduction...

- Signposting programme – issue reduction, ROWIP action & statutory duty
- Equestrian project in NE Carms – ROWIP action, multi user provision
- Byway Project around Kidwelly - ROWIP action, multi user provision
- CAMSWeb development - ROWIP action, volunteer management
- High Priority DMMOs – issue reduction, ROWIP action, statutory duty

SP – fortunate to have successfully secured money, obtaining grants will supplement CCC money with a strategic plan to spend it.

MH – Hopefully it will see some positive outcomes

KB – Good news, please provide details when you have them.

CF – we need to be sure the projects are deliverable before we share them widely to prevent disappointment. This also ensures the proposals do not become public knowledge before we've had a chance to speak with affected landowners.

### **Item 6 – Access Reform**

CF – 3rd phase of Access Reform completed 4 weeks ago. All consultation feedback collected; good use has been made of the information provided. Expert groups have provided comment. Reform process has not been delayed so far despite Covid19.

### **Item 7 – Issue Reports**

RL – information sent out speaks for itself. Acknowledgement that figures are moving upwards, highest seen to date. With additional capacity hopefully figures will start moving in the other direction.

<p>HE – As mentioned earlier, more users than ever on the network contributing to the increasing issue record. Hopefully next year will see more volunteers and comm councils helping to keep the network open.</p> <p>KB – are figures helping to bid for additional resources, that was always the intention.</p> <p>SP – the figures are helpful, keeps a focus on the problems and informing the strategic plans.</p>	
<p><b>Item 8 – PROW Asset Management Plan</b></p> <p>CF – Highways network has an Asset Management Plan (HAMP) which is a Code of Practice for the management of the road network. It is felt that we need a similar plan for PROW assets to identify what’s on the network the associated risks and their priority. Use of volunteers well suited to assist with the 100% network survey to feed into the plan. Kent CC have a completed plan, available online, Kent PROW manager &amp; author of plan has highlighted its value.</p> <p>MH – Will plan include roads, UCRs, BOATs.</p> <p>CF – HAMP covers all of road network and BOATs (tbc)</p> <p>MH – UCRs, and if BOATs are in there, will be a low priority in the HAMP but as a leisure facility are a high priority</p> <p>KB – HAMP prioritisation of UCRs and BOATs is a concern for higher rights PROW users</p> <p>SP - when we’re ready to present the document in draft we will share with the LAF.</p>	<p><b>CF</b></p>
<p><b>Item 9 - AOB</b></p> <p>MH – <u>Charging Policy</u> request for comments, any received?</p> <p>CF – Comments received and incorporated; document now finalised &amp; going through the final stages of the Council approval process</p> <p>KB – lots of complaints being received in respect of <u>Self-closing Gates</u>, they should not be installed automatically on the network.</p> <p>CF – will feed back to Maint. Normally installed as a result of LO concerns around stock control.</p> <p>MH – <u>Equestrian Strategy</u></p> <p>CF – Covid has caused delays but hope to start developing strategy in Jan 2021</p> <p>KB – understands Covid19 delays, will keep monitoring progress and will contribute as much as possible.</p>	<p><b>CF</b></p> <p><b>CF</b></p>

<p>CF – <u>Recruitment</u> update, replacement for Jason Winter in post as CA assistant – Tom Eckley. CF confirmed in post as CA Manager. Now Vacant CA Officer post recruitment to be completed asap.</p> <p>JG – <u>Promoted routes</u> have no acknowledgement of accessibility for <u>disabled users</u></p> <p>KB – this does need improvement, difficult to find accessible routes</p> <p>CF – will take this back to Martin to speak with Marketing about some possibilities to include additional information.</p> <p>MH – <u>Thanks</u> to CCC for assisting promptly with a dangerous UCR issue.</p> <p>PB – Prior to lockdown regular <u>Path Order and Planning consultations</u> were sent through, this has ceased, presumably work has been on stop.</p> <p>MH – Apologies, there have been some although not many, will try to forward any that may not have been sent on to members.</p>	<p><b>CF</b></p> <p><b>MH</b></p>
<p><b>Item 10 – Future Agenda Items</b></p> <p>MH – Nothing to add other than standard items</p>	
<p><b>Item 11 – Meetings for 2020/221</b></p> <p>MH - Move Dec 3<sup>rd</sup> 2020 meeting to Jan 14<sup>th</sup> 2021</p> <p>CF - work out 2021 meetings in the new year.</p> <p>MH – work out one meeting at a time whilst Covid restrictions are having such an impact.</p>	