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County Hall
Rhadyr
Usk
NP15 1GA

30th November 2021

Notice of meeting

Local Access Forum

Monday, 6th December, 2021 at 2.00 pm,
County Hall, Usk - Remote Attendance

AGENDA

Item No	Item	Pages
1.	Apologies for Absence / Introductions.	
2.	Declarations of Interest	
3.	To confirm and sign the minutes of the Monmouthshire Local Access Forum meeting of 22 July 2021	1 - 4
4.	Membership update (Secretary)	
5.	Partnership working (a) Gwent Green Grid Partnership (b) Living Levels Partnership (c) Wye Valley AONB	
6.	General Updates (a) Staffing, CAIP delivery and issues etc. (Report attached) (b) Access Reform Briefing (Document attached) (c) LAF Chairs Meeting 2 December 2021 (Chair/Deputy Chair)	
7.	Consultations (a) Temporary LAF regulations (b) Brecon Beacons Management Plan (for information)	
8.	Dates of Future Meetings	

Paul Matthews

Chief Executive

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
CYNGOR SIR FYNWY

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE COMMITTEE IS AS FOLLOWS:

County Councillor A. Webb

Sheila Hampshire
Mark Storey
Anne Underwood(Chair)
Irene Brooke (Vice Chair)
Anthea Fairey
Shan Lewis
David Smith
David Farnsworth
Tracy Hook
Gordon Davies
Jenny Cockitt
John Askew
Mark Storey
Martin Sweeney
Phil Mundell
Sylvia Fowles

Public Information

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Welsh Language

The Council welcomes contributions from members of the public through the medium of Welsh or English. We respectfully ask that you provide us with adequate notice to accommodate your needs.

Aims and Values of Monmouthshire County Council

Sustainable and Resilient Communities

Outcomes we are working towards

Nobody Is Left Behind

- Older people are able to live their good life
- People have access to appropriate and affordable housing
- People have good access and mobility

People Are Confident, Capable and Involved

- People's lives are not affected by alcohol and drug misuse
- Families are supported
- People feel safe

Our County Thrives

- Business and enterprise
- People have access to practical and flexible learning
- People protect and enhance the environment

Our priorities

- Schools
- Protection of vulnerable people
- Supporting Business and Job Creation
- Maintaining locally accessible services

Our Values

- **Openness:** we aspire to be open and honest to develop trusting relationships.
- **Fairness:** we aspire to provide fair choice, opportunities and experiences and become an organisation built on mutual respect.
- **Flexibility:** we aspire to be flexible in our thinking and action to become an effective and efficient organisation.
- **Teamwork:** we aspire to work together to share our successes and failures by building on our strengths and supporting one another to achieve our goals.

Nodau a Gwerthoedd Cyngor Sir Fynwy

Cymunedau Cynaliadwy a Chryf

Canlyniadau y gweithiwn i'w cyflawni

Neb yn cael ei adael ar ôl

- Gall pobl hŷn fyw bywyd da
- Pobl â mynediad i dai addas a fforddiadwy
- Pobl â mynediad a symudedd da

Pobl yn hyderus, galluog ac yn cymryd rhan

- Camddefnyddio alcohol a chyffuriau ddim yn effeithio ar fywydau pobl
- Teuluoedd yn cael eu cefnogi
- Pobl yn teimlo'n ddiogel

Ein sir yn ffynnu

- Busnes a menter
- Pobl â mynediad i ddysgu ymarferol a hyblyg
- Pobl yn diogelu ac yn cyfoethogi'r amgylchedd

Ein blaenoriaethau

- Ysgolion
- Diogelu pobl agored i niwed
- Cefnogi busnes a chreu swyddi
- Cynnal gwasanaethau sy'n hygyrch yn lleol

Ein gwerthoedd

- **Bod yn agored:** anelwn fod yn agored ac onest i ddatblygu perthnasoedd ymddiriedus
- **Tegwch:** anelwn ddarparu dewis teg, cyfleoedd a phrofiadau a dod yn sefydliad a adeiladwyd ar barch un at y llall.
- **Hyblygrwydd:** anelwn fod yn hyblyg yn ein syniadau a'n gweithredoedd i ddod yn sefydliad effeithlon ac effeithiol.
- **Gwaith tîm:** anelwn gydweithio i rannu ein llwyddiannau a'n methiannau drwy adeiladu ar ein cryfderau a chefnogi ein gilydd i gyflawni ein nodau.

Terms of Reference

Monmouthshire Local Access Forum is the statutory Local Access Forum for Monmouthshire (excluding that part of the county that falls into the Brecon Beacons National Park), as required under the Countryside & Rights of Way Act 2000.

The function of the Forum is to advise the local authority, Natural Resources Wales and others, as to the improvement of public access to land in the area for the purposes of open-air recreation and the enjoyment of the area, and to advise and assist with the implementation of the Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan.

