

TWENTIETH MEETING OF THE CHAIRS OF THE LOCAL ACCESS FORUMS IN WALES

MEETING NOTE

Date: 7 December 2017

Location: Powys Hospitality Centre, Welshpool Livestock Sales, SY21 8SR

Timing: 10.30am – 3.00pm

Present:	Vincent Mears (Arfon Dwyfor), Ian Maberley (BBNPA), William Lindsay (Caerphilly), John Morgan (Ceredigion and National Chair), Gwen Butler (Conwy East & Denbighshire), Bryan Harrison (Flintshire), Dewi ap Rhobert (Ynys Môn), Tony Rooney (Pembrokeshire), Chris Tomley & Richard Tyler (Powys), Tony Yule (RCT), Hedd Pugh (Snowdonia South), Tim Stratton (Wrexham) Carys Drew (Secretariat, NRW), Quentin Grimley (NRW), Evelyn Over (NRW)
Apologies:	Edwin Noble (Snowdonia North), Mark Hadley (Carmarthen), Edwin Guilliford (Eastern Valleys), Anne Underwood (Monmouthshire, Newport),
1.	<p>Introduction and outline of the day</p> <p>The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, in particular Richard Tyler, and Tony Yule who were attending for the first time.</p> <p>Apologies were received from several LAFs (see above) some LAF Chairs had not responded. The Chair for Snowdonia North had not received early notice of the meeting due to an issue (now rectified) with the Secretary's contacts database.</p> <p>Chair suggested that it would be useful to consider the meeting title in the future as 'The Chairs of the Local Access Forums in Wales' was too long.</p>
2.	<p>Note of last Meeting</p> <p>The meeting note had been circulated and approved as correct by email, there were no matters arising.</p> <p>The Chair and Secretariat had met previously to ensure actions had been addressed.</p> <p>Since the last Chairs meeting, two informal joint meetings for Secretaries and Chairs had been held, with one in North Wales and one in South Wales. There were no actions to be passed back to the Chairs meeting as a result of these. A note had been made available for the South Wales meeting. The matter of the WG Consultation and individual responses from LAFs had been discussed in both meetings.</p>

	<p>Feedback was invited on the joint North/South meetings and whilst there were several positive comments in favour of having smaller meetings the consensus was that a national LAF conference was preferred, and that this should have greater emphasis on LAF working and involvement of secretaries rather than several external speakers.</p> <p>Carys noted that the need for these informal meetings had arisen following the decision to focus NRW support on 3 Chairs meetings, with NRW providing room only (where possible) for additional meetings. Should these smaller meetings be useful in the future there was a need to consider provision of simultaneous translation and note taking.</p> <p>Action 20.1: Any individual LAF responses to be sent to Carys Drew for collation.</p>
3.	<p>Letter to Minister</p> <p>One action had arisen in the South Wales meeting, where having understood that some 16,000 responses had been made to the WG consultation on <i>Taking Forward Wales' Sustainable Management of Natural Resources</i>, the Chair had been encouraged to write to the Cabinet Secretary to emphasise the role of LAFs and request to be involved in follow on meetings that would be taking place with other key stakeholders.</p> <p>The letter and response were circulated. The Chair was thanked for writing the letter and it was agreed that the response had been positive in acknowledging the role of LAFs and in confirming that LAFs would be included in meetings with the Minister.</p> <p>It was noted that cyclists had provided campaign response to the consultation but that LAFs struggle with getting cycling interests to join LAFs. The Chair referred to a question he had asked Cycling UK at the National Access Forum, in which it was acknowledged that the structure in Wales needed to be developed. This led to discussion about organised events and liability in the event of accidents.</p> <p>Action 20.2: Tim Stratton to consider and refine possible future agenda item on organised groups and liability in events</p>
4.	<p>Update on Welsh Government Consultation & NRW's response to the Consultation</p> <p>Carys Drew, Access and Recreation Policy officer and Quentin Grimley, Access Team Leader provided a presentation updating the meeting about the WG analysis of responses so far to their consultation on <i>Taking Forward Wales' Sustainable Management of Natural Resources</i>.</p> <p>They then went on to share information about the structured approach taken by NRW in compiling its consultation response and focussed on the detail of the response made to four of the seventeen access proposals.</p>

