



SOUTH LINCOLNSHIRE AND RUTLAND LOCAL ACCESS FORUM 12 JULY 2017

Meeting held in Visitor Centre, Gibraltar Point National Nature Reserve, Gibraltar Road, Skegness, Lincs PE24 4SU at 6.00 pm.

PRESENT:

Representing Lincolnshire County Council: Councillor B Adams and R Wootten

Representing Independent Members: John Law, Rosemary Harris, Alec Hill, Peter Hinton JP MBA, Sam Tate, John Williams, Roger Linford and Barbara Smitheringale

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

1 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

AGREED

That Councillor Ray Wootten be elected as Chairman of the South Lincolnshire and Rutland Local Access Forum for 2017/18.

COUNCILLOR RAY WOOTTEN IN THE CHAIR

The Chairman took the opportunity to welcome everyone to the meeting and introductions were made.

The Chairman also thanked officers for making the arrangements for the meeting to be held at the Gibraltar Point Visitor Centre.

2 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

AGREED

That John Law be elected as Vice-Chairman of the South Lincolnshire and Rutland Local Access Forum for 2017/18.

3 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/REPLACEMENT MEMBERS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Gale Waller, Mr Ian Cox and Mr William Cross.

The Forum was advised that since the last meeting, Councillor Gale Waller had been appointed as the Rutland County Council representative, replacing Councillor William Cross.

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Councillors Bob Adams and Ray Wootten had been appointed as the Lincolnshire County Council representatives.

Mr William Cross had reverted back to representing landowners' views on the Forum.

It was also noted that Mr Andrew Childs and Mrs Audrey Morley had both resigned from the Forum. The Chairman advised that letters of thanks would be sent to both Andrew and Audrey for their work on the Forum.

It was highlighted that there were the following vacancies on the Forum: three landowners; one user of public rights of way; and one for other interests.

4 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF THE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM HELD ON 5 APRIL 2017

AGREED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 5 April 2017 be agreed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

5 ACTIONS ARISING FROM THE MEETING HELD ON 5 APRIL 2017

The Secretary to the Local Access Forum agreed to include the location of the meeting in the future sets of minutes.

Further to Minute 46 - 'Generic Advice to Planners', the Forum was advised that this item was due to be considered by the Mid-Lincolnshire Local Access Forum on 18 July 2017, and it was anticipated that the Mid-Lincolnshire LAF would invite a Planning Officer to attend a future meeting of the Forum to answer questions on this matter. It was suggested that this could be a joint meeting of both Forums.

Further to Minute 52 - 'Dates and Times of Future Meetings and *Any Other Business*', the Forum was reminded that the Chairman had circulated a response, via email, from Lincolnshire Police in relation to the issue of cyclists racing on bridleways.

6 EYEBROOK RESERVOIR - ACCESS FOR WALKERS

John Williams (a member of the Local Access Forum) provided the Forum with an update on the difficulties surrounding the access for walkers to the Eyebrook Reservoir.

The Forum was advised that it had previously been possible to walk round the whole of the reservoir, by obtaining approval from the fishing lodge to pass through their section. However, following a change in management of the fishing lodge, approval to walk through this section of the reservoir had been refused.

It was noted that Tata Steel owned the Eyebrook Reservoir, with the management of the fishing lodge being leased out. Further to this it was agreed that the Chairman

would write a letter to Tata Steel regarding the difficulties surrounding access for walkers and to try to find a resolution.

AGREED

That the Chairman be requested to write a letter to Tata Steel regarding the difficulties surrounding access for walkers and to try and try to resolve the issue with the fishing lodge.

7 COUNTRYSIDE FOR ALL

Consideration was given to a report from the Vice-Chairman of the 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;
- Inclusive Countryside Access Course;
- Woodland Trust;
- Choice Unlimited Event;
- Funding Bids;
- Accessibility Ambassadors;
- Sensory Trails and Green Spaces;
- Gruffalo Spotters Trail;
- Visit England Purple Pound;
- Visit England and the Countryside for All website;
- Changing Places Toilets; and
- Approaching Organisations for Annual Funding.

