



# VELOTHON WALES 2017

## Debrief Summary

The attached document is a summary of the comments received from the following organisations and is intended to stimulate discussions and identify improvements to the Velothon Wales moving into both 2018 and beyond. It is not intended to be a verbatim record of the comments received from every agency.

### Responses received from:

Newport CC

Cardiff CC

Torfaen CC

Monmouthshire CC

Caerphilly CC

SWFRS

Welsh Ambulance

Welsh Cycling

Welsh Government and SWTRA

Heddlu Gwent Police (they have asked for V1 to be held prior to meeting)

Gwent Doctors Out of Hours

Run4Wales



## **Governance Arrangements, Planning Structures and Engagement with Stakeholders**

### **What Went Well.**

Broadly the partners felt the current meeting structure worked well and it was perceived that the Steering Group was better when chaired by WG rather than Ironman but as it focused on the top line issues with detail being worked through the operational groups.

Having one group structure was felt to be beneficial to all parties for widest communication but frequency of meetings could be further amended as a number were correctly postponed. They were supported by 1 to 1 meetings particularly around Traffic Management. Having a single point of contact was also successful when ED was not available.

The tabletop exercise was seen as beneficial and at an appropriate level. The move to Leckwith for event control was also seen as very beneficial.

### **What did not go so well**

There was significant concern around the circulation of documentation from the event organisers with concerns that it was frequently too late for consideration prior to meetings and project plans, whilst better, still needed to be improved.

The use of a single location for the storage of documents was an improvement, once all could access it. Some of the key documents were very late for final versions, such as the risk assessment, and some were not circulated within the timeframes given.

### **Key Lessons for 2018.**

Maintain Steering Group, with WG involvement, to hold event organisers to account.

A single point of contact for each authority from Run4Wales team.

Early distribution of documents, esp minutes and meeting papers, and agreed timelines for document preparation and circulation.

A single location for document storage with notification when changes have been made.

### **Action Plan for 2018**

- **Steering Group to be chaired by WG.**
- **Reduction in number of meetings to 3**
  - **Initial Meeting in October**
  - **Interim Meeting on Progress – January**
  - **Final Meeting - May**
- **SPOC appointed by R4W for each authority**
- **Project Plan prepared for first meeting of steering group**
- **Agreement for all minutes and agendas circulated one week before meeting**
- **Single Storage Point to be identified and agreed by first meeting.**



## **Roles, Responsibilities and Accountability**

### **What Went Well**

Most of the issues had been covered on previous heading.

### **What Did Not Go So Well**

The relationship between the Event Organiser and public, some still perceive the LA as the organiser, needs to be re-focused.

The LAs put in significant amount of effort and planning to facilitate the event but the legacy benefits, as part of the EIA, are less clear outside of Cardiff. There is still a perception from some key businesses that they are disadvantaged unnecessarily and have no recourse.

Litter and toilets were also seen as an issue again.

### **Key Lessons Learnt**

Wider contact with the communities so there is clarity over the roles of the Event Organisers v LA.

Further improvement in waste management to reduce litter and increase, further, the number of toilets.

The sight and input to the EIA as early as possible to be able to gauge the benefit to local communities.

Increase local support for events to maximise the benefits of the road closures.

### **Action Plan for 2018**

- **Correspondence with communities to reinforce planning is managed by Run4Wales and not Local Authorities**
- **Wider consideration for an increase in toilets and litter collection around the route with details provided to participants.**
- **Widest and earliest circulation of EIA**
- **Work with Marcomms group to highlight the Usk experience and coordinate opportunities for other target communities.**



## **Traffic Management Planning inc Stewarding and Pre – Event Business and Resident Contact**

### **What Went Well**

The earlier release of road closure timings was beneficial to the community in allowing them to plan. The quality and content of the leaflets was an improvement on 2016.

The use of the rolling road closure for the Pro Race allowed the roads to be re-opened sooner and reduced the impact.

Engagement with those watching the event was warmly received by the community, particularly children.

Communication with care providers worked well and was a significant improvement on 2016.

### **What Did Not Go So Well**

There was no stewarding plan available to consider and the TMP, other than detailed plans, was not prepared to an expected level. The quality and capability of some of the stewards was significantly worse than 2016. Some had limited to no English, were late arriving on their positions and did not appear to have briefed the stewards.

The relationship between crossing points and ELAPS needs to be improved, or clarified, as there were some key points where carers could not gain access in and out even though they had the relevant pass. Some of the stewards began allowing crossings, where no approved, to try and alleviate the queues which only enhanced the problems.

There were key viewing areas where there was limited, to no, protection and potential for children to wander into the route. These unofficial viewing areas then caused littering additional to that left by the cyclists.

Some of the closure infrastructure was installed in advance of the closure times but it wasn't clear that the roads were still open. This could be included in the communication to the public.

The use of one of the feed stations had changed and caused cyclists to queue back into the road with inherent risks.

The "short route" was announced prior to being agreed to and was incorrectly called the 110km. This meant some of the cyclists were not as prepared as they could be.

