

Minutes of a meeting of the Leicestershire Local Access Forum held at County Hall, Glenfield on Thursday, 2 July 2015.

PRESENT

Mr. T. Kirby (in the Chair)

Ms. V. Allen	Mr. C. Faircliffe
Ms. H. Brown	Mr. A. Hillier-Fry
Mr. J. Bullock	Mr. J. Law
Mr. R. Denney	

1. Welcome by Chairperson and apologies received.

The Chairman welcomed members and officers to the meeting of the Forum. Apologies were received from Mrs Alexandra Pyper, Mr Paul Tame, Mr John Howells, Mr Stan Warren, Mr Herbert Eppel, Mrs Pam Posnett CC, Mrs Ruth Camamile CC, and Mr Brian Sutton. Mr Michael Gamble was welcomed to the Forum as a prospective member.

The Forum was advised that as the meeting was inquorate, no decisions could be made but the members present may comment on items on the agenda.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting.

The minutes of the previous meeting were taken as read, confirmed and signed subject to the following change:

Minute 156

Shared Routes

- (ii). *Members were informed that the Leicestershire and Rutland Bridleway Association would be sending leaflets entitled 'Horses and Cyclists' to Hicks Lodge and another bike rental place;*

3. Urgent items.

There were no urgent items for consideration.

4. Declarations of interest.

Members were invited to declare any interests in respect of items on the agenda.

No declarations were made.

5. Shared Routes.

The Forum received a presentation from officers in Environment and Transport Department in regard to education for new cyclists and shared spaces policies in

Leicestershire. A copy of the presentation, and a report deferred from the previous meeting marked 'Agenda Item 5', are filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussion the following points were raised:-

- (i). Approximately 9,000 children per year received road safety training by nine road safety users. The course consisted of three levels which children passed after reaching a certain amount of time spent training for each level. As part of this progression the trainees also had to meet certain targets and outcomes;
- (ii). The Forum was advised that the amount of training provided was dependent on resources available, and that the level three of the road safety course was particularly resource intensive. The Department For Transport would continue to fund the road safety courses until 2018;
- (iii). Children received a high visibility jacket and a badge, in addition to a leaflet on road safety;
- (iv). The team had recently piloted a 'balance bike' which was a wooden bike designed to encourage five year olds to take up cycling. The scheme was piloted in Melton with 18 children;
- (v). Officers clarified that whilst there was no particular aspect of the training that focused on rights of way, the tutors did try to encourage responsible behaviour when cycling. Whilst all new bikes were fitted with bells, the law did not enforce that they be fitted. Trainees were also encouraged to wear reflective clothing and to use lights;
- (vi). Officers reported that the intention of the any of the new cyclist training initiative aimed at encouraging a shared culture, which would tackle the issues raised by members regarding the lack of awareness of other users;
- (vii). There were a variety of ways the Council encouraged non-motorised travel, such as encouraging inter-school cycling events and holding a 'Walk to School' week;
- (viii). Different areas were targeted each year. This year significant focus had been paid to Hinckley following recent development in the area. Over half of the children in Hinckley had taken part in Travel Choice and Access schemes;
- (ix). The Forum was informed that cycling lessons were catered for all ages, and that a variety of people attended including experienced cyclists who may not be confident in certain situations (such as at roundabouts);
- (x). The Travel Choice and Access Team was not involved with bike hire places and local parks. However there was a constant dialogue with the district and borough councils regarding shared spaces.

RESOLVED:

That the report and presentation be noted.

6. Items of Correspondence.

Members received recently received and sent items of correspondence. A copy of the correspondence, marked 'Agenda Item 6', is filed with these minutes.

Members expressed their concern regarding the lack of resources in local authorities and wished to ensure this was reflected in the annual report. It was advised that as the report was overdue the comments from the County Council needed to be added and sent as soon as possible.

RESOLVED:

That the items of correspondence be noted.

