

## Report of: Head of Nature Recovery

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### Subject: Variation to standing order 16 for replacement of damaged footbridges

**Decision Required: No**

**Recommendation:**

The Authority is recommended to:

- a. Note that Contract Standing Order 16 was utilised to procure the urgent replacement of a dangerous footbridge on a currently temporarily closed public right of way.

#### 1. Key Messages

- 1.1 A key footbridge was destroyed by several fallen trees during Storm Darragh, and the public right of way, Public Footpath PP68/8 in Moylgrove, was subsequently closed for public safety. The bridge needs to be replaced urgently. A replacement bridge was procured to ensure that the route can be reopened. Members are informed that in accordance with Standing Order 16 the Authority procured the bridge from a company who could ensure manufacture, delivery and installation before the main vegetation cutting season.

#### 2. Background

- 2.1 The Authority has agreed Procurement Standing Orders to ensure it meets legal requirements and value for money. The Standing Orders make provision for exceptions, when it is not possible to meet the requirement of the Standing Orders. This either requires the consent of Members to vary the Standing Orders or Standing Order 16 requires the Chief Executive and Head of Finance and Fundraising to report to Members when they have enacted the provision to vary the Standing Orders.
- 2.2 The rights of way network sustained extensive damage following various storms, including Storm Darragh. A key footbridge was destroyed by several fallen trees, and the public right of way was subsequently closed in accordance with the relevant Welsh Government closure procedures, as the route was deemed unsafe.
- 2.3 The replacement for the damaged bridge on a public right of way was procured to ensure that the route could be reopened in a timely way. Members are informed that in accordance with Standing Order 16 the Authority obtained one quote. This was due the availability of specific materials to the required specification for the replacement bridge, the design and delivery time, as well as

the timeframe for installation by the warden team before the busy vegetation cutting season.

### **3. Consultation**

- 3.1 Internal consultation has taken place with Access/Public Rights of Way regarding the temporary closure of the public rights of way as well as the proposed replacement bridge. Welsh Government have been notified of the temporary closure in accordance with relevant procedures.

### **4. Strategic Policy Context**

- 4.1 The information and recommendation(s) contained in this report are consistent with the Authority's statutory purposes and its approved strategic policy context.
- 4.2 The replacement bridge and reinstatement of the public right of way contribute towards the National Park Management Plan Partnership Themes (Connection and Communities), Rights of Way Improvement Plan and the Authority's Well-being Objectives.

[National Park Management Plan](#). [Corporate and Resources Plan](#).  
[Pembrokeshire Rights of Way Improvement Plan](#)

### **5. Financial Considerations**

- 5.1 The replacement, which will consist of two smaller bridges to be installed in the relevant location, are constructed from fibre reinforced plastic (FRP) materials, with pultruded beams supporting the bridges. There were no comparable suppliers of this type of bridge with the type of beam that is required. The bridge materials are durable (with a design life in excess of 75 years), lightweight, and can be transported to the remote and rugged site and installed safely. These structures will last longer than a similar timber structure. Another supplier was contacted; however, they could not provide the bridge in the timeframe needed, there are other companies that supply FRP decking boards, but these would be installed with steel beams which are too heavy to transport to and hence would be difficult to install at this location.
- 5.2 A steel replacement bridge was also considered and priced. However, a steel bridge would be 40% heavier than a FRP bridge, and due to the nature of the location, access and getting equipment to and across the terrain in the area would make a steel bridge high risk and challenging to deliver to site and install.
- 5.3 Costs (~£17k excluding VAT) were met within existing capital budgets and will be claimed via the Access Improvement Grant, and the bridge will be installed by the warden team. This purchase complies with the socially responsible and Sustainable Procurement Policy.

[Financial Standards](#). [Socially Responsible Procurement Strategy](#). [Socially Responsible and Sustainable Procurement Policy](#).

### **6. Risk and Compliance Considerations**

- 6.1 The replacement bridge allows the public right of way to be reopened, and a safe route reinstated for use by the public as well as reducing complaints that may be received due to the closure. Two temporary back-to-back closure

orders were implemented in January, followed by a 6-month temporary closure order which remains in force until 19 July 2025.

- 6.2 The lead in time for manufacture and delivery of the replacement bridge could take up to 6-8 weeks which would also have meant that delivery could have been during the main vegetation cutting season and would take wardens away from maintaining the coast path and public rights of way network in readiness for the summer season. If cutting is not carried out ahead of the season, this could result in increased complaints and greater risk to users of the coast path and rights of way network.
- 6.3 Additionally, any further application for an extension to the existing closure order would need to be agreed by Welsh Government and would need an explanation and justification as to why progress has not been made in resolving the closure.
- 6.4 The replacement bridge supports the Authority to manage well-being and safety risks and compliance with health and safety regulations. Not implementing the proposal exposes the Authority to potential increased health and safety risks.

## **7. Impact on our Public Sector Duties**

### **7.1 Integrated Assessment Completed: No**

Integrated Assessment not required.

### **7.2 Equality, Socio-Economic, Health and Human Rights Impacts**

- 7.2.1 Maintaining the public rights of way network enables access for recreation opportunities which provide positive impacts on health and well-being.

### **7.3 Welsh Language Impacts**

- 7.3.1 There are no negative impacts on Welsh Language.

### **7.4 Section 6 Biodiversity Duty and Carbon Emission Impacts**

- 7.4.1 The bridges are manufactured using structural FRP with a recycled plastic bottle core, with the average bridge removing 3,000 bottles out of landfill and a design life of over 75 years. This means less carbon impact from multiple installations and replacement and are maintenance free. All items are manufactured in the UK.

[Net zero carbon status by 2030: public sector route map](#). [Net Zero Wales Carbon Budget 2 \(2021 to 2025\)](#). [Socially Responsible Procurement Strategy](#). [Socially Responsible and Sustainable Procurement Policy](#).

### **7.5 Well-being Goals for Wales and 5 Ways of Working (Sustainable Development Principles) Impacts**

- 7.5.1 Maintenance and management of the public rights of way network contributes towards the Well-being goals for Wales.

## **8. Conclusion**

- 8.1 Members are asked to note that Contract Standing Order 16 was utilised to procure the urgent replacement of a dangerous footbridge on a currently temporarily closed public right of way due to recent storm damage.

## **9. List Background Documentation:**

None

For further information please contact Michelle Webber, Head of Nature Recovery,  
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