



**MID-LINCOLNSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS
FORUM
3 JULY 2018**

PRESENT: CHRIS PADLEY (CHAIRMAN)

Representing Lincolnshire County Council: Councillor Bill Aron

Representing North East Lincolnshire Council:

Representing Independent Members: Dr Chris Allison, Colin Smith, Ray Shipley and Richard Graham

Officers: Steve Blagg (Democratic Services Officer), Matthew Chaplin (Public Rights of Way Mapping Officer, North East Lincolnshire Council) and Chris Miller (Team Leader for Countryside Services)

1 TOUR OF THE LINCOLNSHIRE COASTAL COUNTRY PARK

(Owing to a traffic accident on one of the main routes leading to the meeting venue the start of the meeting was delayed and therefore it was agreed not to tour the Coastal Country Park prior to the formal part of the meeting as planned. The meeting started at 2.35pm but was inquorate until the arrival of Councillor Bill Aron at minute 8. Minute No's 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 were delayed until the arrival of Councillor Bill Aron).

Officers made a presentation on the current situation in connection with rights of way in the Park and highlighted the following:-

- The constraints on the current rights of way network by the existing road network.
- Rights of way in the northern part of the Park, particularly the area between Chapel St Leonards and Sandilands would be examined first.
- Those routes often used by the public would be examined first.
- Some large bridges had been removed by the Internal Drainage Board in the past.
- The bridleway route owned by Mablethorpe and Sutton Town Council was being upgraded. The Town Council had originally been against the upgrade due to concerns about a possible clash between horse riders and walkers. Officers stated that they were in discussion with a local farmer about the provision of a footpath behind the hedge to overcome this issue.
- The number of bridges in the southern part of the Park would be rationalised.
- The Way Marking of established rights of way had been implemented.
- The opening of the new Observatory had been delayed additional work.
- An update of the development of the English Coastal Footpath was given.

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- The Council was examining applying for Heritage Coast status for this part of the coast. However, there were a number of hurdles to be negotiated before this could be achieved.

2 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN FOR 2018/19

On a motion by Councillor Bill Aron, seconded by Colin Smith, it was –

RESOLVED

That Chris Padley be elected Chairman of the Forum for the ensuing year 2018/19.

3 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN FOR 2018/19

On a motion by Chris Padley, seconded by Richard Graham, it was –

RESOLVED

That Sheila Brookes be elected Vice-Chairman of the Forum for the ensuing year 2018/19.

4 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

There were no questions from the public.

5 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Lewis Strange (Lincolnshire County Council), Sheila Brookes (Independent Member), Sandra Harrison (Independent Member), Helen Pitman (Independent Member) and David Salkeld (Independent Member).

6 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No declarations were made at this stage of the meeting.

7 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF THE MID LINCOLNSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM HELD ON 17 APRIL 2018

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the previous meeting of the Forum held on 17 April 2018, be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

8 ACTIONS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF THE FORUM IF NOT ALREADY ON THE AGENDA

There were no actions from the previous meeting.

9 CONSIDERATION OF THE REORGANISATION OF LOCAL ACCESS FORUMS FOR LINCOLNSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

The Forum received a report in connection with alternative options for the organisation of Lincolnshire County Council's two Local Access Forums.

Officers gave a brief history of the formation of the Forums in 2003 and after 15 years, the County Council was seeking the Forums' views on proposals to consider the organisation of the Forums across the area.

Officers stated that, amongst others, the reasons for the review was that since 2003 the Countryside Service had seen a reduction in the staffing resource available to support the Forums, that membership of the Forums had dwindled over recent years and that it was becoming increasingly difficult to achieve both a geographical and membership balance but also between users, landowners and other interests.

The Council was therefore seeking the advice of both Forums to:-

- Sever the South Lincolnshire and Rutland Joint Forum
- Reconstitute a Lincolnshire Local Access Forum
- Contact North Lincolnshire Council for a view on a sole pan-Lincolnshire or whether a merger with North East Lincolnshire Council was a more viable option.

Officers stated that they were not aware of any other local authority in the country that split itself into two areas.

Comments by the Forum and the responses by officers, where appropriate, included:-

- Officers stated that North East Lincolnshire preferred to be associated with Lincolnshire as they had shared PROWS with the county and were members of the Wolds AONB Joint Management Committee.
- Where would meetings be held if there was one Forum? Officers stated that in the event of one Forum being agreed one location might be preferable.
- Was there any financial advantage in having only one Forum? Officers stated that there would be marginal cost savings because of fewer meetings.
- If there was one Forum it would be necessary to provide more maps to help members. Officers suggested this could be achieved by presenting maps on a projector.
- Officers stated that formal responses would need to be sought from Rutland County Council and North East Lincolnshire on the proposals. In the meantime, officers were happy to re-appoint existing members to one Forum should it be agreed to pursue this course of action as there were already numerous vacancies.
- Officers stated that the current administrative arrangements for the Forums would continue to the next AGM to allow the proposals to be examined.

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RESOLVED

That a single Local Access Forum which may, or may not, include North East Lincolnshire Council Forum according to the wishes of North East Lincolnshire, be recommended.

