



FWJLAF 04

# Flintshire and Wrexham Joint Local Access Forum

**Minutes of the Fourth meeting held on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> November  
2019 at Ty Mawr Country Park, Cefn Mawr, Wrexham**

## **01/19 Attendance and Apologies**

### **Attendance:**

#### **SECRETARY:**

Caroline Selby (CS)

#### **CHAIR:**

Tim Stratton (TS)

#### **MEMBERS:**

Edwina Hart (EH) – from 10.15am

Mabyn Pickering (MP)

David Collins (DC)

Mike Crawshaw (MC)

John Holiday (JH)

Neville Howell (NH)

Edward Wardle (EW)

#### **NON-MEMBERS:**

Tom Woodall (TW) FCC – until 12.35pm

Andy Roberts (AR) FCC – until 11.30am

Adrian Walters (AW) FCC – until 11.30am

#### **Apologies:**

Hannah Arndt

Pene Coles

Rachel Lewis

David Evans

Martin Howorth

Bill Stephens

TS welcomed everyone to the meeting, and he informed the meeting that Nicola Holmwood had sadly died. The LAF members expressed their gratitude for all the work Nicola had undertaken for Rights of Way in Wrexham.

Everyone then introduced themselves as Andy Roberts, Service Manager for Planning Strategy FCC and Adrian Walters, Team Leader Policy Section FCC were attending the meeting.

## **02/19 Minutes of meeting held on 30<sup>th</sup> July 2019**

P6 07/19 access needs to be watched on the A494 route – NH said this not MP.

With this correction, the minutes were proposed by David Collins, seconded by Edward Wardle, agreed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

## **03/19 Flintshire Local Development Plan**

AR and AW gave a presentation on the draft Flintshire LDP 2015 – 30, copies of which were circulated. The consultation ends on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2019.

AR explained that the draft Plan has been 4 years in the process and that once adopted the LDP will replace the current UDP.

There is a two-part scrutiny stage with public consultation and once the comments are taken into account, it will be sent to Welsh Government for examination.

The Plan needs to be serviceable and deliverable.

AW led the meeting through Transport and Accessibility, including sign posting to relevant policies.

MC – farmers are taking a lot of knocks re blame for climate change as people's knowledge is very much lacking and education is needed.

TS – National Development Framework 2020 – 2040- how does the LDP fit with this?

AR – it is a Welsh Government paper that has a short consultation period and incorporates other policies. The broader picture cannot always be seen.

MC – I do not know if NFU or FUW have submitted responses.

MP – disused railways are sometimes on private land.

AW – looking to see how or if these could be incorporated.

JH - gave an illustration of a disused railway line from Mold to Buckley.

AW – other options are always looked at.

AW – Highways are starting to focus on Active Travel.

TS – re Planning approach to transport and active travel – the primary role of LAF is recreation access, not access re employment. In Wrexham, disused railway lines were identified for transport i.e. cycling but I was able to have leisure included as well. There is an assumption that an active travel route is also for recreational purposes, so recreation is not a specific policy.

The term, Green Infrastructure, is sufficiently vague to give similar problems as leisure is a given. The health point of view is not always taken into account as a separate point.

JH – Welsh Government is encouraging health but there is no joined up thinking.

AR – the emphasis comes from Welsh Government. A Green Infrastructure Assessment has been undertaken.

NH – Road safeguarding is on maps but no rights of way.

AR – these routes must be protected and there is a Rights of Way map so there is no need to duplicate. Justification is needed to be included on a map. Green spaces have been expanded.

NH – Open Access land?

AR – defined by NRW. Open Access is legislated.

MC – Open Access on mountains is included but access is not an option but still included.

AR – suggest new Rights of Way could not be shown as would raise expectations with no justification.

DC – ROWIP do not seem to be referenced.

**TW**

AR – this will be checked though RoW staff have been included.

DC – rights of way on new developments must be considered.

AR – proposed new developments are included in the LDP and rights of way will also be included.

TS – ROWIP identify where new Rights of Way could be added.

AR – Green Infrastructure Policy has high priority and Green Infrastructure Assessment can feed into this. It is a work in progress.

TS – my hope is that a Green Infrastructure Plan will offer opportunity to have an integrated plan with various groups that represent an interest in access, health benefits, etc. PSBs are set up to include these.

