

Carmarthenshire Local Access Forum
Thursday 16th February 2017
Carmarthen Leisure Centre, Carmarthen, 6pm

Present:

Members:

Mark Hadley (MH) - Chair
Karen Burch (KB) – Vice Chair
Geoff Williams (GW)
Jane Evans (JE)
Martin Murray (MM) (CCC Maintenance Representative)
Jillie Gardiner (JG)
Glyn Evans (GE)
Richard Leggett (RL)

Secretary (interim)

Caroline Ferguson (CF) (CCC Acting Countryside Access Manager)

Advisors/ Observers/Speakers/Members of the Public

Martin Dolan (MD) Capita Consultancy
John Maudsley (JM) HOWLTA Steering Group
Mike Watson (MW) HOWLTA Steering Group
Simon Charles (SC) CCC Transport Strategy and Infrastructure Manager
Jason Lawday (JL) (Countryside Access Assistant)
Lucy Pugh (LP) (Countryside Access Assistant)

Apologies (Members)

David Stacey (DS)
Glyn Jones (GJ)
Gerald Brown (GB)
Caroline Evans (CE)
Eric Davies (ED)
Chris Rankin (CR)
Keith Morgan (KM)

Apologies (Advisors/Observers)

*CCC in these minutes refers to Carmarthenshire County Council

ITEM	ACTION
Items 1 Welcome & Introduction MH MH welcomed all to the meeting. All presenters introduced themselves.	
Item 2 Presentation from Simon Charles (moved from item 3) SC and MD outlined the current position regarding Active Travel and Carmarthenshire's Integrated Network Map.	

CCC were 1 of only 5 LA's in Wales to have their Existing Route Map (ERM) approved after first submission to WG. This submission was phase 1 of the Active Travel process.

CCC and Capita are presently working together on the next phase of the Active Travel Act which involves the production of Integrated Networks Maps (INM). INM's are being plotted with the aim of connecting built up areas to employers.

There will be a 12 week consultation (26th June – 22nd Sept 2017) in respect of INM's and the data collected as result of the consultation can be used by SC for grant bids.

There will also be audits of walking and cycling routes.

Once complete, all information will be uploaded to the WG system.

GW queried whether the work towards improved connectivity for walking, particularly to schools, will be integrated with parking restrictions.

SC – there will be joint working with schools to promote sustainable transport once improved infrastructure is in place.

JG pointed out that some people won't walk too far.

SC – aim is to target those people who are within a realistic distance.

KB asked if a plan could be circulated

MD – a link to access the plans can be circulated to LAF members once work to improve details has been completed.

MH highlighted lack of consultation with LAF in respect of Active Travel work. Sight of the ERM was requested but was not supplied.

SC – apologised and added that the INMs will be inviting comment.

GW suggested that Tywi Valley Path should be included under Active Travel

SC – focus is on built up areas with over 2000 residents, Llandeilo does not qualify.

MD added that aspirational routes can be included.

SC then moved on to the Tywi Valley Path.

Objective of path creation is to develop a “world class, shared use, active travel facility providing sustainable travel opportunities, improved safety for cyclists in the area (esp road cyclists presently using the A40), accessibility, health and employment improvements and inward investment”.

WG funding has already been drawn down for the Abergwili roadside sections. Other funding still being sourced with the intention of beginning construction in earnest next year.

Capita

Workshops are being held to invite interest/engagement from businesses.

Studies indicate the development could create up to 40 jobs and generate income to the area of 1-2 million pounds.

JG queried equestrian access to path.

SC - currently only walking and cycling access has been agreed, sections for possible equestrian access are being looked at. Negotiations with landowners has been delicate, many are not keen on equine access.

CF queried proposed surfacing materials

SC – surfacing decisions have not been finalised but likely to be a mix of tarmac and stone dust/grit.

GW queried flood risk

SC – the railway embankment being used for the path has not flooded historically.

GW queried route at new school site

SC – present proposal is to route the path around the perimeter of the school car park then use the public footpath to return to the line of the railway alongside Ffairfach Mart site.

MM queried path maintenance arrangements

SC – Future maintenance has not been finalised but there is a commitment from CCC that it will be funded centrally.

GW queried parking facilities for walkers

SC – looking to incorporate ‘hubs’ along the route with parking provision, perhaps in conjunction with local businesses.

GE queried flood risk in Nantgaredig and Whitemill where there isn’t much railway embankment left.

SC – There are some gaps which will require works.

