

**MONMOUTHSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM**

**Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 22nd May 2017 at 1:30pm  
Abergavenny Leisure Centre, Monmouthshire**

**PRESENT:**

**Members:**

<b>Mrs Anne Underwood</b>	<b>Chair</b>	<b>AU</b>
<b>Mrs Irene Brooke</b>		<b>IB</b>
<b>Mrs Pat Belsten</b>		<b>PB</b>
<b>Mrs Anthea Fairey</b>		<b>AF</b>
<b>Mrs Sheila Hampshire</b>		<b>SH</b>
<b>Ms Gwyneth Jones</b>		<b>GJ</b>
<b>Mr Phil Mundell</b>		<b>PM</b>
<b>Mr David Smith</b>		<b>DS</b>
<b>Cllr Ann Webb</b>		<b>AW</b>

<b>MCC</b>	<b>Mr Matthew Lewis</b>	<b>ML</b>
	<b>Mr Paul Keeble</b>	<b>PK</b>

**Minute Secretary: Alan Clarke** **AC**

**1. Apologies**

Apologies were received from John Askew, Elizabeth Hepburn and Ruth Rourke.

**2. Introductions**

**AU** welcomed members to the meeting and introductions were made around the table.

**3. Declarations of Interest**

There were no new declarations of interest.

**4. Minutes of the Meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> February 2017**

The minutes of the meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> February 2017 were agreed by those present and signed by the Chair.

**6. Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

**7. Proposed New Delivery Model for Tourism, Leisure, Culture and Youth Services**

Members noted the document presented by **ML**. He described the background which had led to the current and wider review of services.

A number of options had been considered and in March 2017 the Council had decided to progress just two, an in-house review or a new style, alternative delivery model.

Work was now proceeding to produce detailed plans for both options. The aim was to report in September with a go-live target of 1 April 2018.

**ML** explained that if the alternative delivery model (ADM) was chosen, a charitable trust would be set up with a trading company and a local authority owned company. The management of the assets would be devolved to the ADM who would be responsible for tourism, leisure, culture and youth services and would also take on around 400-450 Council employees. A budget would be provided by the Council towards the costs of running services but in the longer term there would be potential for savings with the ADM having access to external grants. As far as care of rights of way was concerned, the ADM would continue to work to the ROWIP on behalf of the Council.

**AU** said the Wentwood Forest project had benefited from the inclusion of Adventa and probably wouldn't have happened otherwise. Based on this experience, she felt reasonably confident about the current proposals.

**PK** joined the meeting at 2.05pm.

**IB** asked if the proposed changes would result in reduced accountability. **ML** said there would be sufficient checks in the system to cover this.

**AW** asked if there would be provision for scrutiny before determination of a final decision. **ML** said that there would but he had no details on this as yet.

**GJ** asked if there would be any impact on services caused by changes in the short term. **ML** said efforts would be made to guard against this, although there could be some short-term disruption during the implementation period. There are dangers and the Authority is aware of this.

**IB** asked how the changes would affect footpaths. **ML** said in the short term there won't be any changes, but in the longer term there may well be changes in the way in which rights of way are marketed. Also in the longer term the ADM should become more efficient leading to further savings arising from accommodation reorganisation. He said he would continue to report back to the LAF on the progress of the changes.

## **8. Report of the First Stage Consultation on the ROWIP Review**

Members noted the report presented by **ML**. **IB** said there had been very little feedback from individual farmers and landowners who did not seem to have been consulted. She said this was particularly relevant for rights of way as their cooperation was needed.

**ML** said he thought the Country Land and Business Association and the National Farmers' Union had been consulted and he would check with **RR**. **Action: ML**

**PM** highlighted recent problems concerning access and blockages encountered during the Chepstow Walking Festival. This had been despite lengthy consultation with the relevant authorities.

