

Monmouthshire

Local Access Forum

MONMOUTHSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 26th January 2016 at 1:00pm
The Learning Room, Shire Hall, Usk

PRESENT:

Members:

Mr Richard Davies	Chair	RD
Mrs Joanne Bolwell		JB
Mrs Irene Brook		IB
Mrs Stella Collard		SC
Mrs Anne Underwood		AU

MCC	Mr Matthew Lewis	ML
MCC Highways Network	Mr Paul Keeble	PK
Minute Secretary:	Alan Clarke	AC

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from John Askew, Jenny Barrell, Pat Belsten, Allan Thomas, Cllr Ann Webb and Ruth Rourke

2. Introductions

RD welcomed members to the meeting.

3. Declarations of Interest

There were no new declarations of interest.

4. Minutes of the Meeting held on 17th November 2015

The minutes of the meeting held on 17th November 2015 were agreed by those present.

5. Matters Arising

M4 Scheme. ML said he had met with consultants on 1st December. Issues raised by the LAF had been broadly agreed. However there were some difficult constraints on footpath routing at Greenmoor Lane and the consultants were going back to the site to look at these. It was expected that formal consultation would commence as planned on 10th March 2016.

Monmouthshire

Local Access Forum

Mons Lane Care Scheme. **PK** said letters had gone out to local councils and landowners. One response had been received from a landowner who then had accepted reassurances **JA** had given.

JA has carried out risk assessments on the proposed routes and clearance work was now scheduled to commence in March 2016.

Welsh Government Green Paper. **ML** said there had been no response to the submissions made. He said it was unlikely that anything further would now happen before the Welsh Government elections in May 2016.

Active Travel. Members noted the paper produced by Christian Schmidt. **ML** said a number of options had been proposed and will be assessed by **CS** before submission.

RD said it was possible to submit proposals for the integrated network maps up to the deadline of 24th September 2017 and encouraged members to think about potential options for submission.

6. ROWIP Improvement Plans

Members noted the document produced by **ML**. He said the general view from other authorities was that the Welsh Government proposals would make things more complicated. Meanwhile work continued on the preparation of the review of the Monmouthshire ROWIP.

ML said the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority has indicated that, for financial reasons, it was considering withdrawing from the provision of statutory rights of way services. The NPA will be considering this in more detail at a meeting on 5th February 2016. **ML** said that, if the proposals are agreed, the National Park would not be preparing a ROWIP although it would continue to have a LAF. However responsibility for maintenance of rights of way would revert to the appropriate local authorities. In the case of Monmouthshire, this amounted to an additional 500kms of rights of way. A number of issues would need to be clarified with the National Park and any additional maintenance work would have to be prioritised within Monmouthshire's existing workload.

RD suggested that, once firmer decisions had been taken by the National Park, a sub-committee should be formed by the two LAFs to hold further discussions with the National Park.

Members noted the report made by **RR** and the proposed timescale for producing and consulting on the revised LAF. It was agreed that it would be useful to hold drop-in consultation meetings again and to consider taking stands at local shows as well as advertising in local publications. Consultation with user groups should also take place with the production of an information pack which could be easily distributed.

Monmouthshire

Local Access Forum

IB said ways should be considered to encourage more people to use the rights of way network. She felt that the production of local A4/A3 maps would help. Many people with eyesight problems had difficulty reading traditional maps when out in the field. Also a growing number of people now lacked good map reading skills.

7. LAF Annual Report 2015

Members noted and agreed the LAF Annual Report for 2015. **ML** said he will now publish the LAF with a press release and will use the report when advertising for new LAF members.

8. Re-Appointment of LAF

ML said he will commence the process of re-appointment of the LAF at the end of February. He will prepare a draft notice and circulate to Members by email for consideration.

Members noted the ongoing lack of representation at the LAF by other statutory authorities, in particular NRW. Members understood that NRW had gone through a period of restructuring but there was now a need to clarify the best way for NRW to engage with the LAF and have a clear means of exchanging information. **ML** said he would try to re-establish the most appropriate lines of communication with NRW following restructuring. **Action: ML**

9. Future Work Plan

Members noted the proposed future work plan for the LAF. **ML** said there was a lot of work to consider at the next two meetings prior to the formation of the new LAF in November 2016. He will prioritise the workload for the forthcoming meetings.

JB and **SC** left the meeting at 3.30pm.

10. Date of Next Meetings

It was agreed that next meetings will be held on:

Tuesday 12th April 2016 at 1.00pm & Tuesday 6th September 2016 at 1.00pm.

Venues to be agreed.

The meeting closed at 3.45pm.

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

(Chairman)

Date:.....