



## MID-LINCOLNSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM 4 APRIL 2017

### **PRESENT: CHRIS PADLEY (CHAIRMAN)**

Representing Lincolnshire County Council: Councillor D McNally

Representing North East Lincolnshire Council: Councillor Iain Colquhoun

Representing Independent Members: Sheila Brookes, Ray Shipley, Richard East, Peter McKenzie-Brown, Deborah North and Colin Smith

Officers: Steve Blagg (Democratic Services Officer), Matthew Chaplin (Public Rights of Way Mapping Officer) and Chris Miller (Environmental Services Team Leader (Countryside Services))

### 56 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Richard Graham and Sandra Harrison.

### 57 WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS AND FAREWELL TO CURRENT MEMBERS

The Chairman, on behalf of the Forum, welcomed Richard East and Peter McKenzie-Brown, both representing Users of Local Rights of Way, to their first meeting of the Forum.

The Chairman, on behalf of the Forum, stated that this was Councillor Denis Hoyes MBE, last meeting of the Forum before his retirement from the Council after 40 years of service. The Chairman stated that this was also Councillor Daniel McNally's last meeting although he was standing again for re-election at the forthcoming County Council Election on 4 May 2017. He thanked both for their contribution to the work of the Forum.

### 58 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

None declared at this stage of the meeting.

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59      MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF THE MID LINCOLNSHIRE  
LOCAL ACCESS FORUM HELD ON 24 JANUARY 2017

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the previous meeting of the Forum held on 24 January 2017, be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

60      ACTIONS ARISING SINCE THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF THE FORUM  
(IF ANY)

None.

61      GENERIC ADVICE TO PLANNERS

The Forum received a report from John Law, a member of both South Lincolnshire and Leicestershire Local Access Forums, on generic advice to Planning Authorities when these authorities were considering planning applications and the effect on rights of way. The advice had subsequently been considered by the East Midlands Chairs of Local Access Forums at their recent meeting. The Forum was asked whether it could use similar advice to Planning Authorities.

The Forum agreed that this was an important area especially as the Forum had a responsibility under Section 94 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 to provide advice to authorities on access to the countryside. Officers stated that the County Council which was a two tier authority there was a need to consult seven Planning Authorities. North East Lincolnshire was a unitary authority and was able to liaise with its own planning department which was much easier.

The Forum noted that some District Planning Authorities had good communications with the County Council but some were not as good. The Forum suggested that it would be beneficial to hear the views of a planning officer from a District Planning Authority which had a good relationship with the County Council and to seek their views on John Law's report. Following this the opportunity could be taken to produce a generic letter to be sent to planning authorities.

RESOLVED

That the report be deferred for consideration to the next meeting and that a District Planning Authority Planning Officer be invited to attend and consideration be given to producing generic advice from the Forum to planning authorities on the effect of planning applications on rights of way.

62      PERMISSIVE ACCESS

The Forum received a paper submitted from John Law, a member of the South Lincolnshire Local Access, in connection with proposed correspondence by Leicestershire Local Access Forum to various Government departments about public access to the countryside and particularly the implications after Brexit. Particular

reference was made to the removal of funding for provided access in Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) schemes in which farmers received payment for providing new permissive access. This had been removed because of UK Government budget constraints.

Officers stated that the matter had been raised nationally and the Forum would be kept informed of developments as the HLS scheme would need to be altered after withdrawal from the European Union.

RESOLVED

That the paper be noted and that the Forum be updated.

63      CHARITABLE INCORPORATED ORGANISATION (CIO'S)

The Forum received a paper forwarded from John Law, a member of the South Lincolnshire Local Access Forum, which had recently been considered at the East Midlands Local Access Forum Chair's meeting, in connection with Local Access Forums becoming a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. The Chairman stated some LAFs were pursuing this option but it was his view that if this Forum went down this route it could turn into a pressure group. Officers stated that it would also be necessary to create a bank account which would involve a lot of work managing an account.

RESOLVED

That the paper be noted.

64      BENNERLEY VIADUCT PROJECT

The Forum received a paper from John Law, a member of the South Lincolnshire Local Access Forum, in connection with the restoration of the Bennerley Viaduct by Sustrans, which had been considered at a recent meeting of the East Midland Local Access Forums Chairs' meeting. The viaduct was over a quarter mile long straddling the Erewash Valley between Ilkeston, Derbyshire and Awsworth, Nottinghamshire and if opened up would help connect both arms of the Erewash Valley Trail.

