

**NEATH PORT-TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL  
STREETSCENE AND ENGINEERING CABINET BOARD**

**12 JUNE 2020**

**Report of Head of Engineering & Transport – D.W.Griffiths**

**Matter for Decision**

**Wards affected: Blaengwrach & Glynneath**

**Purpose of Report**

To seek approval in principle for Public Access Agreements to be entered in respect of the provision of an alternative temporary pedestrian right of way over land in the ownership of Unity Mine and Welsh Government following the closure of Blaengwrach River Bridge on safety grounds.

**Executive Summary**

The authority has had to close the existing footbridge on safety ground and until a new bridge can be constructed, an alternative pedestrian access route is sought between Glynneath and the villages of Blaengwarch and Cwmgwarch.

**Background**

There is a pedestrian footbridge spanning the River Neath linking Chain Road Glynneath with the village of Blaengwarch via an underpass beneath the A465 Trunk Road as approximately shown edged in Black on the attached copy plan under Appendix A

The structure is currently closed to pedestrians for the safety of the general public.

Approval was agreed in UA 29TD on 2 June 2020 to demolish the existing two span structure and replace it with a new single span footbridge.

In the meantime and until the footbridge can be reopened for public use an alternative pedestrian access route is needed between Glynneath and the villages of Blaengwrach and Cwmgwrach.

The proposal is to provide an alternative access route over the existing path and track as shown approximately coloured Black on the plan attached under Appendix C.

The vast majority of this route is over land in the ownership of Unity Mine with the remainder owned by the Welsh Government.

It is considered that the condition of the existing path and track along this route is adequate requiring only minor works to make it suitable for public use.

Initial discussions have taken place with the owners of Unity Mine and the Welsh Government who have indicated their willingness to proceed with the proposal.

This would be by way of formal Public Access Agreements on terms and conditions to be agreed by the Head of Property & Regeneration. It is anticipated this will be on a small/nominal charge basis plus payment of the owner's legal and professional costs.

## **Financial Impact**

All costs of the footbridge scheme and for the provision of the temporary alternative pedestrian access route to be funded by the Councils Capital Programme Steering Group.

## **Integrated Impact Assessment**

A first stage impact assessment has been undertaken to assist the Council in discharging its legislative duties (under the Equality Act 2010, the Welsh Language Standards (No.1) Regulations 2015, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Environment (Wales) Act 2016.

The first stage assessment, attached at Appendix B, has indicated that a more in-depth assessment is not required. A full impact assessment is not

required as the proposed new footbridge will provide a benefit for the local communities and provide a safe environment for pedestrians, cyclists, school children and residents.

### **Valleys Community Impacts**

There are '**No implications**' associated with this report.

### **Workforce Impacts**

There are '**No Implications**' associated with this report.

### **Legal Impacts**

There are '**No Implications**' associated with this report.

### **Risk Management Impacts**

There are no risk management impacts associated with this report.

### **Consultation**

No formal consultation has taken place.

The local members have been consulted and support the scheme.

### **Recommendations**

It is recommended that in consultation with the Leader and relevant Cabinet Member to enter into Public Access Agreements with the owners of the land required for the temporary alternative access route on terms and conditions to be agreed by the Head of Property & Regeneration.

## **Reason for Proposed Decision**

To reconnect pedestrian access and maintain Statutory Undertakers services between Glynneath and the communities of Blaengwrach & Cwmgwrach.

## **Appendices**

Appendix A - Location Plan - Blaengwrach River Bridge Replacement.

~~Appendix B - Blaengwrach River Bridge - Options Report.~~

Appendix B - Integrated Impact Assessment - Blaengwrach River Bridge Replacement.

Appendix C – Alternative pedestrian access route.

## **Background Papers**

None.

## **Officer Contact**

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