

**VALE OF GLAMORGAN LOCAL ACCESS FORUM**

Minutes of a meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> November, 2017.

Present: Councillor E. Williams (Chairman); Mr. R. Traherne (Vice-Chairman); Mr. F. Coleman, Mr. J.J. Herbert, Ms. C. Lucas, Mr. H.S. McMillan, Mr. R. Pittard, Mr. R. Simpson and Mr. G. Thomas.

Mr. J. Wyatt, Mr. S. Pickering, Mr. G. Teague and Mr. A. Briscoombe (Vale of Glamorgan Council).

(a) Apology for Absence -

This was received from Ms. E. Nash.

(b) Minutes -

AGREED - T H A T the minutes of the meeting held on 31<sup>st</sup> July, 2017 be approved as a correct record.

It was noted that, in accordance with the discussion at the above meeting, the Secretary had submitted the comments of the Forum in respect of the Consultation Paper: "Taking Forward Wales' Sustainable Management of Natural Resources". Certain individual Members of the Forum confirmed they had also submitted comments.

(c) Draft Annual Report 2016/17 -

The Secretary presented the draft Annual Report 2016/17 for consideration. Mr. Coleman pointed out a small change to be made under 'Meetings', in that the three meetings held had all taken place in 2016.

AGREED - T H A T the draft Annual Report be endorsed for publication.

(d) Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP): Grant Update -

The project comprised a number of programme actions aiming to assist in the delivery of ROWIP Objectives.

Ref	Location	Brief Details of Programme Action	Update
VG1	Cowbridge	Drainage scheme alongside Waitrose	Awaiting outcome of enforcement by NRW. Reallocation to improvement of Romilly

			Park Road path.
VG2	Countywide	Adopt a path coordination of works	Continuing to identify structure works and issue maintenance instructions on promoted routes via survey.
VG3	Countywide	Definitive Map anomalies – resolve long standing issues by order	To be reallocated to improvement of path at Romilly Park Road
VG4	30km of priority routes	Vegetation clearance	Second round of annual clearance cuts complete

VG1 provided for the design and implementation of a drainage scheme to relieve flooding of Footpath 6, Cowbridge, which led from Waitrose to the park and childrens play area.

VG2 would support the coordination and resolution of maintenance issues on promoted routes that were part of the Adopt a Path scheme.

VG3 would begin to address long standing issues identified during the quality assurance of the Definitive Map process. This was likely to be through a mix of orders, negotiations and/or enforcement where appropriate.

VG4 would support the annual clearance of inland routes.

Mr. Teague indicated that ROWIP funding would be discontinued with effect from 2018/19. No indication was currently available as to what, if anything, would replace the current ROWIP funding provision.

The Vice-Chairman enquired as to the effect generally on Public Rights of Way service provision as a result of forthcoming Welsh Government funding cuts. Mr. Teague was unaware of such, other than to reiterate the fact that the current £32,000 of ROWIP funding was highly unlikely to be continued. He hoped that, possibly, Welsh Government would consider providing it within an alternative form. The Vice-Chairman asked whether it was felt that the Vale of Glamorgan Council would consider making up the shortfall and, as such, whether the Forum should recommend accordingly to the Council's Cabinet.

During the discussion it was also agreed that representations should be made regarding the fact that, on one hand, Councils were being requested to proceed with the (statutory) requirement to re-publish their Rights of Way Improvement Plans on a ten year basis whilst facing the funding cuts alluded to above.

AGREED -

(1) T H A T the Vale of Glamorgan Council's Cabinet be requested to consider the Council meeting any gap in ROWIP funding arising as a result of discontinuation of existing funding provision by Welsh Government.

(2) T H A T the Secretary convey to Natural Resources Wales the Forum's concern regarding the likely discontinuation of ROWIP funding, particularly given the concurrent requirement on the Council to complete the re-publication of its ROWIP.

(3) T H A T the Secretary convey the Forum's comments to the Wales National Access Forum Secretary with a view to alerting Welsh Local Authorities generally of the issue.

(4) T H A T the Secretary liaise with relevant officers to ascertain whether a presentation could be made to Cabinet on general ROWIP achievements in order to inform consideration of the issue of ongoing funding provision.

(e) Coastal Access Improvement Programme: Background and Update -

The Coastal Access Improvement Programme (CAIP) was a scheme funded by the Welsh Government via Natural Resources Wales and delivered through Local Authorities.

Since the Wales Coast Path officially opened on May 5th 2012 the scheme, which initially ran from 2007-2013 had continued to fund the development and improvement of the route. Following completion of the initial project, further funding was made available; this ran from 2013-2015.

The current programme was initiated by a ministerial announcement that committed £900,000 worth of funding per annum for the next 5 years to the path. The current scheme differed from previous in so much as funding was divided between improvements and maintenance, to reflect the maturing nature of the Coast Path.  
CAIP Funding 2017-18

Offers of grant had been received and accepted for the following improvement projects. Updates on each were included below. It was also anticipated that a further project at Sully Playing Fields would continue though funding had yet to be confirmed for 2017-18 in respect of this

Code	Location	Details	Update
VG1502	Traeth Mawr	Missing link currently available on permissive basis only. Previously submitted as creation order, landowner has indicated willingness to revert to agreement	Complete

No.

