



**SOUTH LINCOLNSHIRE AND
RUTLAND LOCAL ACCESS FORUM
24 OCTOBER 2018**

Meeting held in Council Chamber, Rutland County Council - Catmose, Oakham, Rutland LE15 6HP at 6.00 pm.

PRESENT:

Representing Rutland County Council: Councillor Gale Waller

Representing Independent Members: Rosemary Harris, Peter Hinton JP MBA, John Williams, John Law, Ian Cox, Roger Linford and Barbara Smitheringale

Councillor R Trollope-Bellew (Lincolnshire County Council) observed the meeting.

Officers: Stuart Crook (Public Rights of Way Officer), Cheryl Hall (Democratic Services Officer) and Chris Miller (Team Leader for Countryside Services)

14 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bob Adams and Ray Wootten (Chairman) and Mr William Cross.

JOHN LAW (VICE-CHAIRMAN) IN THE CHAIR

15 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 30 JULY 2018

AGREED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 30 July 2018 be agreed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

16 ACTIONS ARISING FROM THE MEETING HELD ON 30 JULY 2018

There were no outstanding actions arising from the meeting held on 30 July 2018.

17 YEW TREE AVENUE, CLIPSHAM, RUTLAND

The Chairman welcomed Patrick Candler and Cliff Bacon of the Clipsham Yew Tree Avenue Trust (CYTAT) to the meeting.

Detailed information was provided as part of a presentation, which covered the following: -

- A brief history;
- Recent position;

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- A new way of working;
- A great success story;
- Outcomes and benefits; and
- Access and interpretation.

Members were provided with an opportunity to ask questions, where the following points were noted: -

- It was confirmed that Brexit would not have a detrimental effect on the funding secured by the Trust;
- Although it had not been ruled out, it was unlikely that the Trust would use any funding to purchase its own plant or machinery. The Trust would hire qualified workmen to perform maintenance, such as tree pruning, and professional advice had been sought on the timing of this maintenance. It was noted that the Forestry Commission had previously undertaken maintenance annually in September. However, recent advice had suggested that this should be undertaken in May;
- It was suggested that improvements could be made to the car park, including its surface and signage;
- It was suggested that the Trust liaised with the Rutland Access Group regarding advice on accessibility. It was requested that the Rutland County Councillor provided the representatives of the Trust with the contact details of the Group;
- It was highlighted that the fresh off-cuts of the yew trees at Clipsham could be used for medicinal purposes, such as in chemotherapy medication;
- It was suggested that the Trust considered applying as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI);
- It was also suggested that a single volunteer be sought from the Lincolnshire local access forums to act as a contact between the forums and the Trust.

AGREED

That a single volunteer be sought from the Lincolnshire local access forums to act as a contact between the forums and the Trust.

18 FUTURE OF LOCAL ACCESS FORUMS

The Forum received an update from the Team Leader for Countryside Services and the Public Rights of Way Officer regarding any progress made with the future of the Local Access Forums, Minute 6 of the last meeting refers.

At the meeting held on 30 July 2018, the Forum had resolved to recommend to Lincolnshire County Council the establishment of a single Local Access Forum for Lincolnshire, which may, or may not include North East Lincolnshire Council depending on the decision of North East Lincolnshire Council.

The Forum also requested that the Public Rights of Way Officer gives consideration to the arrangements for its own local access forum covering the Rutland area.

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The Team Leader for Countryside Services advised that he had sought legal advice from Lincolnshire County Council's Chief Legal Officer on the process of de-merging the South Lincolnshire and Rutland Local Access Forum. A plan on how and when to proceed would be developed by the Team Leader. However it was hoped that the changes to the Forums would be implemented by the next annual general meeting in July 2019, although this was flexible.

A member raised a concern regarding the potential increase in expenditure for Rutland County Council with establishing its own local access forum, rather than sharing the cost with Lincolnshire. In response, it was advised that the increase in expenditure would be minimal, as the meetings would be held at Oakham rather than off-site and therefore decrease the expenditure for external room bookings and mileage claims.

