

Carmarthenshire Local Access Forum

Thursday 22nd May 2014

Held at Carmarthen Leisure Centre, Johnstown at 6pm

Present:

Jonathan Tudor (JT) - Secretary

Members:

Karen Burch (KB) - Chair
Mark Hadley (MH) - Vice Chair
Glyn Evans (GE)
Eric Davies (ED)
Keith Morgan (KM)
David Stacey (DS)
Caroline Evans (CE)
Rosemary Jones (RJ)
Jillie Gardiner (JG)

Advisors/ Observers/Speakers/Members of the Public

Cllr. Deryk Cundy (DC) – CCC Chair of Community Scrutiny Committee
Geoff Williams (GW) – Ramblers
Rory Dickinson (RD) – CCC Countryside & Coast Manager

Apologies (Members)

Llew Thomas (LT)
Chris Rankin (CR)

Apologies (Advisors)

Cllr. Meryl Gravell - CCC Executive
Board Member Regeneration & Leisure
Phil Stone - NRW
Mike Scott-Archer - BBNP LAF

	ACTION
Item 1 Welcome – KB welcomed all to the meeting.	
Item 2 Apologies – Apologies were taken and recorded.	
Item 3 Consideration/Approval of Minutes of Meeting held on 20th February 2014 The minutes were checked and accepted as correct subject to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• DS said he had raised issue of issues at Wharley Point, Llansteffan in relation to the Wales Coast Path route.• KB wanted alteration to the wording of her comments on Cross Hands West Development to be supplied to JT.	KB
Item 4 Matters Arising from Minutes of Meeting held on 20th February 2014 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Brechfa Windfarm Connection Project – KB had contacted them. They directed the LAF to the public events that were already scheduled. They were prepared to attend a meeting at MMWP if there was demand for a separate meeting from the LAF. JT sent out an email to LAF members who did not express a wish for a separate meeting.• Amman Valley Cycleway – KM provided information from Celtic Energy and KB read out the details to the LAF. There was still concern about part of the route which is on the road.	

- **Ranger Reports** – KB had met with Alan Warner, CCC Countryside Operations Manager to discuss provision of information on maintenance/improvements.

Item 5 CCC Countryside Service Realignment – Update – Rory Dickinson, Countryside and Coast Manager

RD explained that the realignment was necessary because of budget reductions but it had also provided an opportunity to review and deliver a more ‘fit for purpose’ and flexible service. At present there were too many full time maintenance staff in winter when it was more difficult to carry out works and insufficient staff in the summer months when conditions were good for works but most of the time was spent cutting. So more seasonal workers or the use of contractors would be considered. The Countryside Service would consist of 4 Service Areas:

- Countryside Access – Definitive Map/Legal Orders/Enforcement
- Countryside Business and Conservation – Grants/Marketing and Conservation/Biodiversity
- Countryside Development and Commercial - MCP and PCP
- Countryside Operations – Maintenance/Improvements, Site Management.

JT distributed a leaflet with further details of service areas. The posts in the realigned service were ring-fenced for existing Countryside staff.

JG asked about increasing income from the Millennium Coastal Park (MCP). RD said the opportunities to increase income for the Council were being looked at. For example the Welsh Game Fair would be taking place at Pembrey Country Park in June.

JG asked if more information could be made available about the MCP. RD said that it will have its own dedicated web site.

KB asked about maintenance arrangements in the future when there will be fewer Access Rangers and whether some Town/Community Councils may wish to look after their own public rights of way. For example, Quarter Bach had expressed a wish to maintain public rights of way in their area. RD said all options would be considered. When the realignment has been completed RD will bring members of the new Countryside Team to a future LAF meeting.

RD said that he views the ‘countryside’ as the best leisure centre we have in the county and that the aim was to get more people more active more often in it. Country Parks, in stasis since the 60s, also needed to be re-vitalised.

CE commented that it was not clear where the Tourist Information Centre was in the Discovery Centre and there was no visible presence behind the desk there. RD said that the desk there was too high so a person sitting behind it could not be seen.

JT (CCC Countryside Access Manager) explained the new structure of his Countryside Access Team whose primary role was to deal with Legal Orders, keep the Definitive Map and Statement of Public Rights of Way up to date and to take enforcement action where required. The Team would consist of 5 full-time positions (including JT) and 1 part-time Searches Assistant. Currently, the Team was running with 3 full-time and 1 part-time member of staff in post.

RD

<p>Item 6 AGP/ROWIP Grant Work Improvements – presentation – KB</p> <p>KB presented a slideshow film showing before and after shots of improvements to public rights of way in the county stressing that the Countryside Service needs to promote and publicise the good work that it is doing to the public and internally within the Council.</p> <p>KB said that it would be beneficial if the Definitive Map was available online. JT agreed and said it was one of issues that would be progressed when the realignment was completed and the team was up to its full compliment. GW of Dinefwr Ramblers agreed and said that many local authorities had their Public Rights of Way mapping online and some included the ability to report issues online as well. JG said that Brechfa and Llanllwni had mapping available online. Flint and Ceredigion were given as examples of local authorities with online mapping of public rights of way available.</p> <p>GW said that the Ramblers in Wales are reorganising and that he was tasked with getting the various Ramblers groups in Carmarthenshire to define their areas. He was also trying to restart Ramblers volunteer work groups.</p>	<p>JT</p>
<p>Item 7 ‘Easy to Use’ Public Rights of Way – Survey Results - JT</p> <p>JT gave the results for 2013-14 of the annual survey of the PROW network. The survey was based on a random sample of 5.82% of the PROW network. 41.4% were found to be Open, Accessible and Signed and, therefore, judged ‘easy to use’. Copies of the survey results and a chart showing upward trend over the last decade were circulated to members.</p> <p>KB and JG both asked how many bridleways formed part of the survey. JT said that he did not have that information to hand but it could be supplied.</p>	
<p>Item 8 General Update – ROWIP/Legislation/Active Travel - JT</p> <p>JT referred to John Griffith’s (Minister for Culture and Sport) Written Statement – Access and Outdoor Recreation which had been circulated prior to the meeting. It explained the outcome of the review that had been conducted which was that a Green Paper would be published though no timescale was given. However, there would be no legislation during the current Assembly term does not end until 2016.</p>	
<p>Item 9 – AOB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ORPAs (Other Routes with Public Access) – MH reported that he had highlighted various anomalies to CCC StreetScene (highways department). As a result of MH’s work StreetScene had agreed to add the Roman Road south east of Llandovery nr. Hafod Fawr and into BBNP to the List of Streets. • Cllr Deryk Cundy – introduced himself and explained his role as Chair of the Community Scrutiny Committee. CCC had to find savings due to a substantial cut in its budget. It, therefore, needed to continue to look at the ways in which it provided services and identify ways in which it could raise revenue. It was important that people worked together to address these issues and he had valued the opportunity to attend this meeting to gain an insight into the work of the Local Access Forum. Cllr Cundy agreed that there needed to be clear lines of 	

<p>communication between the LAF, elected representatives and Council managers/officers. Online information sources such as 'Discover Carmarthenshire' and the new 'I-Local' facility were vital in enabling people to see the local facilities, amenities and opportunities on their doorstep.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Google shared drive – JG said that she would set up an online shared drive facility that could be used by the LAF. • Town/Community Councils – there was discussion about how connections could be established between them and the LAF. 	JG
<p>Item 10 Date/Location of Future Meetings</p> <p>All meetings are held on Thursdays at 6pm at Carmarthen Leisure Centre as follows:</p> <p>20th November 2014</p>	