

## VALE OF GLAMORGAN LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

Minutes of a meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> July, 2016.

Present: Mr. F. Coleman, Mr. J.J. Herbert, Ms. C. Lucas, Mr. H.S. McMillan, Mr. R. Pittard, Mr. R. Simpson and Mr. G. Thomas.

Mr. J. Wyatt, Mr. S. Pickering, Mr. G. Teague and Mrs. S. Thomas (Vale of Glamorgan Council).

1. Appointment of Chairman –

In the absence of both the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, and on being put to the vote, it was

AGREED – T H A T Mr. F. Coleman be appointed Chairman for this meeting.

Mr. Coleman duly took the Chair.

2. Apologies for Absence –

These were received from Councillor E. Williams (Chairman), Mr. R. Traherne (Vice-Chairman) and Ms. A. Haden ; Mr. B. Guy (Vale of Glamorgan Council) and Ms. M. Miyata-Lee (Natural Resources Wales).

3. Minutes –

AGREED – T H A T the minutes of the meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> May, 2016 be approved as a correct record, subject to a correction to Order dates specified in the Modification Orders table presented at the previous meeting being outlined and the Forum being advised that it had been corrected in the update to be presented at this meeting.

4. “Dog Friendly Vale”: Presentation by Carol Adams, Senior Regeneration Officer, Vale of Glamorgan Council –

The Forum received a presentation on a pilot scheme to test “dog friendly tourism” in the Vale of Glamorgan; the scheme being entitled “Paws in the Vale”.

Work to date had included desk top research looking at the benefits and potential pitfalls of Dog Friendly tourism:

- looking at ways to enhance and minimise pitfalls
- a learning trip to gain a further understanding
- workshops facilitated by a “dog friendly” expert.

Some of the “pros” identified included:

- a growing trend towards becoming dog friendly
- the United Kingdom pet industry now being worth more than £23.7 billion annually
- a rise of 132% in 2011 in pet-friendly bookings
- an indication that dog owners would pay a premium for pet friendly accommodation
- the potential revenue increase available to hotels that opened their doors to dogs.

In terms of pitfalls, these had included:

- dog foul not being disposed of properly and / or ruining crops
- livestock being worried, attacked or killed
- dogs who worried livestock being shot
- cattle injuring walkers with dogs
- dogs and owners falling off cliffs.

The aim of the pilot scheme was to establish whether dog friendly tourism was good for business, whether some of the pitfalls could be mitigated and the behaviour of dog owners influenced. Further work would include a testing of new signage, trialling ways to disseminate the contents of the Countryside Dog Walking Code and developing a Code of Conduct for both residents and tourists that could be used following the pilot to encourage responsible dog friendly tourism. In addition, a toolkit would be developed for the trade, a marketing campaign would be held between October 2016 and January 2017 to promote dog friendly locations in the Vale and, finally, the success and failure of the pilot would be evaluated and the findings disseminated.

Members of the Forum were very interested in the information provided in the presentation and various questions / issues were raised and responded to by Ms. Adams. These included:

- confirmation that the purpose of the pilot was not to try to make everything “dog friendly”
- the advantage of looking to influence dog owners before they even arrived in the Vale, as well as once they were here
- if people were to be directed towards dog friendly facilities, it was necessary to seek to provide associated information at the facility itself
- key messages from the learning visit to Cornwall included:
  - the need to give people a choice
  - the need to manage the dog friendly visitor experience
  - evidence that most “issues” were down to the behaviour of local people, as opposed to visitors
- whilst the pilot sought to establish means of stimulating the rural economy, it was also hoped to learn lessons in terms of influencing the behaviour of local people

- in terms of a suggestion that more access could potentially result in less control, Ms. Adams considered that the very high popularity of the activity already suggested that there would be no “spiral” in terms of usage.

AGREED – T H A T Ms. Adams be thanked for her interesting and informative presentation.

5. Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) Republication –

Given the requirement for the Vale of Glamorgan Council to review and republish its Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) by November 2017, a draft Project Plan had been produced (based on the guidance issued) and this was submitted to the Forum for consideration.

Mr. Teague indicated that the comments of the Forum would be welcomed, particularly in terms of how their involvement might be best facilitated. In response to a specific question, Mr. Teague confirmed that some of the work involved in the process would be outsourced, with the remainder undertaken in-house (the exact split being dependant on the most cost-effective approach). The deadline of November 2017 reflected the requirement to produce a revised ROWIP ten years after the publication of the first ROWIP.

Again, in response to a question, Mr. Teague confirmed that there were two elements to the Assessment Phase, the second of which related to the current condition of the network, as opposed to how the previous ROWIP had delivered.

AGREED – T H A T the draft Project Plan be noted and the Forum confirms its willingness to act as a “sounding board” during the ROWIP review / republication process.

6. Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) Grant Update –

The project comprised a number of programme actions aiming to assist in the delivery of ROWIP Objectives. This year four actions were proposed:

<b>Ref</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Brief Details of Programme Action</b>	<b>Update</b>
VG1	Summerhouse Point	Dedication of rights at Summerhouse	Approval to proceed with an Order has been granted by Committee. Instructions are with Legal Services regarding compensation.