MH queried the income figures that have been generated

SC – economic appraisal produced for the scheme

MH concerned that cyclists will not generate projected income as they don’t stay and use local amenities. Also queried where the job creation was anticipated.

SC – this is detailed in the business case which can be sent to LAF. The creation of the route links with Carmarthenshire’s Walking and Cycling Strategy by connecting routes across the County and encouraging cyclists to stay and use all facilities.

SC

JG maintained MH's concern about people not using local facilities therefore not generating income.

MH added figures do not appear realistic.

GW added a walker's perspective of the proposed scheme – opinion is that old railway lines are dull with limited views.

SC – vantage points along the route are being discussed with proposals for seating.

MM added that circular routes could add potential links to the scheme.

SC – PRoW network surrounding route are being looked at with a view to making improvements subject to funding.

RL queried who the intersecting routes are being looked at with? As far as he is aware the Ramblers have not been approached and no consultation has been received, "local people with local knowledge could help".

SC – attendance at the LAF meeting is partly to make connections.

JG stated that lack of consultation with LAF in respect of the scheme is not compliant with current statutory guidance.

SC – no statutory duty to consult LAF but consultation events will continue and the LAF will be notified via CF.

KB queried provision for equestrian users along the route.

SC – possible opportunities are being explored

KB queried what criteria are being used to establish suitability.

SC – other equestrian routes in the area have been mapped, the views of affected landowners are being taken into account; equestrian expertise would be valuable.

KB offered her assistance. Also queried how much of the affected land is being bought by CCC

SC – less than 40% being bought, over 60% will remain privately owned.

*RL queried the legal processes being used to create and maintain the route.
SC – a mix of compulsory purchases and permissive agreements are proposed.*

MH queried who instigated the scheme? Was it cyclists? Have cyclists agreed they want the path?

SC – initially a Sustrans led initiative back in 2003. Cycling groups have been involved recently.

MH queried is the scheme led by politicians or cyclists.

CF

KB

<p><i>SC – schemes of this scale always require political support but user groups have shown enthusiasm also.</i></p> <p><i>MM pointed out that if Sustrans identified the need originally then likelihood is that cyclists will benefit from the scheme. Removing cyclists and walkers from main roads, especially the A40, can only be positive.</i></p> <p><i>GW pointed out that if the route isn't definitive then local Ramblers leaders would not be insured to lead walks along it.</i></p> <p><i>JG stated that it is morally wrong not to include all users of a scheme of this scale.</i></p> <p><i>SC – repeated that opportunities for wider use will be explored.</i></p> <p><i>KB queried how the scheme is being funded.</i></p> <p><i>SC – some funding has already been secured. Rural Development Fund, EU money and CCC capital are possible sources of funding presently identified to complete scheme, full funding yet to be secured.</i></p>	
<p>Item 3 Presentation from Capita re: ROWIP Review (moved from item 2 on agenda)</p> <p>Presentation given (attached)</p> <p><i>GW queried how stakeholders will be identified</i></p> <p><i>MD – comprehensive list in existing ROWIP, will work with CF to identify any additional stakeholders.</i></p> <p><i>JG asked that the LAF be involved in the review process earlier than at the general stakeholder event.</i></p> <p><i>MD – a meeting with a LAF subcommittee could be arranged in advance of stakeholder event. Would be a task and finish exercise.</i></p> <p><i>GW added that any feedback from LAF/Stakeholders must be well reasoned.</i></p> <p><i>KB felt it was important that any questionnaires used as part of the process should not be leading.</i></p> <p><i>MD – a combination of open and closed questions will be used.</i></p> <p><i>JG asked if information regarding the review will only be publicised online.</i></p> <p><i>MD – will look to place information in local libraries/community centres.</i></p> <p><i>RL queried the exact publication date of new ROWIP.</i></p> <p><i>MD/CF – exact date yet to be determined, will be in January 2018.</i></p> <p><i>MD – Revised document needs to balance ambition with realism.</i></p>	<p>CF/Capita</p>