Some of the signage was still displayed up to a week after the event and official complaint over the quality of the signs.



There is a need to confirm Welsh Translations with some of the authorities earlier to ensure the approved wording is displayed.

### **Key Lessons Learnt**

A TMP, in addition to the route maps, needs to be prepared and circulated. Other key documents such as the stewarding plan and localised risk assessments also need to be prepared and circulated with time for their consideration.

The quality and capability of stewards needs to improve. They need to be aware of their location, speak English and have sufficient briefing to be able to advise public of alternative routes.

Leaflet to public should include reference to the potential for infrastructure to be installed early but roads are not closed until the official time. If ELAPs are put in place then they should be adhered to and only relevant access allowed.

If there is no pro race the timings of the event need to be reconsidered to minimise the length of overall road closure whilst still ensuring it is safe for participants.

### **Action Plan for 2018**

- **Confirm early that there is no pro race and formalise routes**
- **Actively consider a short route, around 50km, to widen the involvement in Velothon**
- **Confirm in leaflets that whilst infrastructure for road closures may be put in place roads are still open until the cut off time**
- **TM Company to prepare a Traffic Management Plan as well as the detailed plan**
- **Stewarding needs a significant refresh. Actively look at localisation of recruitment and training as well as preparation of Stewarding Plan.**
- **Consider the impact on road closure timings by withdrawal of pro race.**



## **Communications and Publicity**

### **What Went Well**

Communication with the carers was improved, although undone on the day by poor stewarding, and the wider business and resident community through timely and more detailed leaflets.

There was a significant improvement in the social media sentiment to the event, up from 21% to 69% and a reduction in negative press mentions from 44% to 25%.

The Cycle Usk was a significant success with both community and school involvement. Over 100 old bikes were painted and displayed around the town with a series of events in the run up to the event. This increased the number of “on the day” supports and was widely commented on by the participants.

The school engagement worked well in places and was supported by Welsh Cycling. Some of the school events are continuing through to September.

### **What Did Not Go So Well**

The event needs to be promoted as early as possible with clarification over the two event lengths and differences identified from the start so participants are aware of what they are signing up to.

The communication with key media, specifically the Abergavenny Chronicle, needs to be developed and active consideration with direct contact with those who publicly voice their objections to the event.

The website was poor and changes took significant time to be achieved.

Details of those seriously injured should be known and updated more frequently as it is a cause of concern with community and councillors.

### **Key Lessons Learnt**

Despite the existence of the Comms Group there is a perception that the direct communication can be improved with key newspapers more closely engaged.

Whilst the community councils are important wider engagement up to and including public meetings may improve relationships with those currently against the event.

When community engagement is adopted by the community it can achieve significant improvements as borne out in Usk. This should be learnt from and the model followed more widely in 2018.



It would help if participants details are opened to local authorities to allow direct marketing from the LAs around events in and around the route.

If viewing locations are promoted then there should be an accompanying risk assessment and welfare facilities, toilets etc, in place at event organisers expense.

It would help if the stewards had a small number of maps of alternative routes available to provide to motorists.

### **Action Plan for 2018**

- **Develop an engagement strategy with communities and media to increase understanding of the event and benefits to community.**
- **Expand the success of Usk to other key communities along the route supported by LAs.**
- **Include request to share information with LAs as part of the enrolment procedure on Active.**
- **Actively consider alternative community meetings in key/ problematic areas.**
- **If viewing areas are highlighted in 2018 there needs to be a linked plan for each.**
- **Resident Comms to be part of the Route and Start finish meetings within Ops rather than MarComms**



### **Any other comments**

Overall the organisational arrangements are improving and complaints are reducing significantly. However, the plans need to be prepared and circulated to and agreed time schedule.

The Velonteers did a sterling job and, in some cases, were doing more than paid stewards.

The event lends itself to wider engagement with Welsh cycling clubs. Their promotion and participation programmes would benefit in reducing some of the antisocial behaviours, littering and urinating etc, that cause issues for the event organisers.

Dropping the Pro Race is an opportunity to focus on community cycling and would allow the introduction of a short route event which would improve the image of the event.

The use of the Run4Wales offices for event control worked well with all agencies co located and aware of all developments throughout the day. The access and support were excellent and made the day go quickly. The hourly updates meant all parties were aware and the "live" updates of locations of the participants and pro race meant requests for information were reduced.

### **Arrangements with Gwent Police**

There were some police specific discussions primarily around the request for Police resources, and the delay in formalising arrangements which impacted on the number of staff required for the Pro Race. Specifically the delay in agreeing the SPS between the event organiser and the Police meant none of the Police resources were sourced in time.

There was a concern that recommendations from previous events and debriefs had not been adopted in full as the same issues came up in 2017 as in previous years.

A consideration for subject matter experts chairing the sub groups to ensure there is a knowledgeable person.

The use of a SeCCO to assess the event and check route pre-event was a significant asset.

Suggested to change lead Force back to South Wales for 2018.

Significant and accurate negative assessment of the stewards within Caerphilly area.





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