

Conwy East and Denbighshire Local Access Forum

Thursday 05th of December 2024

Coed Pella,
Conway Road
Colwyn Bay
LL29 7AZ

AGENDA

1	Welcome and Introductions	SB/ All
2	Regulations	AW
3	Nominations	All
4	Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair	All
5	Review of last meetings discussions/ break out session	SBR
6	Developing future meetings structures and Standard Agenda	All

ATTENDEES

[illegible]

MINUTES

Item		Action
1.0	Welcome, Introductions	
1.1	<p>SBR conducts health and safety briefing then welcomes everyone to the meeting.</p> <p>Forum members introduce themselves.</p>	
2.0	Regulations (Adrian Walls)	
2.1	<p>AW begins the meeting by referring to the Local Access Forums Guidance: 1 document. He advises that these regulations need to be applied in order to establish the forum.</p> <p>AW states in regulation 12 that the Chair and Deputy Chair must be elected by secret ballot as the first item of business at the second meeting of the LAF. Only members of the LAF can stand for these positions. The Secretary presides over the election.</p> <p>If the Chair or Deputy Chair resign, the first item of the next meeting would be the reappointment of that post. To conduct the election there must be more than 1/2 of the Members present.</p> <p>AW clarifies that forum members can nominate each other and even if there's only one person standing, that person has to receive more than half of the votes. Officers from CCBC and DCC as well as Cllr BM and Cllr GE are not permitted to vote. They're only there to advise the forum as they are elected or paid officials of the two Authorities.</p>	
3.0	Nominations	
3.1	<p>Chris Ruane self-nominates for the role of Chair.</p> <p>John Buckley nominates Kevin Slattery for the role of Vice Chair</p>	
4.0	Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair	
4.1	<p>A vote for the role of Chair is carried out with 7 votes for and none against. Chris Ruane is appointed Chair</p> <p>A vote for the role of Vice Chair is carried out with 7 votes for and none against. Kevin Slattery is appointed Vice Chair.</p> <p>AM joins the meeting after the appointments are made and states he has no objections.</p>	
	Part 2	

5.0	Review of last meetings discussions/ break out session	
5.1	<p>SBR says the key themes identified from the breakout session at the last meeting were maintenance, accessibility, active travel, funding, and communication. She states that the feedback is broad so would like to get the forum thinking about them in further detail, what are the issues? Who are the experts that can advise? What are the steps to take forward and what should be prioritised?</p> <p>SBR suggests sharing a tabled document with the members to fill out with further details on two or three of the prioritised issues in order to create an agenda for each of those key themes.</p> <p>SBR actions the Secretary to circulate a form to collect the members contact details and confirm that they're happy for them to be shared with other members of the forum.</p>	<p>BR to share Key theme document</p> <p>BR to circulate detail forms</p>
	Part 3	
6.0	Developing future meetings structures and Standard Agenda	
6.1	<p>AM asks how Local Authorities get their priorities, if they're governed by the Welsh Government, the UK's priorities as a whole, or dependent on what funding's available.</p> <p>AW explains that the Authority prioritises its statutory functions as best as it can as in reality there's insufficient funding to meet all its statutory needs. Prioritisation is a key element to ensure that the Authority doesn't fall short where it needs to be and doesn't receive any guidance from the Welsh Government.</p> <p>KS says the meeting is a good opportunity to identify what's actually meant by 'access'. In his understanding it's about access to leisure in whatever form that takes and asks if anyone has a more refined definition.</p> <p>AW refers to Local Access Forums Guidance: 2 explaining the function of the Local Access Forum is to provide advice to the relevant Authorities as to the improvement of public access to land in the area for the purposes of open-air recreation and the enjoyment of the area.</p> <p>LF suggests looking at the routes that are within CEDLAF's area and audit what they're being used for. She has experience mapping land for landowners and using the data to bid for the single payment farming scheme. She goes on to say this mapping exercise would be helpful to see which PROWs exist and what improvement work should be undertaken to connect paths within the network.</p> <p>AW asks if LF could help the forum to undertake this task and LF agrees.</p> <p>SBR agrees and says that it would be beneficial to use a map to strategically identify future problems or clashing based on events and infrastructure. It can also help the forum identify other land owners and collaborate with them to resolve issues and improve the paths that have the potential to be connected.</p>	

