



SOUTH LINCOLNSHIRE AND RUTLAND LOCAL ACCESS FORUM 20 JANUARY 2016

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR R WOOTTEN (CHAIRMAN)

Representing Lincolnshire County Council: Councillor D Brailsford.

Representing Independent Members: John Law, Rosemary Harris, Sam Tate, John Williams, Ian Cox, Dr Rebecca Johnson, Paul Marshall and Barbara Smitheringale.

Officers: Stuart Crook (Public Rights of Way Officer), Cheryl Hall (Democratic Services Officer), Amanda Jenkins (South Lincolnshire Fenlands Project Officer) and Sean Kent (Group Manager, Environment Services).

21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor W Cross, Mr B Bowles, Mr A Childs, Mr A Hill and Mrs A Morley.

An apology for absence was also received from Chris Miller (Countryside Access Officer).

22 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS OF LOCAL ACCESS FORUMS AS FOLLOWS: -

22a Minutes of the previous meeting of the South Lincolnshire and Rutland Local Access Forum held on 22 July 2015

AGREED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 22 July 2015 be approved by the Chairman as a correct record.

22b Minutes of the Joint Meeting of the Mid-Lincolnshire and South Lincolnshire and Rutland Local Access Forums held on 20 October 2015

AGREED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 20 October 2015 be approved by the Chairman as a correct record.

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There were no actions arising from the minutes of the last meeting in addition to those already listed on the agenda for consideration.

24 THE COUNTY COUNCIL'S BUDGET PROPOSALS FOR 2016/17

The Group Manager – Environmental Services provided the Local Access Forum with a verbal update on the County Council's budget proposals for 2016/17.

Members were advised that the County Council's Executive's budget proposals for 2016/17 were currently out for consultation. The County Council was expected to make savings of circa £42m for 2016/17, with further substantial reductions in funding in following years. A final decision on the budget would be taken by County Council at its meeting on 19 February 2016.

Members raised concerns on how the budget cuts would impact on rights of way.

AGREED

That the update be noted.

25 PRIORITISATION OF PATH, ASSOCIATED WORKS TIMESCALES AND PROACTIVE INSPECTION REGIMES

Consideration was given to a report from the Group Manager – Environmental Services, which invited Members to consider a proposal, owing to budgetary constraints, to prioritise paths and the associated works timescales, alongside the County Council's proactive inspection regimes.

Members were advised that as a consequence of direct funding and staffing decreases over a number of years, the Rights of Way service was required to review the following elements of its work, as follows: -

- the prioritisation of public rights of way;
- the timescales to which the County Council would commit to undertake different types of works, in itself linked to the priority of the individual rights of way.

The report sought written advice from the Local Access Forum to the County Council. Further to this, it was suggested that should any Member have any comments on the content of the reports, to forward them onto the Democratic Services Officer by 29 January 2016.

AGREED

That Members of the Forum be requested to forward any comments on the report to the Democratic Services Officer by 29 January 2016.

26 HIGHER LEVEL STEWARDSHIP SITES

The Vice-Chairman advised Members that he was in the process of producing letters to the Parish Councils, which would be signed by the Chairman of the Local Access Forum.

As this would be the first point of contact for the parish councils, it was advised that those that fell within the area of Rutland County Council be dealt with in a different way. It was therefore suggested that the Vice-Chairman consulted with the Public Rights of Way Officer on the best way forward.

AGREED

That the update be noted.

27 COUNTY FARMS

The Vice-Chairman advised Members that he had received an email from Lincolnshire County Council, advising that owing to limited resources it had not been possible to produce the plans which detailed tenancies that were coming to an end, as received in previous years, for 2015.

It was hoped that the plans for 2016/17 would be available for the Local Access Forum's consideration.

AGREED

That the update be noted.

28 LOST WAYS SUB-GROUP

Consideration was given to a report from the Vice-Chairman of the Local Access Forum on the work of the Lost Ways Sub-Group.

As part of this item, a draft email was circulated at the meeting which was written on behalf of the Chairman, in relation to a Planning Application for a New Livestock Building in Exton, Rutland. It was proposed that the Local Access Forum would object to the planning application on the grounds that it was likely that the site of the proposed building lay over the route of a historic public right of way. However, should the landowner be prepared to dedicate an alternative suitable diverted route, the Forum would withdraw its' objection.

Following advice from officers, it was agreed that the wording in the draft email would be amended advising that historical research on the possible 'Lost Way' was currently being carried out and that in the event of Planning Permission being granted, the imposition of a Planning Condition requiring the landowner to dedicate a suitable diversion to the right of way was introduced.

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Owing to the limited number of Local Access Forum meetings each year, it was suggested that responsibility for responding to planning applications of this nature were delegated to the Lost Ways Sub-Group. Any responses would still be signed off by the Chairman of the Local Access Forum, prior to submission.

AGREED

- (1) That responsibility for responding to planning applications which involve possible 'lost ways' be delegated to the Lost Ways Sub-Group.
- (2) That the draft response to the Planning Application on a New Livestock Building in Exton, Rutland, be amended to reflect advice from officers and submitted to Rutland County Council, on behalf of the Chairman of the Forum.

