



Minutes of a meeting of the Leicestershire Local Access Forum held at County Hall, Glenfield on Tuesday 14th May 2019

PRESENT

Members

Mr John Howells (Chair)
 Mr R. Denney (DC, Vice Chair)
 Ms. V. Allen
 Mr. T. Kirby
 Mr. M. Gamble
 Ms. H Brown
 Mr. C. Faircliffe
 Mrs. H. Edwards

Officers

Mr. I. Hill (Guest speaker)
 Mr. P. Lindley (LCC)
 Mr. L. Quincey (LCC)
 Ms. C. Waldron (LCC)
 Miss. H. Hudson (LCC)

1. The Chairman's welcome and opening remarks

Mr. Howells welcomed and introduced Mr Hill, Mr. Quincey and Ms. Waldron to the meeting.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Mr. McWilliam, Mrs. Pyper, Mr. Nicholls, and Cllr. Radford.

3. Minutes of the previous meeting

The Chairman went through the minutes and the matters arising from the minutes.

Agenda Item 2 – Apologies

'Mr. A. Pyper' should read 'Mrs. A. Pyper'.

Agenda Item 5 – Minutes of the previous meeting

Mr. Howells provided an update from Mr. McWilliam regarding the rules of non-attendance. If a member does not attend a meeting for a year, the group can request that their membership be terminated. It was confirmed that Mr. Fisher is an official member having replaced Mr. Tame.

Agenda Item 14 – Orders Update

In the third paragraph, it should read 'Mrs. H. Brown', not 'Mrs. H. Edwards'.

Agenda Item 18 – Area Surveys

Mr. Denney's name is spelt incorrectly in the fourth paragraph.

Agenda Item 21 – Any Other Business

The first sentence is to be amended to ensure it reads correctly.

Subject to the amendments being made, the minutes were approved as being an accurate account of the meeting.

4. Declarations of interest

The members confirmed that there were no declarations of interest.

5. Matters arising not otherwise on the agenda

There were no matters arising not otherwise on the agenda.

6. Requests for urgent items to be debated at the Chairman's discretion

The Chair advised that Mr. Hill will provide an update on the relocation of Scraftoft Golf Course after Item 7, Bus Routes.

Ms. Allen asked to discuss road safety for vulnerable road users and Mr. Howells confirmed this would be heard under Item 19.

7. Bus Routes

A presentation was delivered by Ms. Waldron on the Passenger Transport Policy and Strategy (PTPS), which was adopted in October 2018.

The aim was to look objectively at all passenger transport provision and complete a review of bus services financially supported by the council. Bus Services are reviewed using 3 key indicators and an overall score calculated.

Following the scoring, further detailed analysis of each service is undertaken. There are 5 possible outcomes once the review is concluded:

- Remove the bus service if it does not fit the policy (try to avoid)
- Continue to operate the bus service in its current form
- Change the bus service (e.g. hours of operation, route etc.)
- Replace the bus service with a demand responsive transport (DRT) service
- Replace the bus service with a community-led solution which LCC will assist with

An engagement pack has been developed to inform the discussions with affected communities.

If a bus is not anticipated to be the solution, the Council's baseline offer is DRT. This is a bookable service and is a cross between a bus and a taxi. There is a timetable and people can book a place on the service. If no one books on, the service doesn't run; more cost effective. This 'fills the gap' as communities will not be left without a service. DRT could operate alone or alongside community-led solutions.

Ms. Waldron explained that the Council welcomes ideas from community-led solutions and will provide guidance on establishing and running the schemes. Suggestions are

included in the engagement pack which will be available at all community engagement events they plan to carry out.

Mr. Denney said there was a sixth option; promoting current local services. Mr. Denney raised that DRT doesn't work for visitors and this could affect businesses. Ms. Waldron said that DRTs are designed for the local population but the telephone number will be advertised so could potentially work for visitors too. Mr. Quincey added that they need to manage expectations due to financial constraints. The PTPS is clear and focuses on essential journeys.

Mr. Kirby asked if the data collected showed the services which people connected with. Ms. Waldron said that the origin data is first-class but the destination data is not complete; it tells part of the story. Officers have also been on the buses and spoken to drivers/operators to gain a better insight into this but it's still incomplete.

Mr. Denney reiterated that more could be done to promote existing services and Mr. Quincey agreed that promotion was a key element. LCC currently promotes the Choose How You Move sustainable travel initiative but they recognise that they need to do more. They've found that the public aren't aware of DRT. Once they've completed the review, they will engage with communities.