AR – I will take all comments and points back to feed into policies and plans.

TS- re major housing developments. 12 – 18 months ago, Wrexham Business Forum, identified green corridors which could be included from the health and wellbeing point of view, but housing developers do not always take advantage of this. Routes and standards of routes – Green Corridor – usage – the cost is low to the developers if known about at an early stage.

AR – this is correct but needs a development Brief re what Green Infrastructure requirements there are before any work begins. A lot of collaborative work has been undertaken by WCBC and FCC and more work can be done re Supplementary Planning Guidance.

JH – need to utilise the expertise of groups such as LAF, Ramblers, Sustrans, etc.

AR – to be done as a single piece of work.

TS – SPG in Wrexham is bitty and put of date. A Green Infrastructure SPG of what is being talked about today would need to be in the right point of the planning cycle. He gave an example of Brymbo development. There is a need to get things right at the beginning.

AR – the advantage of working with groups such as LAF is that it adds weight for if / when developers object. I am willing to speak to colleagues in Wrexham re SPG and make a proposal re joint and inclusive working. **TW**

EH – need a Green Infrastructure before developments begin. New Rights of Way need to be restricted by ways to prevent use by motorised vehicles.

AR – need to include the right people in the process.

MP – there are three large developments in my area which have rights of way. Need to be known about years in advance to protect existing rights of way as sometimes these can be lost.

AR – accessibility, connectivity, rights of way must be protected early on. These can be linked to SPG and development briefs – Green Corridor.

NH – need a document identifying existing active travel routes and stage two - to show aspirational active travel routes.

AW – these are on the maps on the website.

JH – the scale is too small and needs to be larger as currently unreadable.

AR – I will feed this back and will ask if Wrexham has a map of aspirational routes. **TW**

TS – need to move the mindset re all developments that the default should be restrictive by way.

AR – there is a need to speak to Rights of Way and LAF re requirements on all developments.

TS – A483 and A494 – what is the involvement with the Trunk Road Agency?

AR – stakeholders and consultees.

TS – attendance at consultations re proposals. How can a road be downgraded? Would this involve both Planners and Trunk Agency?

Ar and AW – unknown. New access to a Traveller site would be needed and will be funded by the Welsh Government so that is working together.

DC – could some funding be used to fund non-motorised use?

AR – there are medium to long term aspirational routes. Plans and strategies are cross referenced and have regard to.

EH – query re funding Traveller and Gypsy site finding.

AR – it is a legal requirement and if it is not correct, then the Plan can be rejected by Welsh Government.

TS – AR will take forward actions and TW to be put as the actionee as he is the conduit.

JH – NCN5 has tourism potential but it needs to be utilized as currently Flintshire is seen as somewhere to travel through and not as a destination.

AR – quality areas are in the Plan though tourism is limited due to funding. There is only one officer in Tourism, so it is a lack of funding rather than willingness

TS – what about Welsh Government Access Reforms?

AW – I am not familiar with these.

TW – Welsh Government are currently working through the process of the access reforms through a newly convened steering group.

AR – until defined and delivered then cannot be considered.

AR – all comments re draft LDP must be received by 5pm on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2019. Comments need to be made by completing the form online either as a LAF or as individuals.

AR and AW were thanked for attending the meeting, for the copies of the draft Plan and for the presentations and explanations.

AR and AW left at this point of the meeting.

TS – there is the need to record the lack of attendance by Wrexham Rights of Way department at this meeting. The consultation meeting re A483 trunk road in Colwyn Bay was not attended by the Highways Department but was attended by Sean Hanratty (RoW). Further budget cuts have been proposed to the Rights of Way department, so I suggest that a letter is sent to the Chief Executive Officer. LAF is a statutory consultee.

A formal letter to the Chief Executive Officer and Cllr. David Bithell explaining that LAF is concerned about the lack of resources for Rights of Way.

TS – what happens to DMMO applications if the applicant dies?

TW – they may not be progressed if only pertinent to that applicant. Evidence may be lost and there is a backlog due to the lack of resources.

DC – there are rumours that the management / running of Country Parks in Wrexham may be taken over by private contractors.