10 RESPONSE TO DEFRA BY THE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM ON THE EFFECTS OF BREXIT ON THE COUNTRYSIDE

The Chairman reported that he had not had an opportunity to prepare a report on a response to the consultation by Defra and in his opinion the consultation was vague. Officers agreed with the Chairman and added that a response had been sent on behalf of Way Mark. Officers stated that there seemed to be more emphasis on agriculture and access was not prominent. The Secretary of State had emphasised the "public good" instead of agriculture receiving payment to produce food. Officers stated that all national user bodies had been asked to submit their own ideas and that they wanted to avoid nothing too onerous being added to the workload of Local Government. Officers stated that some good ideas had been suggested including paying farmers to maintain PROWs.

It was agreed to keep this item on the agenda for the next meeting.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

11 COUNTRYSIDE FOR ALL

The Forum received a report from John Law, a representative of the South Lincolnshire Local Access Forum, in connection with countryside for all routes.

The Forum's attention was drawn to the various actions in the report which affected the Forum. These included "other sponsorship deals" and "choice unlimited events". The Forum supported the various actions identified in the report on "other sponsorship deals" but following concerns expressed by officers about the Forum exceeding its terms of reference in connection with the "choice unlimited events" actions the Forum agreed to support the action John Law was proposing to take on this matter and to thank him for his work as a voluntary member. Officers reminded the Forum that its function was to advise the local authority and Natural England on access issues. Officers stated that they did not think that Natural England would have an issue with John Law's proposals.

RESOLVED

That the various actions detailed in the report under the headings of "other sponsorship deals" and "choice unlimited events" be supported.

12 REPORTS OF NORTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

12a Countryside and Rights of Way Improvement Plan

The Forum received a report from North East Lincolnshire in connection with its Rights of Way Improvement Plan objectives.

Officers stated that the views of colleagues were still being sought on the Plan and that the Plan would be updated around five themes with objectives for each theme.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

12b Definitive Map Modification Orders

The Forum received a report from North East Lincolnshire in connection with its Definitive Map Modification Orders.

Officers drew the Forum's attention to the following matters:-

- DMMO 7 (Vicarage Gardens/Compton Drive to Bargate) – An objection had been received from a local school to the Order.
- DMMO 9 (Cormorant Drive to Great Coates Road, Grimsby – this was for a Gating Order because of anti-social behaviour.
- Another request for a DMMO at Butt Lane, Laceby had just been received.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

12c Progress of Public Path Orders

The Forum received a report in connection with the progress of North East Lincolnshire's Public Path Orders.

Officers highlighted the following matters:-

- PPO 19 (Stallingborough Footpath 37) – The Order for the extinguishment of the footpath had now been approved by the Planning Committee.
- PPO 17 (South Killingholme Footpath 94) – The reason for the inclusion of this footpath was that it now crossed into North East Lincolnshire's boundary from Lincolnshire.
- PPO 19 (Stallingborough Footpath 37) – This Order had been initiated by Network Rail because of anti-social behaviour on the railway line. Officers hoped that Network Rail would provide more comprehensive information than they had done in the past.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

13 REPORTS BY LINCOLNSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

13a Progress of Definitive Map Modification Orders

The Forum received a report in connection with the progress of Lincolnshire County Council's Definitive Map Modification Orders.

Officers stated that now that there was a full complement of staff it was hoped to expedite the Orders better than had been the case in the past. Members were advised that a Public Inquiry was imminent and stated that this might of interest to Members because of its unique nature. Members would be advised when the Inquiry would take place to enable them to attend if they so wished.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

13b Progress of Public Path Orders

The Forum received a report in connection with the progress of Lincolnshire County Council's Public Path Orders.

Officers and Members highlighted the following matters:-

- The development of the English Coastal Footpath was a priority for the future.
- Examples of existing issues on the footpath network included trying to resolve the problems of houses being built on the network
- Footpath 18 (Donna Nook) – The Environment Agency had realigned the coastline but North Somercotes Parish Council were not happy with this action because of a 40 metre breach in the sea defences to let water in to support flora and fauna. A Definitive Map Modification Order had been prepared for horse riders but this had been turned down by the Secretary of State. The Environment Agency had gone to the Secretary of State to divert the footpath along the coast embankment and objections had been received. Following a Public Inquiry the diversion was agreed and subsequently moved inland. This would eventually become part of the English Coast Footpath.
- A Member referred to an application by a resident in Market Rasen to create a hardstanding area for a flower bed immediately outside of their property which meant that walkers would have to walk on the road. Highways were aware of this matter and stated that the matter had been referred to legal. A formal complaint about the hardstanding area had been submitted. Because of concerns about whether to use Highways or Magistrates powers to prevent such schemes taking place in the future without proper consultation it was agreed to place this matter on the agenda for the next meeting.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted and that the process of dealing with applications for the installation of hardstanding areas outside properties be considered at the next meeting.

14 DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Forum would be arranged for 2.00pm on Tuesday 23 October 2018 at the County Offices, Lincoln.

The meeting closed at 4.20 pm