



Minutes of a HYBRID meeting of the **ROW COMMITTEE** held at the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Talbot Street, Maesteg and remotely via Microsoft Teams and, on **Tuesday, 18th February 2025**

PRESENT: Deputy Clerk, CMO

COUNCILLORS

IN PERSON: **C Davies (Chair),**
P Davies, G Williams & I Williams

ONLINE: N/A

APOLOGIES: R Lewis

** Cllr R Lewis experienced connection issues so was unable to attend the meeting.

DECLARATION OF INTEREST: None received

447. TO DISCUSS PESTICIDES COURSE

The CMO recently attended the pesticides course at Pencoed College which was funded by UK Government Multiply scheme.

Whilst on the course the CMO was advised of the strict legislation of maintaining, storing and cleaning the pesticides equipment, the key points of legislation being, but not limited to:

1. Control of Pesticides Regulations 1986 (COPR)

- **Overview:** COPR is a key piece of legislation that regulates the sale, supply, and use of pesticides in the UK. Under COPR, pesticide users must follow guidelines for storage, transportation, and use to ensure public safety and environmental protection.
- **Cleaning Equipment:** COPR requires that users ensure that any equipment used to apply pesticides is thoroughly cleaned after use to avoid cross-contamination. This includes using the correct cleaning procedures to ensure no pesticide residues remain on the equipment.
- **Storage:** Pesticides must be stored safely and securely to prevent any risk of leaks or contamination. The regulations specify that pesticides must be stored in areas that are:

- Well-ventilated and away from any potential sources of contamination (e.g., food, water sources).
- Suitable for the quantity and type of pesticides being stored.
- Clearly labeled to indicate the contents and hazards.
- **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):** COPR requires the use of PPE when cleaning and storing pesticides to minimize exposure to hazardous chemicals.

2. The Pesticides (Use) Regulations 2012

- **Equipment Cleaning:** Under these regulations, pesticide users are required to clean application equipment regularly and thoroughly. The purpose is to avoid contamination of future applications and protect both human health and the environment.
- **Clean Water:** The regulations stipulate that the water used for cleaning pesticide application equipment should be disposed of in an environmentally responsible manner. It should not be discharged into drains, watercourses, or land without following proper disposal protocols.
- **Record Keeping:** Users are required to maintain records of pesticide use, including cleaning, to demonstrate compliance with regulations and best practices.

3. The Environmental Protection Act 1990

- **Waste Management:** This act deals with the proper disposal of waste, including pesticide containers, chemical residues, and cleaning water that contains pesticide residues. It stipulates that such waste must be disposed of in accordance with environmental protection rules, preventing contamination of land and water.
- **Storage of Waste:** Waste from pesticide cleaning (e.g., residual pesticide or contaminated materials) must be stored in a secure manner to prevent leaks, spills, or unauthorized access. The waste should be kept in closed containers, and any materials that have been contaminated must be disposed of properly.
- **Environmental Harm:** The legislation aims to ensure that pesticides and their residues do not cause harm to the environment or public health. Failure to comply with these rules can lead to enforcement action, including fines or penalties.

4. The Hazardous Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2005

- **Waste Classification:** Pesticides and pesticide-contaminated materials may be classified as hazardous waste. This includes any pesticide residues, containers, or materials that have come into contact with pesticides. These must be managed under specific requirements for hazardous waste disposal.
- **Disposal of Pesticides:** Pesticide waste must be collected and stored separately from non-hazardous waste. It must be disposed of through licensed waste carriers and at licensed waste disposal sites.

5. The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974

- **General Duty of Care:** Employers and individuals involved in the storage and cleaning of pesticides are required to ensure that they provide a safe working environment. This includes:
 - Ensuring proper training for workers in handling, cleaning, and storing pesticides.
 - Maintaining safe equipment for pesticide use and cleaning.
 - Using appropriate PPE to protect against pesticide exposure during cleaning and storage.
- **Risk Assessment:** Under the Act, businesses must conduct risk assessments related to pesticide use and equipment cleaning to identify any potential health hazards and take steps to mitigate them.

6. The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations 2002

- **Health Risks:** COSHH regulations are designed to protect workers from exposure to harmful substances, including pesticides. This legislation requires:
 - Employers to assess the risks posed by pesticides and implement control measures to prevent exposure, including during the cleaning and storage of equipment.
 - Workers to be provided with appropriate training, PPE, and information on the risks associated with handling pesticides.
 - The development of safe systems of work and emergency procedures in the event of pesticide spills or accidents.

7. The Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2011

- **Waste Disposal:** These regulations establish the requirements for handling and disposing of waste generated from the cleaning of pesticide application equipment. Specific measures include:
 - Proper classification, storage, and disposal of waste, especially if it contains hazardous materials such as pesticide residues.
 - The requirement for using registered waste disposal contractors when handling hazardous waste.