7. Reports from committees and working groups.

The Forum considered any reports from committees and working groups. A copy of the reports, marked 'Agenda Item 7', are filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussion the following points were raised:-

- (i). Members expressed their concern that the work due to take place at Bardon Quarry would divert walkers onto an inappropriate road with very limited visibility for all users. Members requested that more detailed plans of the work be sent to the Forum;
- (ii). Members were informed that a presentation would be taking place on the 9th July at Oakham Museum on Lost Ways;
- (iii). The Forum had completed its surveys of all the open access areas it had been asked to undertake. Officers expressed their gratitude to the Forum for the positive approach it took when carrying out these surveys, and welcomed Members to submit any views on open access areas they felt a survey would be beneficial;
- (iv). Members received a presentation which was hoped to be provided to various health practises across the County regarding accessible sites for the disabled. Members were asked to take pictures of accessible sites and forward them to John Law. It was clarified that the path needed to be at least one metre wide to be considered accessible.

RESOLVED:

That the reports be noted.

8. Reports from representatives on outside bodies.

The Forum received updates from members who represented the Forum on outside bodies. A copy of the reports, marked 'Agenda Item 8', is filed with these minutes.

Members were informed that although Natural England had withdrawn some support for Local Access Forum's, they would continue to support two meetings of the East Midlands Local Access Forum per year.

It was unclear if the Natural and Historic Environment Partnership was still in existence. It was clarified that the Local Nature Partnership may have taken on the role of this group.

RESOLVED:

That the reports from representatives on outside bodies be noted.

9. Big Pathwatch update.

The Forum received an update on the Big Pathwatch project being ran by the Ramblers. A copy of the update, marked 'Agenda Item 9', is filed with these minutes.

The forum was advised that the project was still to be launched, and that there was concern over the information which would be received from the project which could only be a partial understanding of the state of paths in the UK. Members reported that they had experienced problems when trying to use the app which would be available for the public to take part in the project.

RESOLVED:

That the update be noted.

10. Funding Countryside Access.

The Forum received a report outlining the options to fund relevant projects at risk due to being outside of the statutory duties of local authorities. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 10', is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussion the following points were raised:-

- (i). Community Interest Organisations (CIOs) were organisations registered with the Charity Commission in order to apply for funding for relevant projects. The Forum was advised that the Norfolk Local Access Forum was in the process of applying to become a CIO;
- (ii). Some members expressed support for the idea, but concerns were raised as to whether or not this would increase the burden on Local Access Forum's which were volunteer organisations. Concern was also raised about the appropriateness of Local Access Forum's becoming CIO's;
- (iii). As the meeting was inquorate and therefore could not make a decision, it was decided to defer the item for consideration at the next meeting and requested that further information on the progress made by the Norfolk Local Access Forum be brought back to the Forum.

RESOLVED:

That the item be deferred for consideration at the next meeting of the Forum.

11. Making our needs known and influencing decision makers.

The Forum received a draft report outlining proposals to improve the ways in which Local Access forums may comment on nationally important issues as a single body. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 11', is filed with these minutes.

The proposal was not to recreate the England Local Access Forum, but a body consisting of members for Local Access Forum's which came together on an ad-hoc basis to consider items of national importance which had arisen. However concern was expressed that this may increase the workload on members of Local Access Forums if they have to attend national meetings.

As the meeting was inquorate, members were advised that they would have the opportunity to comment on the proposals and make a decision at a later date.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

12. Proposal for Future Permissive Access In Stewardship Schemes.

The Forum considered a report outlining concerns regarding the funding of permissive access across the country, and proposed a means to which Local Access Forum's could influence any decisions on this. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 12', is filed with these minutes.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

13. Burbage Common Survey.

The Forum received a report outlining the survey of open access land undertaken at Burbage Common. A copy of the survey, marked 'Agenda Item 13', is filed with these minutes.

Members expressed their satisfaction of the survey and that the site visit was particularly positive. Overall it was felt that the land was well managed by Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council.

RESOLVED:

That the survey be noted.

14. Orders update.

The Forum received an update on the current position of various Public Path and Modification Orders. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 14', is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussion the following points were raised:-

- (i). Members were advised that the diversion of public footpaths from a bridge under the Old Great Central Railway Line, Shawell, has arisen after concerns over the structure of the bridge were raised;
- (ii). It was clarified that the proposed section of footpath to be extinguished in Markfield was at the end of a road, and therefore did not pose a traffic risk to local residents and those having to walk briefly on the road;

- (iii). The proposed footpath to be added in Barwell had arisen due to a resident temporarily blocking the path.

RESOLVED:

That the orders update be noted.

15. Date of next meeting.

It was noted that the next meeting of the Forum would be held on 6th October 2015 at County Hall, Glenfield.

5.30 - 8.10 pm
02 July 2015

CHAIRMAN