<p>Members were then asked to volunteer for LAF subcommittee for purposes of ROWIP Review.</p> <p>KB (equine), GW (walker), MH (4x4 user), JG (tourist operator) volunteered. CF to attend as CCC representative. CF to identify landowner representative and add to list then send contact info to MD. Meeting date also to be arranged.</p>	<p>CF</p>
<p>Item 4 Presentation from the Heart of Wales Line Trail Sub-Committee</p> <p>John Maudsley and Mike Watson gave a short presentation to introduce the HOWLT steering group, outline the proposed trail and explain the associated crowd funding arrangements in place for the scheme to assist with improvements & maintenance.</p> <p><i>JE queried whether other funding opportunities for the trail have been explored.</i></p> <p><i>MW – would be interested to hear about other possibilities.</i></p> <p>JE provided her details as the local BHS rep as the trail is going to be using bridleways therefore BHS money could be used.</p> <p><i>MM added that funding for future maintenance of the trail being obtained was great to hear as it is often not the case.</i></p> <p><i>MH asked if the route of the trail have been timed to trains.</i></p> <p><i>JM – not been possible to time the route to trains in this way but all sections will end at facilities and local B&B's/businesses will be promoted as part of the scheme.</i></p> <p><i>MH gave his support to the scheme and the likelihood of local businesses like his own making contributions to the crowd fund. Other members agreed.</i></p> <p>Final HOWLTA report provides detail of route. Can be circulated to LAF.</p> <p>Scheme identified as having links to ROWIP, representatives of HOWLTA to be invited to ROWIP stakeholder event.</p>	<p>CF</p> <p>CF</p>
<p>Item 5 New Members/Resignations</p> <p>None</p>	
<p>Item 6 Apologies</p> <p>Apologies were taken and recorded.</p>	
<p>Item 7 Consideration/Approval of Minutes - Meeting held 19/01/2017</p> <p>The minutes were checked and approved subject to 2 corrections:</p>	

<p>1) Addition of Gerald Brown to members present 2) Typo on page 3</p> <p>CF will make corrections and send for translation.</p>	<p>CF</p>
<p>Item 8 Matters Arising from Minutes – not otherwise agenda items</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Item 6, bridges – BHS have up to £25k bridge fund to assist with BR bridges and also a Community Fund for BR maintenance. Can CCC use this? <p>CF – JE needs to discuss directly with Alan Warner and/or Kelly Shefford</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Item 6 works on BOATs/UCRs – confirmation of £16k from Highways to spend on BOATs and UCRs 2017-18. Item 6, volunteers – still awaiting list of potential volunteer party roles from Alan Warner. <p>MM – will work on producing a list for GW for volunteers to assist with County Walk surveying</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Item 7, LAF Wales sub-committee – GW has emailed John Morgan for info, no response to date. Item 8, 3D Walking – not yet live, no further info, MH to send email. Item 9, BBNP Del Ag – MM asked for clarification around KB’s concerns over BBNP maintenance arrangements in wilderness areas etc. Item 11, 2017 LAF meetings – GW could a LAF website be developed for CCC? <p>CF – severe lack of resource in respect of technical support in CA. LP carries out role as is capable but has limited time. CA team couldn’t sustain a stand-alone website, LAF page on CCC website is updated as promptly as possible.</p> <p>RL – how resilient can CA team be with current staffing levels if even a single staff member is away?</p>	<p>MM</p> <p>MH</p> <p>KB</p>
<p>Item 9 BBNP Delegation Agreement</p> <p>CF provided an update of present position – draft document with Heads of Service for comment.</p> <p>MH requested LAF be kept updated of progress.</p>	<p>CF</p>
<p>Item 10 CCC Countryside Access Legal & Maint Teams – update.</p> <p>Part time Searches Assistant (Helena Burke HB) has started with CA Legal team. Any spare time HB has is presently being used to input survey data to CAMS, time consuming task due to quality of data.</p>	

<p>RL offered to raise issue of Pathwatch data usability with RA HQ, can it be improved.</p> <p>CF happy for RL to raise the issue with RA.</p> <p>No update of CA Maint team.</p>	<p>RL</p>
<p>Item 11 LAF Annual Report</p> <p>MH update – report is a work in progress.</p>	
<p>Item 12 Future Agenda Items</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TRO's – Invite John McEvoy to present TRO process for BOATs and UCRs • ROWIP update • Issues Stats – up to end of 2016-17 financial year not up to date of next meeting. • Minister for Environment Statement 	<p>CF</p>
<p>Item 13 AOB</p> <p>Meeting with Heads of Service – date for meeting needs to be arranged for April</p> <p>KB requested Stats for BR's not open due to Legal Issues</p>	<p>CF</p> <p>CF/LP</p>
<p>Item 14 Next meeting</p> <p>11th May 2017 – Llandeilo venue TBC</p>	<p>CF</p>