	<p>TJ asks for clarification on where the boundary of the forums remit is.</p> <p>AW explains that Conwy East generally reaches the middle of the Conwy River and then the whole of Denbighshire up to its boundary with Flintshire.</p>	
6.2	<p>AM says in 2017 the Welsh Government put out a consultation paper in regards to increasing the utilisation of footpaths by cyclists and horse riders. Similar to the Scottish system, where any right of way is usable by anybody, walkers, cyclists or horse riders. With some exceptions as to whether or not the path is passable or suitable. AM asks if anything ever come of it.</p> <p>AW says he and SBR are working with Welsh Government on one of the points highlighted by the consultation which was the need to have a central, web based access map showing the status of every public path. This project will likely take 12 months to launch however it's something that can be shown to the forum. AW suggest the Chair writes a letter to the Minister to get a clearer idea of where the consultation is at.</p> <p>GE supports the idea of writing letter to the Minister and says the Local Access Forum can lobby and try to influence the Government to come up with a suitable policy.</p> <p>BM asks how the new National Park will fit into this.</p> <p>AW says that they will have to manage a network in which half is within and half is outside the National Park, and so working with Conwy who have more experience may help for a better understanding of the implications which may arise. He goes on to explain that Denbighshire will be employing a National Parks Access Officer as the National Park is unlike the AONB. Whether or not it uses the existing Local Access Forum only time will tell.</p> <p>SBR explains that the forum covers the East of Conwy and the West is covered by the National Park who Conwy have a very good, close working relationship with. The Access and Well-being Manager, Peter Rhutherford was invited to spectate the meeting however as there was uncertainty on whether there would be a Chair and Vice Chair nomination, he was invited to attend the next meeting sometime in March.</p> <p>LF asks if it would be possible to hear from the Welsh Government or other Local Access Forums about what they're doing so everyone is on the same page.</p> <p>AW agrees and says that having someone like Peter attend the meeting as a spectator and a representative from Natural Resources Wales will be very useful and the members should try and get in touch with Ministers even if they're unable to attend.</p> <p>LF asks if the forum would like to have a shared drive to save any useful reports or documents of interest.</p>	

	<p>GE expresses the importance of thinking about the issues on a strategic level and about policy, what work can the two Local Authorities actually undertake. The forum need to be mindful of the admin role behind all of their ideas as well.</p> <p>AW agrees and says he would envisage trying to meet once a year to show examples of particular projects that will enhance the groups understanding of key issues the Local Authorities are dealing with.</p> <p>SBR says that she doesn't want the forum to be just discussing ideas, she wants them to be put into action. There may be funding pots that the Local Authorities can't access however the forum can get in touch with the Town and Community Councils and ask them to apply for the funding.</p> <p>SBR goes on to say the forum can start sharing ideas on how they want the future structure of agendas to look like. The Chair, Vice Chair, and anyone they want to invite to the pre-meeting can discuss this. They can also think about where the meeting should take place, in a building, on site or on Teams, wherever will be most accommodating.</p> <p>AW adds that the agenda should have an opportunity to give an update on the actions given in the last meeting to discuss improvements or progress that's been made. He goes on to say that NRW have an annual conference that will give the forum the ability to see what they're doing which can help the Chair set the agenda. He also says there might be some sample agendas for the forum to work from.</p> <p>The forum members pair up to discuss the five key themes identified in the last meeting in order to start populating the tables.</p>	
7.0	AOB	
7.1	<p>JB asks how to go about claiming expenses.</p> <p>AW says the officers can discuss this and advise the members at the next forum.</p>	