

Monmouthshire

Local Access Forum

AGENDA ITEM: 4

SUBJECT: COMMUNITY LINKS: PROGRESS REPORT
MEETING: MONMOUTHSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM
DATE: 26 JANUARY 2023

1. PURPOSE:

- 1.1 To update the Forum on progress since the appointment of the Community Links Officer and to propose terms of reference for the improvement sub-group.

2. RECOMMENDATION:

- 2.1 To note progress to date and to approve the terms of reference for the improvement sub-group.

3. BACKGROUND:

- 3.1 As a result of the 22/23 budget process a new permanent Community Links Officer post has been added to the Countryside Access Team. This full-time post was established to enable community volunteering, by leading on working with volunteers, local path care groups, friends groups, community councils and others to help facilitate volunteer and community input to resolving outstanding issues. The aim is to support both practical volunteer and community tasks and facilitate group's independent involvement. To support the role a community links project forms part of the 2022-25 Access Improvement Grant proposals. Tom Arnold started in this post in August 2022 and will provide an update on his work to date.
- 3.2 The 26 April 2022 meeting of the LAF approved the establishment of an improvement sub-group to support working with local communities to identify future improvements and it is now timely to establish that to support the Community Links Officer's work. Draft terms of reference are appended. To date two members have expressed an interest in joining this group, other members are also invited.

4. AUTHOR:

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Monmouthshire Local Access Forum: Improvement Sub-Group

Draft terms of reference

1. The sub-group is established as a committee of the Local Access Forum in accordance with the Terms of Reference for the Monmouthshire Local Access Forum.
2. As agreed at the Local Access Forum meeting on 26 April 2022 the improvement sub-group's purpose is to assist in the implementation of the Countryside Access Improvement Plan, including:
 - a. Helping in the identification of routes for improvement
 - b. Assisting in working with local communities to assess these improvement opportunities
 - c. Assist in monitor and identify the benefits of schemes within communities
 - d. Assist in engaging with local path groups, community councils and others to facilitate volunteer engagement in resolving issue
 - e. Assist in formulating funding bids
 - f. Consider and prepare responses on the Local Access Forum's behalf to improvement proposals including consultations under forestry / farming schemes
3. The membership of the sub-group is open to any member of the Local Access Forum and to any other individuals who would assist in the sub-group's work.
4. The appointment of non LAF members to the sub-group will be subject to approval by a simple majority of the full Local Access Forum,
5. Any additional sub-group members who are not Local Access Forum members will nevertheless be expected to adhere to the requirements on Local Access Forum members set out in the approved Terms of Reference for the Monmouthshire Local Access Forum.
6. The Chair of the sub-group will be a LAF member and agreed amongst the group's members and subject to approval by the Local Access Forum's Chair
7. The appointing authority will provide support to the sub-group, primarily through liaison with the Community Links Officer and the Public Rights of Way Officer.
8. The sub-group's Chair will be responsible for recording the group's considerations and reporting progress, and any issues requiring a decision, to the Local Access Forum on a regular basis.

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9. The duration of the sub-group is at the discretion of the Local Access Forum and will end at the end of the Local Access Forum's period of appointment. The sub-group may be re-established, and any non LAF members reappointed, by the new Local Access Forum.