Mrs. Edwards asked if disability access has been taken into account. Mr. Quincey advised that community transport does cater for those with disability needs but they do need more volunteers to provide wider coverage. Mrs. Edwards stated that there should be equal access on all vehicles provided and Mr. Quincey agreed.

Ms. Allen questioned why Park & Ride wasn't included and Mr. Quincey confirmed that this is covered by a completely separate budget. Ms. Allen then asked whether the Skylink to EMA would stop in the East Midlands Gateway freight terminal new employment area. Mr. Quincey advised that the Skylinks are commercially operated but they will stop at a hub point and there may be a shuttle bus which locals can use to get to the Skylink.

Mr. Kirby queried how the Arriva Click app was working in Lubbethorpe and if it would be extended. Mr. Quincey said that this was in the very early stages but they're keeping an eye on it as they're keen to see how effective it is. Arriva may promote this commercially in the future. Ms. Allen asked if it follows a set route in Lubbethorpe and Mr. Quincey said that it didn't; it runs like a taxi.

Mr. Hill raised that the data collection is retrospective and that there is a lot of development happening in Leicestershire at the moment. He also said that developers are not promoting bus services, despite S106 contributions. Mr. Quincey recognised this issue and agreed that LCC need to think differently about how they promote the services; perhaps vouchers for any kind of sustainable travel, not just a bus pass. Ms. Allen added that it needs to be provided in an easy-to-access way.

Mr. Howells asked when the review would be complete and Mr. Quincey advised that it is a phased program but they are aiming to be done by the start of the next financial year. He stated that all contracts for existing services have been extended to cover the review period. Mr. Howells suggested that it would be helpful to have an update in 6 months' time. Mr. Denney added that the forum members have a lot of knowledge and encouraged Mr. Quincey to liaise with them. Mr. Quincey confirmed that there are a

number of upcoming engagement events so he'll keep the forum informed. Mr. Howells thanked Mr. Quincey and Ms. Waldron for presenting and they then left the meeting.

8. Scraptoft Golf Course Development

Mr. Hill informed the forum that he has engaged with the Scraptoft Golf Club and they are having productive conversations. Mr. Hill has 50 completed access forms which he has forwarded to the golf club. There are no PROW on the new site, but there are a number of unrecorded paths.

Mr. Denney asked if Mr. Hill had submitted the information to Mr. Lindley and Mr. McWilliam to which he confirmed that he hadn't. Mr Lindley stated that if Mr. Hill submits an application, the planners have to take it into consideration during the decision making process. Mr. Hill advised that he had sent the information to the consultation group. Mr. Howells reiterated that if Mr. Hill has data of paths, then this needs to be sent to the planners, even if they're unrecorded.

Mr. Faircliffe asked if the developers are aware of Mr. Hill's list and he confirmed that they were. Mr Faircliffe added that he was surprised the developers weren't being more proactive. Mr. Hill said that they appear to be dealing with the land issues first and will likely respond to him later. Mr. Hill asked if he needed more than 50 forms and Mr. Denney advised that as long as he has 20 for one route, then that would be fine.

Ms. Brown asked about signs if landowners don't want people to access their land. Mr. Lindley explained the process.

Mr. Howell's thanked Mr. Hill for the update and he left the meeting.

9. Reports from committees and working groups

- (a) Planning and Travel Committee (RD) – Mr. Denney advised that he had nothing further to add to his written report.
- (b) Network Opportunities Committee (CF & RD) – Nothing to add to the report, Mr. Denney said he had a list of priority routes he would distribute to all volunteers.

10. Reports from outside bodies

- (a) Heart of the Forest, Access and Connectivity Group (VA) – Report to be noted.
- (b) River Soar and Grand Union Canal Partnership (HE) – Report to be noted. The next meeting is scheduled for 5th June 2019.
- (c) National Forest Access & Recreational Group (RD) – Ongoing – no meetings have been held in the interim.
- (d) East Midlands Local Access Forum (EMLAF) Chairs Meeting Update (JH) – Mr. Howells was unable to attend the forum meeting so he asked Ms. Allen to provide the salient points. Ms Allen said it was worth noting that the Derby/Derbyshire LLAFF keep track of how their ROWIPs progress meeting by meeting. There was also a discussion on the underpass which relates back to Broadnook. The consensus was that direct lines facilitated by an underpass have great value. The perception of underpasses being dangerous is exaggerated.

