

BACKGROUND INFORMATION, LLANRHYSTUD – “SAFE ROUTES IN COMMUNITIES” GRANT APPLICATION FOR 2022-23

Summary

- ❖ Since the 1980's local residents have been very concerned about the safety of pedestrians (especially children) along the B4337, (Moelifor Terrace, Llanrhystud) a road section with no pavements between the terraces, which has become increasingly more hazardous during the past 2 or 3 years. All previous initiatives to find a solution failed and all recent initiatives have come from LCC / local residents with no alternative suggestions or possible solutions from Ceredigion County Council (CCC).
- ❖ After LCC set up a volunteer road safety group in November 2021, a group member (Tudor Jones) discovered prior to Christmas that grants were available from Welsh Government (WG) for projects targeting safer routes to school /communities. However, the closing date for application submission was fast approaching. In the meantime, the sub group decided to go for it (though it was thought there was insufficient time), while simultaneously attempting to seek advice from CCC.
- ❖ In the hope of a response from CCC, the group carried out surveys of road widths and noted the high volume of larger vehicles using the B4337, and concluded that a continuous pavement between the terraces of the older properties was not a viable option. The sub Group walked all the possible options and it was only when a resident (Avril Jones) kindly volunteered for the path to pass through her garden that the project and hence a possible solution became a possibility.
- ❖ Quotes were obtained from reputable local contractors to enable realistic costings to be submitted.
- ❖ Agreement in principle (subject to negotiation) was obtained from all land owners affected.
- ❖ 30 page application (SRIC) Pro Forma completed (cost under £35,000, excluding legal and compensation costs).
- ❖ All above completed within 1 month - installation 2022/23 subject to grant and planning approval?
- ❖ WG rules required the application to be submitted by a Local Authority not a Community Council.
- ❖ Attempts (quite a number) to contact the appropriate person within CCC proved negative.
- ❖ Eventually the group were forced to ask the then County Councillor (Mr Rowland Rees-Evans) to intervene.
- ❖ After initial contact, CCC again would not respond so once again Mr Rees-Evans had to be involved.
- ❖ SRIC application form & supporting documentation/data submitted to CCC subsequent to contact from CCC, within the last few days prior to the WG application cut-off date.
- ❖ 11/2/22 e-mail notification from CCC advising a Feasibility Study application had been submitted to WG. FAIT ACCOMPLI.
- ❖ Requests for a copy from CCC were not responded to and CCC did not advise, discuss or consult with LCC or the group (despite LCC being the initiator of this opportunity) regarding the discarding of the scheme submitted by LCC.
- ❖ Early April 2022, Cambrian News report CCC success - grant secured from WG for £40,000 for a feasibility study.
- ❖ 25/4/22 LCC forced to enquire with CCC re. grant funding announcement and request information listed in letter.
- ❖ 5/5/22 CCC response – EDS team issued client brief, unable to provide timescales for the project; subject to EDS team resource availability?
- ❖ 15/5/22 to 23/11/22 CCC do not respond to many requests from Councillor G W Evans, i.e. why the LCC scheme was discarded? The scope of the feasibility study? Methodology? Timescales? Progress, etc?
- ❖ 23/11/22 CCC respond to 2/11/22 email advising 'regret', 'limited progress', intention to mitigate failure by 'external consultants' @ £19,500 to only complete by end March 2023.

- ❖ Does this mean that the 27th January cut-off date for the next phase during 2023/2024 will/has been missed?
- ❖ 14/12/22 Letter to CCC CEO: What is going on? Lack of progress? Lack of engagement/communication issues with Elected Officers? An oven ready scheme discarded? Use of expensive consultants? Requirement for urgent action/target dates to resolve inadequate safety situation.
- ❖ 21/1/2023 Letter response received from CCC CEO - reply to be compiled shortly.