**ML** said **RR** would be having more detailed discussions with the major land use providers within the County and with Natural Resources Wales. He said that while the

ROWIP could contain lots of aspirations, it was largely down to management on the ground by NRW. Monmouthshire was the first Authority in Wales to consult with NRW on ROWIP provisions.

**ML** said he was still happy to receive comments on the ROWIP. The LAF also needed to decide how it wished to work with MCC on the production of the final document. He suggested setting up a working group. It was agreed that **RR** should discuss this with **AU**.  
**Action: RR & AU**

## 9. Report from LAF Chairs Meeting

**AU** reported following the LAF Chairs meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> April. She said the Welsh Government still intended to issue a White Paper on countryside access but it was not included in the current legislative timetable. She said some of the problems highlighted at the meeting had been inconsistencies in mapping and the expense involved in making changes to the map.

**AU** said this was likely to be the last year of ROWIP funding. A new structure will be put in place although the details have yet to be announced.

**AU** said the meeting had discussed the importance of how LAFs liaise with National Parks. She said the arrangements seem to work well in Monmouthshire. The Members noted the paper circulated on this. There was also agreement that the LAFs should make an annual presentation to County Councils. **ML** confirmed that this had been agreed with MCC.

**AU** said there was likely to be a wider role for LAFs in the future. This gave rise to the need to raise the public awareness of the work of the LAF and to attract new members.

**IB** asked if the LAF could become a statutory consultee. **ML** said this would not be possible without legislation but he was happy to copy information in to a LAF sub-group. He said he would speak to Richard Garner to discuss how a practical process could be established. **PM** said the County needed to be broken down into smaller geographical areas in order to involve local interest groups.  
**Action: ML**

**AU** said the new Glastir Advanced programme had been discussed at the Chairmans' Members noted the document circulated. **ML** said this would be a useful initiative for Monmouthshire to be involved in and it was agreed that this should be linked to the ROWIP sub-group. **ML** will discuss the details with **RR**.  
**Action: ML & RR**

## 10. Mon Lane Care Scheme

**ML** said that unfortunately **JH** had not been able to attend today's meeting because of work commitments and therefore the site visit had had to be cancelled. **JH** was also proposing to step down from the LAF because of other ongoing commitments. **PK** said that **JH** still hoped to help out with Lane Care and he had suggested that another 4x4 user should be co-opted onto the LAF.

**SH** suggested that some of the conflict of use of ROWs by motorised vehicles could be alleviated if the Planning Department was more accepting of applications for use of

4x4s and motorcycles on designated courses on farmland. **ML** agreed that this was an issue the LAF needed to tackle, perhaps through a sub-group with a 4x4 representative. **AU** suggested that Traffic Regulation Orders needed to be built in to any arrangements in order to prevent nuisance.

**DS** suggested the possibility of a weekend meeting in order to fit in with **JS**' availability. **PK** will contact **JS** on this. **Action: PK**

**11. Other Updates**

**a) M4 Inquiry**

**ML** said the M4 Inquiry was continuing. LAF and MCC comments had been submitted and undertakings had been given on most of these. MCC did not have the resources to maintain a full watching brief but would aim to respond as necessary.

**b) Brecon Beacons National Park**

**ML** said Heads of Terms on an updated agreement with the National Park had been agreed and would be backdated to 1 April 2017. MCC's legal department were now drawing up a full legal agreement.

**c) Living Levels**

**ML** said he would arrange a full briefing on the Living Levels project for presentation at a future LAF meeting.

**d) National Parks**

**AW** said the Chief Executive of the National Park Authority would be speaking to the full MCC council shortly and this may be of interest to LAF members should they wish to attend.

**e) Training**

**AU** said some basic training for LAF members would be set up shortly.

**12. Future Work Programme**

Members noted the items listed on the Future Work Programme.

**13. Date and Venue of Next Meeting.**

To be advised.

The meeting closed at 4.00pm.

Signed as a true record of the proceedings:.....

(Chairman)

Date:.....