It was confirmed that formal decisions on the future of the local access forums would be required by Lincolnshire County Council and Rutland County Council before any progress could be made.

The Team Leader for Countryside Services reiterated that the reason for the review was that since 2003 the Countryside Service at Lincolnshire County Council had seen a reduction in the staffing resource available to support the forums; membership had reduced over recent years; and it was becoming increasingly difficult to achieve a balance of members, both geographically and in terms of representation of users, landowners and other interests.

The Forum reiterated its support for the establishment of a single local access forum for Lincolnshire and for Rutland County Council to establish its own forum. The benefits of Rutland having its own local access forum were discussed by members.

AGREED

- (1) That the update be noted.
- (2) That the Forum's support for the establishment of a single local access forum for Lincolnshire and for Rutland County Council to establish its own forum be reiterated.

19 COUNTRYSIDE FOR ALL

Consideration was given to a report by John Law (Vice-Chairman) which provided an update on the work of the Countryside for All Sub-Group.

The report provided Members of the Forum with an update on the following areas: -

- Countryside for all routes;
- Dementia-friendly walks – Rutland;
- Funding bids;
- Other sponsorship deals;
- Choice unlimited events; and

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- Changing places toilets.

It was highlighted that Rutland County Council had recently appointed a new officer to the role of Communications Manager and it was suggested that they could assist with the promotion of dementia-friendly walks and training in Rutland.

It was advised that the Rutland Choice Unlimited event was held on 16 October 2018. Feedback from the event had been positive and those members of the Forum who were in attendance supported this. It was queried whether the location of the car park was suitable, as it was commented that it was a reasonable distance between the car park and the venue for wheelchair users.

It was also highlighted that Anglian Water had contacted a business to provide a quote for Changing Places Toilets for the new café at Rutland Water. The Vice-Chairman would advise the Forum of any developments.

AGREED

That the update be noted.

20 EAST MIDLANDS CHAIRS' MEETING

The Chairman advised that meetings of the East Midlands Chairs' Meeting were held on a six monthly basis. However, the meeting scheduled for March 2018 had been cancelled.

A suggestion to move meetings from six monthly to annually had been considered by the East Midlands Chairs' Meeting on 9 October 2018 and it was agreed to continue to meet twice per year.

The Chairman advised that consideration had also been given by the Chair's Meeting to the impact of automated farm machinery and drones. It was agreed that the minute from this discussion would be circulated electronically, for the Forum's information.

AGREED

That the verbal update be noted.

21 STREET DOCTOR - FAULT REPORTING IT SYSTEM

A Member of the Forum advised that he had recently used the fault reporting IT online system, Street Doctor, used by Northamptonshire County Council and was impressed by its usability.

It was highlighted that the system was very easy to use and faults could be reported by clicking on a location map. The system also provided updates on progress, should the fault reporter wish to receive updates. Screen shots of the process would be circulated electronically, for the Forum's information.

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The Public Rights of Way Officer advised the Forum that Rutland County Council operated a similar system, Rutland – FixMyStreet (<https://rutland.fixmystreet.com/>), which incorporated a wider range of options.

The Team Leader for Countryside Services advised that Lincolnshire County Council also operated FixMyStreet, for highways fault reporting. However it did not yet include public rights of way, although it was hoped this would form part of the system in future. Currently for public rights of way fault reporting, Lincolnshire operated a 'write to us' system or via the Customer Service Centre. The Forum supported the proposal for public rights of way fault reporting to be incorporated into FixMyStreet.

AGREED

That the verbal update be noted.

22 **NORTH HYKEHAM RELIEF ROAD**

Consideration was given to a report by the Team Leader for Countryside Services, which advised the Forum of the current approach to the treatment of the public rights of way and countryside access network concerning the North Hykeham Relief Road project.