(e) Charnwood Forest Regional Steering Group (RD) – Report to be noted.

11. Correspondence

There was no additional correspondence to consider.

12. Orders Update

Mr. Howells asked if there were any comments following the orders update provided in the pack. Ms. Allen advised that since the report, there has been confirmation of two minor bridleway diversions.

13. Barrow Crossing Update

Mr. Howells stated that he, Mr. Denney and Ms. Allen had a meeting 3 weeks ago with the Chair of the Ramblers Association to discuss the evidence from Network Rail and will continue to progress this and keep the forum updated.

14. Open Access Sites Survey

Ms. Brown advised that the Loughborough Meadows survey needed circulating to the group following the meeting. Ms. Brown, Mr Denney and Mr. Howells have been to visit the Altar Stones in Markfield today; they will write a report and circulate in due course.

15. Broadnook

Mr. Denney explained that he and Ms. Allen are due to attend a meeting with Charnwood Borough Council and the developers of Broadnook next week.

16. QGIS Software and Definitive Map

Mr. Lindley told the group that QGIS is being rolled out in at present, and will eventually replace MapInfo as the primary means of displaying the Definitive Map in house. However, it is taking some time for officers to master the new software and progress is slow. Mr. Lindley also advised that the County Council are looking at a one-stop mapping system whereby they can view a variety of information sets on the authority's website including rights of way. Members of LLAF may find this more accessible. They might find this obviates any need to install and use QGIS at home.

Mr. Denney asked if the Definitive Statement was available in text form and Mr. Lindley confirmed that it was and he would be able to provide this.

Mr. Lindley then demonstrated the Findmystreet.co.uk (Geoplace) webpage. This site shows the position and status of streets, footpaths and bridleways as portrayed by the National Street Gazetteer. It allows users to select footpaths, for example, and view their details. This is a useful tool and appears to be up-to-date. Mr. Lindley did urge caution as not all of the detail appears to be accurate with regard to status.

Mr. Denney said that there are so many different systems that it's difficult to know which is the best to use. Mr. Lindley said that the Findmystreet.co.uk site is not ideal for researching unrecorded paths but is helpful for footpath and bridleway information etc. He added that if they progress the planned web mapping, that would be the best one-stop system to use, but Findmystreet.co.uk is a very useful tool in the meantime.

Mr. Gamble told the group that he had tried to use QGIS today and a ransomware warning appeared which was a concern. Mr. Lindley said that it shouldn't contain any kind of virus or malware and that perhaps some of the coding may just look like ransomware, which triggers the warning. If in doubt, do not download anything you are not sure of; seek advice.

17. Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP)

Mr. Howells informed the group that there is a ROWIP workshop next Friday (24th May) and encouraged them to attend. Mr. McWilliam will facilitate the workshop. Mr. Denney and Ms. Allen confirmed that they would be able to attend.

18. Annual Report

Mr. Howells confirmed that he would ask Mr. McWilliam for a progress update.

19. Any other items which the Chairperson has decided to take as urgent

Ms. Allen raised that continued development and the additional transport resulting from this is causing issues with vulnerable road users. A discussion was held regarding this, with Ms. Allen providing further details and stating that there is a huge need for more multi-user rights of way everywhere. The Chair asked Ms. Allen to bring her concerns and ideas to the ROWIP workshop next Friday.

20. Any Other Business

The Chair went round and asked members for any other business.

Mr. Kirby raised the email to Mr. Lindley regarding the footpath on Stapleton Lane, Barwell. Mr. Denney advised that a copy of the email had been circulated in the pack, but did ask Mr. Lindley if he had a response. Mr. Lindley confirmed that he couldn't respond fully but that was aware that the Barwell Sustainable Urban Extension would subsume the path and this might hopefully offer options to improve the situation.

21. Date of the next meeting

The next meeting will take place on 3rd July 2019 (5.00pm for 5.30pm) – Forum County Hall (Workshop from 4.00pm).

Future dates are confirmed as follows:

- 28th October 2019 – FORUM
- 6th January 2020 - FORUM

The meetings of the Unrecorded Ways Group are as follows:

- 20th June 2019 (5.00pm to 7.30pm) – Room tbc
- 13th August 2019 (2.30pm to 4.30pm) – Room tbc
- 12th September 2019 (7.00pm to 9.00pm) – Glenfield Parish Rooms
- 26th November 2019 (2.30pm to 4.30pm) – Room tbc