VG1503	East of Nash Point	Rollback of path to mitigate cliff undercutting	Referred to consultant – site visits and landowner contact undertaken
VG1504	West of Tresilian Bay	Formalisation of rollback following coastal erosion	Referred to consultant – site visits and landowner contact undertaken.
VG1506	Summerhouse	legal orders to formalise cliff top rollback	Referred to consultant – site visits and landowner contact undertaken
VG1507	Gileston	Creation of missing link. Agreement complete and works agreed. Creation order underway in respect of final part of land.	Dedication agreement concluded & outstanding order progressed. Works associated with agreement complete
VG1701	Monknash	Improvement of drainage, surface and crossing	Topo survey complete, heritage survey complete, design work commissioned

In addition an allocation for coast path maintenance via grant and at 75% grant rate had been advised. In the Vale for 2017-18 this amounted to £19,230 of grant to be matched by £6,410. It was anticipated that this would be issued each year over the life of the programme:

Code	Description	Details	Update
Maint	Maintenance Projects on VoG WCP	Vegetation cut back, maintenance of furniture and surfaces	Seasonal cuts complete. Report into cliff erosion near Rhoose received. Contract for ancillary works at Sully invited.

The Chairman referred to the obvious progress that had been made on various schemes and hoped that the Council would be able to eventually publicise such (e.g. on its website).

(f) Maintenance Reports -

The Forum was provided with an update in relation to maintenance work carried out up to 24<sup>th</sup> October, 2017.

Responding to a question as to whether areas of high density of “issues” had any correlation with low prioritisation of paths, Mr. Teague considered that it was likely to simply be the density itself, rather than any prioritisation, to be causing a concentration of issues. He also confirmed that there were no particular individuals or organisations generating a particularly large number of specific issues.

The Vice-Chairman asked whether the number of issues requiring attention had increased year on year. In response, Mr. Teague alluded to a figure of approximately 1,600 existing in 2011. That figure had reduced, albeit a change-over of staff in 2015 had resulted in an increase in the logging of issues, which, in turn, had led to an increase in the total number. However, that number had now again dropped considerably. Mr. Coleman asked whether the picture regarding promoted routes only would look better if it was not combined with non-promoted routes. In response, Mr. Teague suggested that, in reality, some non-promoted routes may themselves have issues requiring attention, but that these were not known due to the significantly lower level of use of such paths.

(g) Legal Orders and Evidential Modification Orders Updates -

The Forum was presented with an update on the Legal Orders and Evidential Modification Orders across the Vale of Glamorgan. Many of the Orders in the list had now been closed off and the associated electronic mapping updated. The most prominent Order awaiting completion was Wenvoe 21 and 22 path, which, again, was due to be completed imminently.

As far as Modification Orders were concerned, Mr. Teague indicated that the process relating to Romilly Road was almost complete.

(h) Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP): Republication -

A series of workshops were to be held to help inform the review of the Vale of Glamorgan Council’s Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP).

It was 10 years since the first publication of the ROWIP, and there was now a statutory obligation on the Council to carry out this review, and to republish its ROWIP.

The three workshop-type events (for which invitations had been issued) would take place as follows:

Date	Time	Location
21st November 2017	Morning (10:30 – 12:30)	Porthkerry Park Wooden Lodge (next to Porthkerry Park Café)

21st November 2017	Evening (18:00 – 20:00)	Cowbridge Old Hall North East Corner of Cowbridge Physic Gardens
22nd November 2017	Afternoon (14:00 – 16:00)	Heritage Coast Centre Southerndown
<p>Arrangements were being made to receive further views by telephone for anyone unable to make the events and who wished to contribute.</p> <p>AGREED - T H A T the Secretary forward the e-mail containing the invitation to/information on the ROWIP Re-Publication workshops to Forum Members.</p>		
<p>(i) <u>Vale of Glamorgan Council Response to Chapter 4 of “Taking Forward Wales’ Sustainable Management of Natural Resources” -</u></p> <p>A copy of the Council’s response to the above Consultation Paper had been included on the agenda. The general theme of the response was that the Council was generally opposed to the more “controversial” proposals and wished to raise the potential implications if objections to such were ignored. Most of the more technical proposals had been supported.</p> <p>Mr. Pittard suggested that the questions themselves had been somewhat narrowly framed and Mr. Teague concurred with that view, adding that the Council had, therefore, included a more detailed Appendix with its response to the actual questions.</p> <p>AGREED - T H A T the Forum place on record its view that the Council’s response had been excellent and was endorsed by the Forum.</p>		
<p>(j) Member Briefing: Protecting the Network -</p> <p>The Forum received a presentation from Mr. Teague, which covered topics relating to the protection of the network, specifically the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Highway authority Responsibilities</li><li>• Enforcement methods</li><li>• Animals</li><li>• Obstructions</li><li>• Damage</li><li>• Hazards</li><li>• Deterrence</li><li>• Traffic Regulation Orders.</li></ul>		