8. The EU Plant Protection Products (PPP) Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009

- **Pesticide Approval and Use:** This regulation ensures that all pesticides used in the EU, including the UK, are thoroughly tested for safety before they are approved for sale and use. The regulation includes provisions for the proper use, storage, and disposal of pesticides to protect human health and the environment.
- **Post-Use Cleaning:** The regulation emphasizes the need for cleaning equipment and storage areas to minimize environmental contamination and pesticide exposure after use.

The CMO noted that he would be more than willing to side with the committees recommendation. He noted that the amount of additional work to maintain the required standards for spraying that would be taking place sparingly, if permission is even

granted by the landowners, would not be practical. There is also the additional concern that the CMO van is used to transport food and bathroom goods during the Christmas period so there is the very realistic concern of cross contamination which would have ill outcomes for the public and the Council.

The committee considered the CMOs testimony and thanked him for all of his efforts and commitment to the role and especially noted his excellent work since he joined the Council. It was suggested that the Council should look at appointing a subcontractor to undertake weed spraying if the permission is granted by BCBC. A member did state that he would check the spraying regulations within BCBC to see if there is a feasible way the Council can undertake weed spraying.

It was agreed to recommend to council:

- *To no longer pursue the CMO being trained in weed spraying and consider a contractor if permission is granted by the landowners to spray in the future.*
- *Cllr P Davies to check the spraying regulations within BCBC to see if there is a feasible way the Council can undertake weed spraying.*

448. TO DISCUSS DIGITAL TRAILS APP

One of the action points from the Grasshopper report is to link in with the Wellbeing and Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 with the following action points

Wellbeing and Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015	Action point
A healthier Wales	Support the creation of a digital rights of way map.
A globally responsible Wales	Establish a partnership with Llangynwyd Council – draft boundary changes to come into effect in May 2027

The Deputy Mayor attended the One Voice Wales conference and made contact with *At Creative* who provided a quote and also attended January 2025 full council meeting with the following minute:

FULL COUNCIL 14/01/2025

MINUTE 351

TO RECEIVE A REPRESENTATIVE FROM AT CREATIVE TO DISCUSS MAESTEG 200TH ANNIVERSARY DIGITAL TRAILS

The Deputy Mayor Cllr G Thomas welcomed D Boys from *At Creative* to discuss the digital trails project. Members were provided with a PDF copy of the digital app proposal. This proposal outlines the details involved in digitising the rights of way with Maesteg for them to be accessible through an android/iPhone application.

Mr Boys showed several examples of the app in action and noted that the app is interactive and there is also an audio section that explains certain points of interests.

The app can list all local trails and can display historic photographs of Maesteg along the walking routes to see what places used to look like.

The following questions were raised:

- **Is the app available for both IOS and Android systems?**

Yes,

- **Is there a limit on the number of trails?**

No limit

- **How would content be uploaded?**

This can be done inhouse or At Creative could do this

- **How would be digitise the current paper walk leaflets?**

Training is available for Maesteg Council staff to create the walks, or the information can be sent to At Creative who will upload this data accordingly.

- **Are there analytics for users to see how many people are using the app and how many people are completing the walks?**

Yes, you can also check what people are clicking on the app – no personal data is stored, the app is fully GDPR compliant.

Is there a cost to download the app?

- *This is up to the Town Council, although many Town and community councils provide this free of charge.*

- **Are there any limitations on the number of users?**

No limitations, once downloaded the app works offline and is independent of how many people have downloaded or currently using

- **Any studies showing that the app increases tourism?**

No specific studies but the app is well received by those who use the app.

- **Is there support offered after initial purchase?**

Yes, 12 months support and maintenance.

- **Is the app targeted at any specific age groups and is it complicated to use?**

No, its straightforward in its appearance and use. We have been around since 2012 and have worked on the feedback received since then to create the product we do now.

- **Is the app online only?**

The app is downloaded from an app store – it is then available offline. The downloading of further updates or new walks will require mobile data or a WIFI connection.

The Deputy Mayor and Councillors in attendance thanked D Boys for his attendance and presentation. Members briefly discussed the presentation and summarised that the budget line for digitising our rights of way is not available until the new financial year. In the meantime, it is **recommended** that the Rights of Way committee meet to discuss the viability of this and make the final recommendation to Council.

It was also noted that the Clerk had made initial enquiries with BCBC Tourism and ROW departments for advice on any available grants.

RESOLVED: Rights of Way committee meet to discuss the viability of this and make the final recommendation to Council.