The Chairman had attended the Chairs' meeting when this matter had been discussed and stated that the viaduct was located in a populated area and was similar to the viaduct at Torksey but much larger. He stated that the painting of the viaduct was a big job and Sustrans had no plans to carry out this work.

RESOLVED

That the paper be noted.

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#### **65      COUNTRYSIDE FOR ALL**

The Forum received a report from John Law, a member of the South Lincolnshire Local Access Forum, in connection with an update of "Countryside for All" routes in Lincolnshire and Rutland. Officers stated that they had been examining various sites around the county to create routes on those routes with limited access and had been working with various partners to attract funding for this project.

The Forum stated that there was national concern in rights of way about funding and one significant source of funding was the NHS. The Forum agreed that there was a strong connection between physical and mental health and exercise but agreed that it was difficult to show evidence as the effects of exercise were long term. The Forum needed to emphasise the importance and strong evidence of rights of way for the wellbeing of all.

The Forum emphasised the importance of access to the countryside for disabled people and the need to remove obstacles. Officers gave an example of the removal of stiles in north Lincolnshire and added that when a new route was installed the County Council's Access Policy was taken into consideration. North East Lincolnshire Council now had a policy of not installing stiles.

Officers drew attention to the latest developments in connection with the English Coastal footpath in Lincolnshire particularly the route from Skegness to Mablethorpe where access by wheel chair users had been taken into account.

#### **RESOLVED**

That the report be noted.

#### **66      NORTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE COUNTRYSIDE AND RIGHTS OF WAY IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

The Forum received a report on the latest situation in connection with North East Lincolnshire Council's Countryside and Rights of Way Improvement Plan.

Since the publication of the report officers stated that they were meeting the land agent to discuss improvements to exit points on to the A18 (closure of footpath 21 at Stallingsborough) and that it was proposed to move a Sub Station at the end of the footpath (Footpath 72). Officers stated that poachers were a problem in some areas as they were able to use their vehicles on bridleways and that this was being examined. A member stated that any prevention measures would need to consider Carriage drivers and that the issuing of a key might be an option. In the event of the absence of Humberside Police not having anyone responsible for wildlife crime it was suggested that North East Lincolnshire Council should seek advice from PC Nick Willey, who had responsibility for wildlife crime in Lincolnshire.

#### **RESOLVED**

That the report be noted.

67     LINCOLNSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL PROGRESS OF DEFINITIVE MAP  
MODIFICATION ORDERS

The Forum received a report from Lincolnshire County Council on the latest situation in connection with their Definitive Map Modification Orders.

Since the report was published officers stated that in connection with Case 379 (North Ormsby), no objections had been received to the recording of this footpath and therefore the footpath was now opened for use and that in Case 136 (Castle Bytham), this had now been submitted to the Secretary of State for consideration.

The Chairman stated that attempts were being made to provide a digitalised transcription of the enclosure awards to enable easy computer access and asked if anyone from the Forum was interested in participating in this project. A member suggested that the History Group at the University of Lincoln might be interested.

Officers reported that Catherine Beeby had been promoted internally to the post of Senior Definitive Map Officer and would attend the next meeting of the Forum.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

68     NORTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL PROGRESS OF DEFINITIVE  
MAP MODIFICATION ORDERS

The Forum received a report from North East Lincolnshire Council in connection with the latest position of their Definitive Map Modification Orders. Officers stated that the Country Park which included the provision of a footpath (DMMO 8) was expected to open in summer 2017.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

69     LINCOLNSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL PROGRESS OF PUBLIC PATH  
ORDERS

The Forum received a report from Lincolnshire County Council in connection with the latest situation of their Public Path Orders.

Officers drew attention to the potential dedication of a bridleway over a current footpath in the Coastal Country Park area but Mablethorpe Town Council had raised concerns because of the extra responsibility involved in its maintenance and the potential conflict between horse riders and walkers. The Forum stated that there were already many rights of way which allowed different users and all users needed to have respect for each other.

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RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

70      NORTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL PROGRESS OF PUBLIC PATH ORDERS

The Forum received a report from North East Lincolnshire Council on the latest situation in connection with their Public Path Orders.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

71      DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Forum would be arranged for 2pm on Tuesday 18 July 2017 at Huttoft Village Hall, followed by a tour of the Coastal Country Park at 4pm.

The meeting closed at 3.40 pm