The Local Access Forum was shown a short YouTube video demonstrating the importance of the Changing Places Toilets campaign for fully accessible toilets. It was agreed that the link to this video was circulated via email. The costs associated with making such adaptations to public toilets were discussed, and it was highlighted that these adaptations should not impact on public liability insurance.

Further to the above, it was suggested that the Chairman should write a letter, in consultation with the Team Leader for Countryside Services and the Vice-Chairman, to the chief executives of the seven Lincolnshire district councils and both Lincolnshire and Rutland county councils, highlighting the importance of disabled access both generally and specifically promoting the Changing Places Toilets campaign.

It was noted that the track from Casthorpe Road, Manthorpe, to the Grantham Canal towpath belonged to Lincolnshire County Council. As it was not yet possible to upgrade the track and access gate, owing to financial constraints, it had been decided to provide a route leaflet to reflect the current state of the route. The Team Leader for Countryside Services advised that he was unsure how long it would take

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for this route to be placed on the definitive map. However, he would notify the Forum once it had been added.

It was also noted that a meeting was scheduled to be held on 25 July 2017 at Tonic Health in Spalding, commencing at 2.00 pm to discuss the Choice Unlimited event in May 2018. It was agreed that the Chairman of the Lincolnshire Health and Wellbeing Board; the four Lincolnshire County Councillors who represented the Spalding electoral divisions; and Councillor Bob Adams (member of the Local Access Forum) be invited to attend the meeting on 25 July 2017.

A discussion took place regarding the Ashing Lane Nature Reserve, where it was agreed that the Forum would receive an update on this matter from the Team Leader for Countryside Services at its meeting on 25 October 2017.

AGREED

- (1) That a link to the YouTube video demonstrating the importance of the Changing Places Toilets campaign for fully accessible toilets be emailed to the Forum.
- (2) That the Chairman be requested to write a letter, in consultation with the Team Leader for Countryside Services and the Vice-Chairman, to the chief executives of the seven Lincolnshire district councils and both Lincolnshire and Rutland county councils, highlighting the importance of disabled access both generally and specifically promoting the Changing Places Toilets campaign.
- (3) That the Chairman of the Lincolnshire Health and Wellbeing Board; the four Lincolnshire County Councillors who represent the Spalding electoral divisions; and Councillor Bob Adams (member of the Local Access Forum) be invited to attend the working group on 25 July 2017.
- (4) That an item on *Ashing Lane Nature Reserve* be included on the agenda for the meeting on 25 October 2017.

8 CHARITABLE ORGANISATIONS

The Vice-Chairman advised that a presentation on Charitable Incorporated Organisations was given at a recent East Midlands Regional Chairs' Meeting in March 2017.

It was noted that there was not an appetite at the East Midlands Regional Chairs' Meeting to establish Charitable Incorporated Organisations and the reasons for this were explained to the Forum. However, the Chairs agreed to take the information back to their Local Access Forums. The outcome of discussions with the Local Access Forums would be discussed at the next Regional Chairs' Meeting.

The South Lincolnshire and Rutland Local Access Forum's position was discussed, following which it was concluded that the Local Access Forum did not pursue this any further.

AGREED

That the Charitable Incorporated Organisation status be not pursued by the Local Access Forum.

9 ENGLISH COAST PATH - UPDATE

Consideration was given to a verbal update by Chris Miller (Team Leader for Countryside Services) on the development of the English Coast Path.

Members were advised that Natural England continued to work with affected occupiers to secure a route between Sutton Bridge and Skegness. The provision of access from Frampton to Gibraltar Point remained to be the key issue and also the need to cross the Steeping River at Gibraltar Point. The likely solution was to utilise the existing Internal Drainage Board Bridge. However, this could potentially cause problems with conservation, such as wildfowl disturbance, and for the Environment Agency.