Membership

Members of the forum are appointed by the “Appointing Authority” (Monmouthshire County Council in accordance with the relevant regulations. The current membership of the forum is as follows:

Mr John Askew

Mrs Patricia Belsten

Mrs Irene Brooke

Mrs Anthea Fairey

Mrs Sheila Hampshire

Ms Elizabeth Hepburn

Ms Gwyneth Jones

Mr Phil Mundell

Mr David Smith

Mr Mark Storey

Mrs Anne Underwood (Deputy Chair)

Cllr Ann Webb (the “Appointing Authority” representative)

Observers;

Representatives from Monmouthshire County Council and Natural Resources Wales

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MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Local Access Forum held
at County Hall, Usk - Remote Attendance on Thursday, 22nd July, 2021 at 2.30 pm

PRESENT: Irene Brooke (Deputy Chair)
Jenny Cockitt
David Farnsworth
Sheila Hampshire
Tracy Hook
Shan Lewis
Phil Mundell
Martin Sweeney
Anne Underwood (Chair)

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Joanne Chase	Solicitor
Susan Hughes	Active Travel Officer
Matthew Lewis (Countryside)	Interim Performance, Evaluation and Programme Development Lead for MonLife
Ruth Rourke	Principal Officer - Countryside Access
Sarah Tindal	Natural Resources Wales
Robert Campbell	Natural Resources Wales

1. Apologies for Absence / Introductions

Apologies were received from members: Gordon Davies, Anthea Fairey, David Smith, Mark Storey, Ann Webb and from Paul Keeble (MCC)

AU welcomed members to the meeting which was being held virtually in accordance with the provisions of The Countryside Access (Local Access Forum) (Wales) (Coronavirus) Regulations 2020.

It was noted that Joanne Chase Head of Commercial Law MCC was attending the meeting for the first time.

2. To confirm and sign the minutes of the Monmouthshire Local Access Forum meeting of 9 March 2021

The minutes of the meeting of 9 March 2021 were approved as a correct record.

3. Active Travel Consultation

SHu provided the forum with a presentation on the background to the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013, including the definition of active travel and the settlements covered by the requirement. The presentation also covered a summary of the public engagement to date and the current, and final, consultation on the draft network maps. The importance of the process was stressed and in particular that future investment will be based on whether a route has been identified on the maps. It was recognised that many of the routes identified in the settlements were public

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Local Access Forum held at County Hall, Usk - Remote Attendance on Thursday, 22nd July, 2021 at 2.30 pm

rights of way and that many also provided important links to the wider countryside access network. A summary of current active travel schemes linking to the wider network and managed countryside sites was also provided.

Members asked a number of questions including how the proposed “primary routes” had been identified and the data behind them; the importance of the continuity of routes; how delivery would be phased and assessed; and the strategic approach to putting forward bids for Welsh Government funding across the county. In response to the latter SHu indicated that to date only 3 strategic bids each year were invited by Welsh Government and that currently they were for Abergavenny, Caldicot and Monmouth schemes.

It was agreed that members would further consider the interactive maps (<https://mccactivetravelconsultation.commonplace.is/>) as they wished. If appropriate submit individual responses, and if there were issues they felt the forum should respond to collectively these should be provided to the Secretary so a coordinated response could be approved by the Chair and Deputy Chair prior to the close of the consultation period at the end of August.

SHu was thanked for her informative presentation.

4. Countryside Access Improvement Plan Delivery Plan (report to follow)

RR introduced the item and summarised for members the requirement that the Council publishes an annual delivery plan of its proposed actions to deliver the approved Countryside Access Improvement Plan (CAIP). The delivery plan was structured to reflect the objectives and actions of the CAIP to allow cross referencing.

Members asked a number of questions including the relationship between the actions in the delivery plan and agreed priorities and how those priorities related to particular routes. In the following discussion it was explained that the Council’s approved prioritisation scheme was task and “benefit” based rather than route based, as reflected in the original consultation around its development, however the importance of national, regional and local promoted routes and their quality standards was reflected in the system. It was noted that a fuller explanation of this can be found in the Monmouthshire’s Countryside Access Policy, Protocol and Operational Management Guide which accompanied the Countryside Access Improvement Plan. RR undertook to provide members with links to those documents (Secretary’s note: also provided above).

Members were invited to review the delivery plan and offer any further input to RR as the plan is a “live” document that can be updated as projects develop.

5. Future Work Programme

AU introduced the item. ML summarised the items already identified from the last meeting: Access during an emergency / promotion of the Countryside Code; Definitive Map Modification Order prioritisation; the Ramblers Association Lost Ways project / Slow Ways. Welsh Government’s Access Reform Proposals were also identified as a future work item. RC indicated that NRW would wish to update members on current operations and cover their draft forestry operations plan for 2022- 25.

A short discussion followed and members asked about the response to incidents of cropping and enforcement. RR explained the general approach and ML updated members on the internal appointment of a new Enforcement Officer. ML also promised to follow up the request to re-establish member’s access to the iPROW magazine if possible.

AU reminded the LAF that the forum has the ability to appoint working groups if members see fit for specific tasks

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6. Dates of future meetings

The forum agreed it would continue to meet on an afternoon, and ML will consult on dates for a Sept/Oct and Jan/Feb 2022 meeting. A decision would be taken closer to the time as to whether the forum could return to face to face meetings or need to continue to meet virtually as long as the Regulations allow (Secretary's note: the Regulations allowing virtual meetings currently expire on 31 December 2021).

AU thanked members for their continued perseverance with virtual access.

The meeting ended at 3.38 pm

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