EH – Trail Riders have applied for access to Rights of Way in the Glyn Ceiriog Valley.

DC – I have not heard of this though appeals can be made to the Planning Inspectorate.

Discussion then took place re damage to areas and land in and around the Glyn Ceiriog Valley and the Wayfarers.

TS will contact other LAF members then draft and send a letter to Chief Executive Officer, WCBC and Cllr. David Bithell, WCBC. **TS**

TS – there are problems with bridle gates that have been installed in some places as cannot be ridden through.

DC – need to raise about the standard of work done by contractors.

JH- need to consult with those who have the necessary expertise.

## 04/19                      Matters Arising Meeting held 30<sup>th</sup> July 2019

- a) P2    03/19 a        NWWT to be invited to join LAF as a co-option. TW to contact re appointment.                      **TW**
- b) P2    03/19 b        TW has spoken to Streetscene and this is being investigated. Ongoing item.
- c) P2    03/19 e        TW has a contact in Trunk Agency. Next meeting in Wrexham in 2020.
- d) P3    03/19              TS to be the contact instead of LS.                      **TS**
- e) P3    03/19 f        TW and MH did discuss this. Annual Delivery Plans will be brought to LAF at the start of the financial year and a report at the end of the financial year.                      **MH and TW**
- f) P4    04/19              MC said that there is a problem with people understanding signage.
- g) P4    05/19              CS sent links to Wrexham ROWIP.
- h) P5 05/19              Work has progressed on the Wildlife Park with funding from Toyota and the Wildlife Trust. It is intended to be a place for people to visit.
- i) P5    06/19              CS sent the link to the video.
- j) P7    08/19 a        EH sent information to TS who informed other LAFs at the LAF Chairs meeting.
- k) P7    08/19 b        CS sent the information to members. NH said that the route is not accessible except by using verges as the road is duelled and there is a barrier in the middle of the road. Members said that more information is needed and that LAF needs to be involved at a much earlier stage.

JH – people riding electric motor bikes are becoming an increasing problem.

NH – I suggest inviting Highways from both WCBC and FCC to explain the maintenance of highways, byways, pavements, etc and non-motorised access on roads.                      **Item for future agenda**

## 05/19                      Consultation on Welsh Government Access Reforms

A paper had been circulated to members prior to the meeting and DC gave a short presentation.

This is a legal framework that everyone will be working to in a few years' time. There were consultations in 2015 and 2017 which generated huge responses. The proposals are now out in 2019.

Diversions and Modifications – time may be reduced and easier to enact.

Role of LAFs – this is still open at present, but the role may be developed and should include Active Travel.

Establishment of multi-use paths.

Creation of new public rights of way. Cycle ways and cycle path are different. Cycle way - part of the road network.

TS – Definitive Map advantages?

TW – there would be advantages and will be fluid through time and will change.

JH – clarification of Inland water?

TW – there is no consensus of river use between the fishing fraternity and canoe users. It is far too difficult to resolve at present.

TS – the national Access Forum meeting today on specifically about this matter.

MP – two representatives from fishing came to a LAF meeting, which was very interesting and informative. CS to send minutes to JH. **CS**

DC – information re an indicative timeline - waiting to hear about the expert groups and the membership of such groups. This is applicable only to Wales.

TS – if there are any responses or information then please circulate instead of waiting for the next meeting. **ALL**

TW left the meeting at this point.

## **06/19 Any Other Business**

- a) DC - A483 consultation – NRW have been consulting with a variety of people to set out the priorities for NRW. Next consultation on 28<sup>th</sup> November 2019 at Ty Pawb.
- b) National Development Framework (see page 2) – consultation was attended by TS and DC.
- c) LAF Chairs meeting – Access proposals were discussed.
- d) EW – Mosses. Due to the wet weather the tracks used by various groups are in a very poor condition at present.

TS – any movement / progress will be seasonal.

- e) DC – should LAF apply to become members of Wrexham Public Service Board. To be discussed at next meeting.
- f) NH - would it be useful to meet in other places and invite Community Councils to attend?  
TS – there may be problems re budget restrictions. If Community Councils have a dedicated Rights of Way interest, then would they be interested in working together?

**07/19      Date, time and location of Next Meeting**

In Flintshire in early 2020.