VG2	Countywide	Adopt a path co-ordination of works	Maintenance issues on adopt a path routes have been programmed and initial approaches commenced.
VG3	Countywide	Definitive Map anomalies – resolve long standing issues	Project not yet commenced.
VG4	30km of priority routes	Vegetation clearance	First annual clearance cut complete.

VG1 provided for the dedication of public footpath rights along a track between Boverton Mill and Boverton Mill and Summerhouse Point. The grant allocation reflected anticipated compensation figures in addition to legal costs.

VG2 would support the co-ordination and resolution of maintenance issues on promoted routes that were part of the Adopt a Path scheme.

VG3 would begin to address long standing issues identified during the quality assurance of the Definitive Map process. This was likely to be through a mix of Orders, negotiations and / or enforcement where appropriate.

VG4 would support the annual clearance of inland routes.

Mr. Teague indicated that the position regarding ROWIP grant funding for 2017/18 was unlikely to be known until at least November 2016. Asked whether details of the programme were contained within one document, Mr. Teague confirmed that this would possible and that he would submit a document to the next meeting.

#### 7. Coastal Access Improvement Programme: Background and Update –

The Coastal Access Improvement Programme (CAIP) was a scheme funded by the Welsh Government via Natural Resources Wales and delivered through Local Authorities.

Since the Wales Coast Path officially opened on 5<sup>th</sup> May, 2012 the scheme, which initially ran from 2007-2013, had continued to fund the development and improvement of the route. Following completion of the initial project, further funding was made available, this ran from 2013-2015.

The current programme was initiated by a Ministerial announcement that committed £900,000 worth of funding per annum for the next five years to the Path. The current scheme differed from previous in so much as funding was divided between improvements and maintenance, to reflect the maturing nature of the Coast Path.

Offers of grant had been received and accepted for the following improvement projects. Updates on each were included below. It was also anticipated that a

further project at Sully Playing Fields would continue though funding had yet to be confirmed for 2016-17 in respect of this.

<b>Code</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Update</b>
<u>VG1601</u>	Dimhole	Path close to edge requires cutting back into cliff and provision of level surface as it ascends from cwm.	Tenders received and favoured contractor considered.
<u>VG1501</u>	Ogmore Down	Conclude outstanding creation agreement on path, formalising new alignment that avoids needs for road walking	Dwr Cymru objections addressed. No further objections received at pre-order.
<u>VG1502</u>	Traeth Mawr	Missing link currently available on permissive basis only. Previously submitted as creation order, landowner has indicated willingness to revert to agreement	Draft agreement to legal
<u>VG1505</u>	Cwm Colhuw West	Improve surface by addition of loose stone (type 1).	Works to improve surface have commenced.
<u>VG1507</u>	Gileston	Creation of missing link. Previously submitted as creation order, landowner has indicated willingness to revert to agreement	No move

In addition an allocation for coast path maintenance via grant and at 75% grant rate has been advised. In the Vale for 2016-17 this amounted to £19,230 of grant to be matched by £6,410. It was anticipated that this would be issued each year over the life of the programme:

<b>Code</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Update</b>
<i>Maint</i>	Maintenance Projects on VoG WCP	Vegetation cut back, maintenance of furniture and surfaces	First seasonal vegetation cut back complete.

## 8. Maintenance Reports –

In presenting the report, Mr. Teague introduced members of the Forum to Andy

Briscombe, who was an Assistant PROW Officer (Maintenance). He also alluded to the briefing session which he would be presenting later in the meeting on Maintenance (one of a series of briefings he would give to the Forum).

The Forum was provided with an update in relation to maintenance work carried out across the Vale of Glamorgan from March 2011 to July 2016. Mr. Briscombe referred to the intention to utilise the “window” from August to October (i.e. when most crops had been harvested and / or hay was on the ground) to undertake much of the Work Programme. Landowners were more accepting of the team using vehicles to access land at that time of year. The Work Programme would include a member of the Maintenance Team identifying whether issues were recorded correctly and, where necessary, re-entering issues on the system. The overall Work Programme was split into west, central and east areas (split across the three Ranger Teams).

Responding to points raised regarding the provision of kissing gates as replacements for stiles, Mr. Briscombe indicated that he and Mr. Teague were looking at ways of attaching a way marker on the upright of kissing gates.

AGREED – T H A T the Work Programme be reported to the next meeting of the Forum.

9. Legal and Evidential Modification Orders Update –

The Form was presented with an update on the Legal Orders and Evidential Modification Orders across the Vale of Glamorgan.

10. Member Briefing: Maintenance –

The Forum received a presentation from Mr. Teague, which covered the following Public Rights of Way related areas:

- Background / Reason for Definitive Maps
- Maintaining and Protecting – Highway Authority responsibilities
- Maintaining and Protecting – Landowner responsibilities
- Structures and Furniture
- Livestock
- Cultivation.

Following the presentation, Mr. Teague offered Forum members the opportunity of participating in a day of practical / volunteer work.

AGREED – T H A T the Secretary e-mail / contact Forum members, asking those who are interested in participating in a day of practical / volunteer work to contact Mr. Teague accordingly.