

Minutes of a meeting of the Leicestershire Local Access Forum held at County Hall, Glenfield on Tuesday, 6 October 2015.

PRESENT

Mr. T. Kirby (in the Chair)

Ms. V. Allen	Mr. J. Howells
Ms. H. Brown	Mr. J. Law
Mr. C. Faircliffe	Mr. B. Sutton
Mr. M. Gamble	Mr. S. Warren
Mr. A. Hillier-Fry	

16. Welcome by Chairperson and apologies received.

The Chairman welcomed those present to the meeting. Apologies had been received from Pam Posnett CC, Ruth Camamile CC, Alex Pyper, Paul Tame and Roy Denney.

17. Notes of the inquorate meeting held on 2 July 2015.

The notes of the inquorate meeting held on 2 July 2015 were taken as read, confirmed and signed subject to the following changes:

Minute 5

- (i). *Approximately 9,000 children per year received road safety training by nine road trainers. 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;*
- (ix). *The Forum was informed that cycling lessons 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);*

Minute 10

- (i). *Community Interest Companies (CICs) 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 CIC;*

18. Urgent items.

The Chairman agreed to take one item as urgent to consider the restoration proposals at the Albion landfill site.

19. Declarations of interest.

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

No declarations were made.

20. Reports from committees and working groups.

The Forum received updates from the committees and working groups. A copy of the reports, marked 'Agenda Item 5', are filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussion the following points were raised:-

- (i). There would be no permanent diversions as a result of the Lubbesthorpe development. However it was natural that the bridle road would become busier as a result of the development;
- (ii). The Verges Committee had met with the ecologist at the County Council to discuss the Council's approach to verges. Members expressed disappointment at the current state of the verges, and that the policy of allowing verges to grow naturally would only allow dominant weeds to grow;
- (iii). Members expressed disappointment with the current grass cutting policy of the Council and felt that the timings of the grass cutting was inappropriate. Farmers and landowners possessed the equipment and experience to cut verges themselves but were not permitted to do so. The Forum was advised that the Cabinet would be considering a report on grass cutting at its meeting in October;
- (iv). It was felt that overhanging trees and hedges were a frequent problem in the County. The Forum was advised that the Environment and Transport Overview and Scrutiny Committee had previously discussed overgrown trees and hedges as part of the evolving highways maintenance policy;
- (v). It was agreed that a complaint would be submitted by the Forum on the state of the verges and that it would be beneficial for an officer to attend the next Forum meeting to explain the current Council practice;
- (vi). A request had been made for a permissive path on Hall Farm, Blaby on land owned by the County Council to be dedicated as a highway. The authority had indicated that there was no plan to formally dedicate the route as a highway but that it would remain open as a permissive route. Members expressed disappointment to this response and proposed to submit a request for the matter to be reconsidered;
- (vii). Members watched a video on Dementia Friendly Walks with the intention on these walks being developed and promoted in Leicestershire. It was requested that the Councillors look into the current policy which does not allow for volunteers to produce the Countryside For All literature without endorsement of the County Council.

RESOLVED:

That the contents of the reports be noted.

21. 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 6', is filed with these minutes.

Members of the Parks, Open Spaces and Countryside Group had been able to see the rewilding measures undertaken along the river in Market Harborough. Overall members had been happy with the results.

It was unclear as to whether the Midlands Road Users group still existed. Members had contacted Highways England regarding this but had not received a response.

RESOLVED:

That the contents of the reports be noted.

22. Funding Countryside Access.

RESOLVED:

That the item be deferred to the next meeting of the Forum.

23. Making Our Needs Known and Influencing Decision Makers.

Members of the Forum considered a consultation document which proposed to create a national body which it was hoped would provide local access forums with a single voice on issues of national concern.

Members felt that it would be difficult to find agreement on issues of national concern due to all local access forums having different needs and issues for consideration. It was also felt that maintaining the local voice was much more important than a national voice.

It was felt that local access forums had greater influence as a collective group of Forums, which would be reduced if it was turned into a single voice. Concern was also expressed that regional groups tended to have a low turnout, and it would be difficult to encourage members to attend national meetings without the resources available.

RESOLVED:

a) That the contents of the report be noted; and

b) That the proposal as outlined in the report be rejected by the Forum.

24. Proposal for Future Permissive Access in Stewardship Schemes.

RESOLVED:

That the item be deferred to the next meeting of the Forum.

25. Major Developments in Leicestershire.

Members considered the potential large developments taking place in Leicestershire already or in the near future.

Several Sustainable Urban Extensions (SUEs) were being developed across Leicestershire. Members expressed concern regarding developers not meeting all section 106 requirements. Whilst the Forum had already responded to many of these large developments, it would need to check the potential rights of way implications from these developments and any future SUEs.

26. Membership of the Local Access Forum.

The Forum considered a report outlining amendments to the membership of the Local Access Forum. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 11', is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussion the following points were raised:

- (i). Owing to recent changes in the membership of the Forum, it had become necessary to review the number of elected members sitting on the Forum in order for the Forum to comply with Local Access Forum (2007) regulations. As there were three elected members sitting on the Forum, the recent changes in membership numbers meant that one elected member would no longer be able to continue;
- (ii). It was anticipated that a new member would be able to join the Forum which would allow a third elected member to sit on the Forum again;
- (iii). It was suggested that an alternative elected member to that set out in the report become the participating member.

An amendment was moved by John Howells:

"That the elected member proposed to be the participating observer be reviewed".

The amendment was put, four members voting for the amendment and four against. The amendment was not carried.

RESOLVED:

That the proposals as outlined in the report be supported.

27. Terms of Reference of the Local Access Forum.

The Forum considered a report outlining the proposed new Terms of Reference of the Forum. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 12', is filed with these minutes.

It was moved by John Law:

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

The motion was put, two members voting for the motion and seven against. The motion was not carried.

RESOLVED:

That the amended Terms of Reference of the Leicestershire Local Access Forum be approved.

28. Items of Correspondence.

The Forum considered the correspondence which had been received and sent by the Forum since its previous meeting.

RESOLVED:

That the correspondence be noted.

29. Orders Update.

The Forum received a reporting updating the Forum 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.

Members were concerned about the path diversion through an estate in Harborough stating that this was not standard practice. It was queried whether or not this was due to the only alternative being through gardens which the police would not recommend. The Forum was informed that the diversion order was out for consultation.

RESOLVED:

That the contents of the report be noted.

30. Diary and Work Programme for 2016.

The Forum received a proposed diary and work programme for 2016. A copy of the diary, marked 'Agenda Item 15', is filed with these minutes.

Members requested that the Forum meeting scheduled for Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> July 2016 be rescheduled to take place before the beginning of the school holidays. Members also raised concerns that the sub-group meetings were scheduled to be held mid-week when many members would be in work.

RESOLVED:

That the following meeting dates of the Forum be noted:-

- Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> January
- Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> April
- Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> October

*Members were advised after the meeting that a Forum meeting would also be held on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> July.*

31. Urgent items.

The Forum considered the restoration plan for the Albion Landfill Site and the proposed comments to submit regarding the plan. A copy of the comments and map of the site are filed with these minutes.

Members were encouraged to submit any comments that they had to Roy Denney.

RESOLVED:

That the comments made in respect of the Albion Landfill site restoration be submitted.

5.30 - 7.55 pm  
06 October 2015

CHAIRMAN