	<p>Discussion Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several points were made about the control of dogs in the countryside and the impact of dog attacks on livestock • Attendees commented that they had been impressed with the NRW response and the detailed issues that NRW had identified • Clarification is needed on the issue of membership after the term of a LAF had finished (after 3 years from the first meeting) until a new LAF was formed, and problems when there was a delay in formation of a LAF • Consideration should be given to the status of the LAF Chairs meeting • The NRW response to proposal 27 was, overall, aligned with the response of the LAF Chairs meeting • Suggestion that LAFs could have a role in providing oversight of funding opportunities suitable for access, funding sources and context have changed enormously in the last 20 years • The provision of adequate resourcing will underpin the success of any proposals going forward • Concern about safety of users on shared routes • Terms in the consultation needed to be defined e.g. vessel • Implication of changing the CROW restriction ‘any animal other than a dog’ in relation to locking farms up for 6 days following controls put in place to prevent spread of Foot and Mouth • Concern that allowing camping on open access land would adversely affect rural businesses
<p>5.</p>	<p>Powys Planning application</p> <p>Richard Tyler raised the matter of a planning application, from April 2018 developers will be required to show public rights of way on applications forms. He asked for a supporting letter from John Morgan, it was agreed that the matter would be discussed outside of the meeting.</p> <p>Action 20.3 Richard Tyler and Chair to discuss issue</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p>Glastir: feedback from meeting with Jane Tibbott</p> <p>The Chair and Deputy had met with Jane Tibbott, Glastir Advanced to discuss the guidance for LAFs, contact between Glastir officers and LAFs and implementation of Glastir Advanced. There was no intention to change guidance at this stage, it was noted that there are communication issues in</p>

	<p>relation to LAFs not being aware if any permissive access suggestions are being taken forward. The note of the meeting had been shared with Jane Tibbott who had noted that the current arrangements would not be changed but issues would be considered in any scheme post Brexit.</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p>Glastir Woodland Creation (GWC): Consultation Arrangements</p> <p>Evelyn Over, Glastir Woodlands Implementation Officer gave a presentation about the GWC scheme: what the schemes aims are, how it works, which organisations are involved, who develops the plan – the Woodland Planner – and how they have responsibility for public consultation. Woodland Creation is informed by the Le woodland opportunities map , it follows a set process and is subject to guidance. This includes guidance for when GWC is for land designated as open access land and public rights of way.</p> <p>Discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing access would be taken into account as part of any scheme going forward but payment access improvements were not part of the GWC scheme • Consideration needed to be given where GWC was on Open Access Land since, if, at the subsequent review of Open Access land (which occurs every 10 years) the land is not deemed to be predominantly mountain, moor, heath or down, it may be removed from the Open Access Conclusive Map. As such, Local Authorities would be consulted and it was suggested that they contact their LAF. • Recognition that matters affecting the enjoyment of rights of way were subjective <p>Action 20.4: LAFs that wish to be consulted regarding GWC when their authority is notified should make this clear to their appointing authority and agree process for providing advice in a timely way.</p>
<p>8.</p>	<p>Amalgamation of LAFs</p> <p>Wrexham LAF had reached the end of its term and had been advised by their authority that the LAF would be joining with the Flintshire LAF. There was some uncertainty about this, with Flintshire LAF not having been made aware of this in any formal way.</p> <p>Discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under the regulations, appointing authorities can establish joint forums. • Need to get clarity about what is being proposed. <p>Action 20.5: Chair and Secretary to discuss and consider</p>

<p>9.</p>	<p>Wylfa Nuclear Power Station: cable connection issues</p> <p>Dewi ap Rhobert spoke to the previously circulated paper about the views and concerns of the Anglesey LAF in relation to the impact of the infrastructure which would lead to a double line of pylons across the island associated with the Power station development. The LAF consider that this will have a huge visual impact and negative impact on open-air recreation and the enjoyment of the area. He asked for the support of the LAF Chairs meeting.</p> <p>The meeting considered the points made by the Anglesey LAF and gave full support to the LAF in stating its opposition to the proposal.</p>
<p>10.</p>	<p>Benchmarking: (LAF Work programme, Communicating formal advice)</p> <p>It was agreed to add ‘Communicating formal advice to local authority’ as one of the benchmarking topics, to ensure that authorities take notice of advice issued to them. If the LAF has formal advice to offer to the authority it should be addressed to the Chief Executive officer, drafted by the secretary and signed by the LAF Chair. This mechanism was useful, when necessary.</p> <p>The LAF work programme should be included in the annual report and helped demonstrate the value of the LAF.</p> <p>Action 20.6: Chair to draft wording for inclusion in the suite of benchmarking topics</p>
<p>11.</p>	<p>Reports from Forums</p> <p>BBNPA: had recently appointed new LAF with 19 members, nearly half the members are women. Two representatives use wheelchairs. They had been unable to identify member to represent cycling interests. The National Park Chief Executive was retiring soon and would be succeeded by Julian Atkins who was the current head of countryside.</p> <p>RCT: The Vice Chair had recently retired, they were trying to build relations with the authority and drum up new membership, including looking at whether changing meeting times would be helpful.</p> <p>Powys: The LAF were considering taking over the secretariat themselves due to issues that had arisen.</p> <p>Action 20.7: Chair to consider including Chief Executive as an item on a future agenda, and include inviting speaker.</p> <p>Arfon Dwyfor: Had received a helpful presentation about Definitive Map</p>

	Modification Orders and highlighted that it is a very resource heavy process. The presentation could be made available to others if of interest.
12.	Date of Next meeting Agreed to hold meeting in late March in Aberystwyth