The section between Skegness and Mablethorpe had already been through the report process, and had received fourteen representations. The proposal had now been submitted to the Secretary of State for ratification. The main issue with this section was the alignment of the route along the beach near the North Shore Golf Course. It was noted that the rationale for this route selection was that the golf course had demonstrated that there was a safety aspect to walking the rock armour pathway, which was reduced by walking on the beach. Natural England, as part of the official scheme guidance, had to balance both the needs of the user and those of business interests and in this case had determined that a short stretch of the route on the beach was acceptable, under the circumstances.

Natural England had begun work on assessing the section between Mablethorpe and Humber Bridge and had completed a brief paper based walk through, as well as some site visits. Consideration was currently being given to where the route at Donna Nook should be aligned, given the extensive seal population at specific times of the year and how to join access through Grimsby and Immingham.

It was requested that the written report on the English Coast Path, which was due to be presented to the Mid-Lincolnshire and Rutland LAF be emailed to Members of the South Lincolnshire and Rutland LAF for information.

AGREED

- (1) That the update be noted.
- (2) That the Mid-Lincolnshire Local Access Forum's report on the English Coast Path be emailed to Members of the South Lincolnshire and Rutland LAF for information.

10 DEFINITIVE MAP MODIFICATION ORDERS - ONGOING

10a Lincolnshire County Council

Consideration was given to a report from Lincolnshire County Council.

The Team Leader for Countryside Services clarified the reasons for the order relating to Castle Bytham being reclassified.

The process for declaring a permissive path was discussed. It was highlighted that the costs associated with this process were minimal, provided that the landowner was in support. It was highlighted it could take some time before the ordnance survey map was updated.

In response to a question, it was noted that it was possible to obtain extracts from the ordnance survey map via the relevant local authority, through their permissions, or via the Ordnance Survey, directly.

AGREED

That the report be noted.

10b Rutland County Council

Consideration was given to a report from Rutland County Council.

A conversation took place regarding the latest position with regards to the order in Wardley.

AGREED

That the report be noted.

11 PUBLIC PATH ORDERS AND PROGRESS REPORT

11a Lincolnshire County Council

Consideration was given to a report from Lincolnshire County Council.

The Forum expressed its thanks for the work of the Team Leader for Countryside Services, and members of his Team, over the years on Public Path Orders and Definitive Map Modification Orders.

AGREED

That the report be noted.

11b Rutland County Council

Consideration was given to a report from Rutland County Council.

The Forum also expressed its thanks for the work of the Public Rights of Way Officer, and members of his Team, over the years on Public Path Orders and Definitive Map Modification Orders.

AGREED

That the report be noted.

12 RUTLAND COUNTY COUNCIL - RIGHTS OF WAY IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The Forum was reminded that The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 had placed a duty on all Highway Authorities to produce a Rights of Way Improvement Plan. The first Rutland Countryside Access and Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) was published in October 2007, similarly with Lincolnshire's which was published in November 2007.

The Forum was advised that there was also a requirement to review ROWIPs every 10 years. Therefore, both the Rutland and the Lincolnshire ROWIPs were due for review during 2017. The arrangements for both reviews were discussed, including how the Forum would be consulted.

AGREED

- (1) That the draft Rutland Countryside Access and Rights of Way Improvement Plan be emailed to the members of the Forum from the Rutland area in August 2017, for comment.
- (2) That a standing item on the *Rights of Way Improvement Plans* be added to each agenda of the Forum.

13 DATES AND TIMES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

AGREED

That the next meeting of the Forum be held on 25 October 2017 at 6.00 pm at Rutland County Council.

It was noted that a debate was held in the Houses on Commons on 4 July 2017 in relation to the number of road traffic accidents (RTAs) on rural roads, particularly those RTAs involving horses. The ways in which the police could respond to these incidents were discussed, particularly whether drivers were prosecuted for their actions. The Chairman advised that he would make some enquiries with Lincolnshire Police regarding its policy and update the Forum via email on this matter.

The meeting closed at 8.00 pm.