It was highlighted that the construction of such a large civil engineering scheme would inevitably effect public rights of way and access and it was important that as the scheme progressed, mitigation measures were sought and where possible enhancements to what were often known as 'non-motorised users' were found. The report highlighted the rights of way that were affected and how they would be addressed.

AGREED

That the current approach to the treatment of the public rights of way and countryside access network concerning the North Hykeham Relief Road project be endorsed.

23 **DEFINITIVE MAP MODIFICATION ORDERS - ONGOING**

23a **Lincolnshire County Council**

Consideration was given to verbal update from Lincolnshire County Council, which provided an update on progress with Definitive Map Modification Orders (DMMOs).

It was reported that of 152 outstanding DMMOs, 12 were actively being worked on.

It was highlighted that a Public Inquiry had been held on 25-26 July 2018 in respect of Case 182 – Coningsby and was now awaiting a decision from the Secretary of State.

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It was highlighted that a recruitment exercise had been undertaken to fill the vacancy of Senior Definitive Map Officer. It was hoped that once the successful candidate was in place it would help lessen the workload on DMMOs.

The Team Leader for Countryside Services confirmed that the Council's enforcement policy with landowners had not changed.

AGREED

That the update be noted.

23b Rutland County Council

Consideration was given to a report from Rutland County Council, which provided an update on progress with DMMOs.

It was reported that of the five outstanding DMMOs, it was anticipated that this number would reduce to three by the end of the calendar year as two were close to resolution.

It was advised reported that a Public Inquiry had been scheduled for the case at Clipsham on 19 & 20 December 2018.

AGREED

That the report be noted.

24 PUBLIC PATH ORDERS AND PROGRESS REPORT

24a Lincolnshire County Council

Consideration was given to verbal update from Lincolnshire County Council, which provided an update on the progress of Public Path Orders.

It was highlighted that with regards to File 329 – Market Deeping and Deeping St James a Public Inquiry had been held on 21-22 August 2018. It was advised that the order had been confirmed subject to the path being widened by a foot to allow extra space.

AGREED

That the update be noted.

24b Rutland County Council

Consideration was given to a report from Rutland County Council, which provided an update on progress with PPOs.

It was advised that a new case at Seaton had been received.

Discussions were ongoing regarding the proposed route at Langham.

AGREED

That the report be noted.

25 RIGHTS OF WAY IMPROVEMENT PLAN - UPDATE

25a Lincolnshire County Council

The Forum was advised that the Team Leader for Countryside Services advised that work would be undertaken in January 2019 on a revision to the Lincolnshire Rights of Way Improvement Plan.

The Team Leader for Countryside Services had scheduled a meeting with the Council's Community Engagement Team regarding establishing a plan to engage with parish councils and user groups once the draft revised plan was available for consultation.

AGREED

That the update be noted.

25b Rutland County Council - Draft Rights of Way Improvement Plan

Consideration was given to a draft Rights of Improvement Plan (ROWIP) 2018 – 2027 for Rutland County Council.

It was advised that the twelve week consultation period had now commenced and would conclude on 19 January 2019. Feedback forms were available for individual members of the Forum to complete.

A member of the Forum advised that having read through the document there were sections that required updating, as it included out of date information. It was confirmed that the document would be updated.

It was also suggested that the document was more explicit so it was clear that the aspirations set out in the draft ROWIP could only be achieved if funding allowed, which was largely reliant out the local government budget settlement.

The Rutland County Councillor advised that she would circulate electronically, via the Secretary, her written feedback on the ROWIP.

AGREED

That the update be noted.

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26 DATES AND TIMES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

AGREED

That future meeting of the Forum be held on the following dates, times and locations:

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- 16 January 2019 at 2.00 pm – Guildhall Arts Centre, St Peter's Hill, Grantham
- 24 April 2019 at 2.00 pm - Court Room, Stamford Town Council, Stamford

The Chairman circulated a copy of the Choice Unlimited leaflet for Rutland, which promoted the event on 16 October 2018.

The meeting closed at 8.25 pm.