Proposed trails to be added to the app:

- [Llynfi Valley Walk 1](#)
- [Llynfi Valley Walk 2](#)
- [Llynfi Valley Walk 3](#)
- [Llynfi Valley Walk 4](#)
- [Llynfi Valley Walk 5](#)
- Historical Buildings Walk
- Public Rights of Way to be added at a later date – would need photographs of starting point, end point, any notable features along the ROW
- [Spirit of Llynfi Woodland](#)

If Llan Middle would like to be added, we could add:

- [Parc Tir Iarll Nature Trail](#)
- [A Circular Walk in the Llangynwyd Middle Community Area](#)

Funding:

Funding: MTC have allocated £7,000.00 in the budget for this, however there may be some grants available:

- Clerk has contacted BCBC ROW Manager to ask if there are any grants available for this project who has advised:

I refer to your email dated 13th January advising that Maesteg Town Council are looking to create a RoW Digital App and enquiring if there are any grants available towards purchasing this type of digital software.

Unfortunately, I don't know of any grants that the Town Council themselves could apply for, however, the Rights of Way team will be receiving Access Improvement Grant next year from Welsh Government and there is a possibility that I could allocate some of that funding towards part funding this project. In order for me to consider that further would you be able to advise on the following.

1. Are the Town Council hoping to have their own standalone App or will they be putting their trails onto the Places and Trails app which is run by “atCreative”?
2. Are the trails going to be based on the Llynfi Valley Walks leaflets that were designed as a partnership between our two Council's previously? If so, how many were you thinking of including?

3. If the trails are based on the Llynfi Valley Walks then we'd need to ensure these were all open and available for use before the App goes live. Do you know if this is the case for any that you are thinking of including?

Once I've got that information, I'll be able to determine whether this would be something that I could partially fund with the Access Improvement Grant.

I trust that the above information will be of assistance to you and the Town Council, however, should you, or they, have any queries just let me know.

- Clerk has contacted BCBC Tourism to ask if there are any grants available for this project who has advised:

I think that is not a bad idea. Anything to help increase tourism, cannot hurt. From a funding point of view, we are still awaiting news if we have an Events/Tourism grant for the next financial year.

As soon as I have confirmation one way or the other, I will let you know. Hopefully in the next two weeks.

One question, when would you be looking to implement this?

The committee thanked the Clerk for providing this information in advance of the meeting. A member asked if the Council should review the rights of way prior to this app going live to ensure the walks are safe for the public.

The deputy clerk advised that the rights of way manager in BCBC has asked that we contact him prior to the app going live to ensure the rights of way are safe and open. The deputy clerk also advised that the town council can only maintain the rights of way and any large issues must be reported to BCBC.

The committee discussed the accessibility of Llan Middle CC rights of way within the app as Maesteg Council share many rights of way within their boundaries.

It was agreed to recommend to council:

- *to pursue the app at £7,000 but to confirm the annual running costs including 'day rate'.*
- *to issue an amount of money, up to £500 in value to run an advertising campaign upon the launch of the app.*
- *contact Llan Middle CC and ask if they wish to have access to the app and provide their right of way information.*
- *Continue with applying for grants from BCBC ROW & Tourism*

449. TO DISCUSS ANY OTHER ROW ISSUES

A member mentioned that a rights of way sign had been taken down and a stile had been replaced with a fence which he assumes was done by the landowner. The deputy clerk advised that in these instances we contact BCBC who will issue a legal notice if an offence has been committed. The deputy clerk continued stating that the role of the CMO is to maintain the rights of way, we do not have the power to remove and construct property that we have not been given permission to do so but we are happy to receive any complaints such as this and report them to BCBC.

The CMO noted the importance of obtaining the proper rights of way maps from BCBC to ensure that he is working on the correct land legally. The current maps we have are not clear enough and aren't the official ones used by BCBC.

The deputy clerk advised that this was chased up through a freedom of information request and additional requests to the RoW manager in recent years. Members and the deputy clerk will chase this up once more.

450. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. To no longer pursue the CMO being trained in weed spraying and consider a contractor if permission is granted by the landowners to spray in the future.
2. Cllr P Davies to check the spraying regulations within BCBC to see if there is a feasible way the Council can undertake weed spraying.
3. To proceed with the digital trails app at £7,000. Annual and daily costs to be clarified for the future.
4. To issue an amount of money, up to £500 in value to run an advertising campaign upon the launch of the app.
5. To advise BCBC ROW and Tourism that MTC intend to proceed with the digital trails app to be implemented in 2025/26 financial year and to include the following trails with a provision to add public ROW and the Llan Middle CC trail:
 - a. Llynfi Valley Walk 1
 - b. Llynfi Valley Walk 2
 - c. Llynfi Valley Walk 3
 - d. Llynfi Valley Walk 4
 - e. Llynfi Valley Walk 5
 - f. Historical Buildings Walk
6. To seek views from Llan Middle Community Council to see if they would like to add their trails to the app and be granted access. If costs are associated, the Council to review this decision.
7. Chase BCBC ROW for clearer maps.

**Minutes emailed to all Councillors to Read on 19th February 2025
Read and accepted at a remote meeting of the Council held on 4th March 2025**

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Mayor