

Agenda Item 2

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Minutes of a meeting of the Leicestershire Local Access Forum held at County Hall, Glenfield on Thursday 27 October 2022 at 2.00 pm

Present:

Mr R Denney (RD) – Vice-Chairperson
Mr P Williams (PW)
Mrs S Bicknell (SB)
Mr M Gamble (MG)
Mr B Sutton (BS)
Ms V Allen (VA)
Mrs A Pyper (AP)

Officers, all representing the Council

Mr E McWilliam (EM)
Mrs K Brown (minutes)

1. Welcome by Chairperson and apologies received

EM welcomed everyone to the meeting. RD confirmed the Chairperson was not present and agreed to act as the Chair for the meeting.

Apologies were received from Mr O'Shea, Mrs Radford and Mr J Howells.

2. Resignations

It was noted that Mr D Nicholls and Mrs H Edwards had resigned from the Forum.

3. Co-option of Members

RD welcomed two new prospective members of the Forum. They were Mr Peter Williams from Leicestershire and Rutland Ramblers and a member of the Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust and Mrs Sue Bicknell from Leicestershire and Rutland Ramblers and Leicester Orienteering Club.

4. Further Recruitment

Discussion took place on the various ways to recruit more members and volunteers and the nature of representatives who would want to engage with this Forum.

VA agreed to forward suggested names to EM. It was also suggested that Trent Rivers Trust should be approached to ask for a nominated representative to join the Forum. The Canals River Trust, CLA and NFU should be approached for a nominated representative.

EM agreed to promote the Forum to encourage new members and to contact the CLA and NFU.

EM to check and confirm the nominated County Councillor for the Forum.

5. To advise of any items which the Chairperson has agreed to take as urgent

None.

6. Declarations of Interest

The members confirmed that there were no declarations of interest.

7. Legislation Update (EM)

EM outlined the Defra announcement on Definitive Map 2026 'cut-off date' for historic paths and a package of measures was being looked up which would be included in the Deregulation Act 2015.

Discussion took place on the local authority's statutory duties in terms of maintaining public rights of way how this would work going forward with the new cut-off date. EM said that the current system was very complex and would need to be looked at when the new measures come in.

The meeting discussed the number of claims that come into the local authority (currently 240 outstanding) and they all have to go through a process which can be time-consuming. It was agreed that EM would be sent those outstanding from BHS.

8. Reports from Committees and Working Groups

a) Planning and Travel Committee (RD)

Mr Denney outlined the plans for the proposed RFI (Rail Freight Interchange) at Burbage Common which would affect footpaths and bridleways but these plans would need examining in more detail.

It was agreed to look at the paperwork at the next meeting. Mr Denney asked for any comments to be sent to him and he will put together a formal letter

b) Unrecorded Ways Group (MG & RD)

The meeting discussed the recruitment to research the process and prioritisation going forward. MG agreed to come into County Hall to help with working on this. RD reiterated the offer of help would always be there.

c) Lost Ways (VA) and Outstanding Orders (PL)

VA reported that the BHS was setting up a mapping system as evidence for a route and outlined how it worked. VA outlined the number of routes to be record that were outstanding in Leicestershire and Rutland. VA agreed to send the list to MG to help with this process.

The meeting discussed the process for the Outstanding Orders and the number outstanding. EM agreed to communicate the issues discussed to his team. It was agreed that the sub-group to the Forum would arrange a meeting to address the issues raised.

9. Lottery Bid

Mr Denney referred to a bid put together previously for the Charnwood Forest and the LLAF agreed to pay for a digitalisation machine. Discussion took place on the situation of the machine at the Records Office in terms of availability and manpower. Mr Denney agreed to write to the Records Office on behalf of the Forum and EM would also make contact.

10. Any Other Items from the Chair

BS asked about the process of roads being downgraded because of rising costs. EM commented that there was a lot less money now to carry out work but agreed to find out more information from the Environment and Transport Department.

PW asked about the situation regarding the North of Leicester and Melton Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan. RD said that this was currently in public consultation and would be discussed at the next Planning and Travel Committee.

EM reported that the new link for Beacon Outwoods/Dean's Lane was due to be implemented early next year.

MG queried the authority's stance on walking and cycling access for disabled people. MG added that he wrote in previously regarding bollards and squeeze gates but never got a reply. EM stated that there is an officer looking at this and agreed to follow this up for MG.

BS expressed concern about the profile of the grass verges and the machinery being used to carry out the cutting. BS added that it was unsafe and commented that Highways are approached to reconsider this. EM agreed to seek an officer to attend the next meeting of the Forum.

11. Future Meetings

RD agreed to send out a proposed date and time for the next meeting.