29 COUNTRYSIDE FOR ALL SUB-GROUP

Consideration was given to a report from the Vice-Chairman of the Lincolnshire and Rutland Local Access Forum 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;
- Choice Unlimited Event;
- Current Funding Bids;
- Future Funding Bids;
- Budget implications on Health Walks and Dementia Friendly Walks;
- LAF Conference;
- 2016 Lincolnshire Wolds Walking festival;
- Clinical Commissioning Groups;
- Dementia Action Alliance.

With regards to both current and future funding bids, the Local Access Forum indicated its support for the Sub-Group to apply to other funding bodies for the dementia friendly walk leader training places; to draft speculative letters for funding, for the Local Access Forum's approval and the Chairman's signature; and to write joint applications with other organisations as funders, as referred to in the report. Further to this, the Group Manager – Environmental Services confirmed that the County Council would store any funding grants within the County Council's accounts for use by the Forum.

It was noted that Sam Tate would attend the Local Access Forum conference on behalf of the Forum.

Also circulated as part of this item was a draft report on 'Lincolnshire Walking for Health – The Future', and the Vice-Chairman sought comments on the report by

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29 January 2016. It was noted that the report would be submitted to the Chairman of the Lincolnshire Health and Wellbeing Board, for her consideration.

AGREED

That Members of the Forum be requested to forward any comments on the draft report to the Vice-Chairman by 29 January 2016.

30 COUNTRYSIDE ACCESS AND RIGHTS OF WAY IMPROVEMENT PLAN UPDATE

30a Rutland County Council

Consideration was given to a report from Rutland County Council which outlined the progress made in the implementation of Rutland's Countryside Access and Rights of Way Improvement Plan.

Members queried why the number of stiles requiring attention was so high. In response to this, Members were reassured that the stiles were safe; it was that they did not comply with British Standards.

AGREED

That the update be noted.

30b Lincolnshire County Council

The Group Manager – Environmental Services advised Members that it had not been possible to produce a report for this item, owing to a lack in resources.

The way in which this information would be presented at future meetings was currently under review.

AGREED

That the update be noted.

31 DEFINITIVE MAP MODIFICATION ORDERS

31a Rutland County Council

Consideration was given to a report from Rutland County Council.

Members were comfortable with the content of the report and raised no additional questions or comments.

AGREED

That the update be noted.

31b Lincolnshire County Council

Consideration was given to a new style report from Lincolnshire County Council, which detailed the progress of Definitive Map Modification Order work currently being undertaken.

Members were advised that the way in which cases were prioritised would be reviewed, owing to limited resources. It was suggested that the current list of cases would be re-prioritised and presented to a future meeting of the Local Access Forum.

The Vice-Chairman suggested that if any of the cases were potentially a lost way, they could be referred to the Lost Ways Sub-Group for consideration.

In response to a question, it was agreed that the Group Manager – Environmental Services would investigate the meaning of 'an apparent lack of intention to dedicate', as detailed under the update for Case 364, and report back the Members of the Local Access Forum via email.

AGREED

That the update be noted.

32 PUBLIC PATH ORDERS PROGRESS REPORT

32a Rutland County Council

Consideration was given to a report from Rutland County Council which provided an update on Public Path Orders within the county.

Members were comfortable with the content of the report and raised no additional questions or comments.

AGREED

That the update be noted.

32b Lincolnshire County Council

Consideration was given to a report from Lincolnshire County Council which provided an update on the progress of Public Path Orders in the county.

The Local Access Forum thanked officers, including any supporting officers, from Lincolnshire County Council and Rutland County Council for their hard work on this.

AGREED

That the update be noted.

33 DATES AND TIMES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Consideration was given to the dates of future meetings for April, July and October 2016.

Following a discussion on possible dates, it was suggested that the Democratic Services Officer emailed all Members of the Local Access Forum seeking availability for April and July 2016. Further to this, it was suggested that the meeting in April should be held in Lincoln, commencing at 6.00 pm and the meeting in July at the Visitor Centre at Gibraltar Point, commencing at 6.00 pm.

It was agreed that a meeting of the Local Access Forum would be held on 26 October 2016, commencing at 2.00 pm. It was hoped that the meeting would be held at Rutland County Council.

The Local Access Forum raised concerns that it was not being consulted on certain items, for example the Minerals and Waste Local Plan, which was currently out for consultation until 29 January 2016. Officers agreed to take these comments forward. Further to this, Amanda Jenkins agreed to contact the Chairman regarding a response to the consultation.

In light of the comments above, the Chairman requested that an item on the South Kesteven Local Plan consultation was presented to the Local Access Forum at its meeting in April 2016. It was also suggested that an item on 'Sub-Groups' was added to the agenda, with a view to establishing an additional sub-group specifically for responding to consultations.

It was noted that the 40th Anniversary of the Viking Way would be celebrated this year and it was queried whether the Local Access Forum could promote it in any way. The Chairman agreed to discuss this further outside of the meeting with Ian Cox.

AGREED

That the date of future meetings be confirmed as soon as possible.

The meeting closed at 3.45 pm.

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