

**SOUTH LINCOLNSHIRE AND
 RUTLAND LOCAL ACCESS FORUM
 15 JANUARY 2014**

PRESENT:

Representing Lincolnshire County Council: Councillors R Wootten

Representing Rutland County Council:

Representing Independent Members: B Bowles, R Harris, A Gibbon, A Hill, G Norris, I Cox, J Law, Mr P Marshall and B Smitheringale

Officers: Stuart Crook, Philip Garner, Chris Miller (Countryside Access Manager), Andrew Savage (Senior Countryside Access Officer) and Rachel Wilson

25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor D Brailsford (Lincolnshire County Council), Councillor B Montgomery (Rutland County Council), Mr William Cross, Mrs Audrey Morley and Mr John Williams.

26 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 9 OCTOBER 2013

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 9 October 2013 be signed as a correct record by the Chairman, subject to the following amendments:

- Minute 21 – it was requested that bullet point 2 was removed;
- Minute 21 – bullet point 3 – deletion of word 'being';
- Minute 21 – bullet point 5 – correction of spelling of 'Lincolnshire'

27 ACTIONS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

There were no actions arising from the minutes of the previous meeting which were not already included in the agenda.

28 LINCOLNSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL - ROLE OF PUBLIC HEALTH

Note: It was agreed that agenda item 9 – 'Proposal for a Walking Festival' would be considered as part of this item.

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A presentation was received from Phil Garner, Specialist Programme Manager, Public Health, which provided them with further information in relation to the following areas:

- What is Public Health?
- The Components of Public Health;
- NHS Changes;
- Health and Wellbeing Board;
- The New Public Health Functions;
- Public Health Priorities;
- The Growing Evidence-base
- Physical Activity and Health;

Members of the Local Access Forum were provided with the opportunity to ask questions to the officers present and some of the points raised during discussion included the following:

- One of the key targets was to engage with people who had never exercised before. It was hoped to do this with those people who were already engaged with health services for existing problems. Health professionals were being trained to sign post people to various local activities;
- It was queried whether there would be any funding available from Public Health for a walking festival? Members were informed that the way that the Wolds festival was funded would be changing, and a decision was expected by 3 February 2014 on whether Public Health would be able to support the Wolds Festival. Scoping work was being undertaken across the south of the County for a southern walking festival. An autumnal time had been suggested for it to take place, and for it to link into some of the cultural and tourist attractions. A rolling programme of events was suggested taking place from mid-September to October half term. It was queried whether this Forum would want to be a key stakeholder in taking this forward?
- Public Health had funded work on rights of way to keep the access open;
- The funding for Public Health had been confirmed by the Department for Health until 2016;
- Ideas had been put forward in relation to the proposal for a walking festival, and it was thought that the suggestion to get the twinning association involved was an interesting idea, as there was a need to encourage more visitors to this area. There had also been a suggestion from Gordon Norris to build links with disabled groups in the area;
- There was a need to encourage people to try walking as a form of exercise. Any suggestions for walks for first time walkers would be appreciated;
- It was suggested that the Gravity Fields festival could be a key point for linking in with events in the south of the county;
- It was noted that the Society of Lincolnshire History and Archaeology was trying to put together a series of walks of specific historical interest;
- Rutland had a number of routes which were being promoted in leaflets, work had also been done on developing an app and also a QR code which would provide further information on routes;

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- With the 100 year anniversary of the start of the First World War approaching, there were a lot of historic things to see in Grantham;
- It was suggested that this be brought back to the next meeting of the Local Access Forum and that John Law would draft a letter inviting a representative of the Wolds Association to attend the next meeting;
- It was commented that it was important for people to go for a work in the first place;
- Some parish councils had held village walks in their own parishes;
- Mile stones along routes were important, particularly for users of mobility scooters or electric wheelchairs so they knew far they could travel;
- It was suggested that leaflets about walking routes should be promoted to slimming group leaders as some of the members of these groups may not have considered walking as a form of exercise;
- It was important to highlight the different lengths of walks to people, as first time walkers may only want a short route start with, but then may decide to tackle a longer one;
- The idea of designating towns/villages in the south of the county as a 'walkers welcome' was put forward, with a number of different routes starting and ending at that location. This could also help to boost the visitor economy for that town;
- It was noted that Public Health was currently working with Weight Watchers and Slimming World and the districts to promote exercise in these areas;
- Promotional activity which supported physical activity was typically a district council function;
- In terms of the need for mile markers, it was noted that some bespoke oak mile posts had been produced as part of ROWIP 1 but they were quite expensive. The production of these markers was still supported, but they tended to be included as part of specific projects such as the Coastal Country Park. Where the authority could draw down funding to provide them, it would always take that opportunity;
- An e-mail had been received from the town clerk at Caistor indicating interest in the town becoming a start point for walking routes;
- It was thought that the walking festival for the south of the county was an excellent idea;

RESOLVED

That the points raised during discussion be noted.

29 COUNTRYSIDE ACCESS & RIGHTS OF WAY IMPROVEMENT PLAN
 UPDATE

(a) Rutland County Council

It was reported that this would come back to the next meeting as a 6 month update.

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(b) Lincolnshire County Council

Consideration was given to a report which outlined the progress made in the implementation of the Lincolnshire Countryside Access and Rights of Way Improvement Plan.

Some of the point raised included the following:

- It was reported that 3km of path had been improved during the past year, and the bridge at Skidbrook had been raised.
- The Rights of Way Improvement Plan was just about finished and the completed version would be circulated to the Forum before the next meeting.
- It was noted that the leaflet which had been distributed by the Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership to raise driver awareness of equestrians had been produced by the BHS.
- Members commented that the work carried out on the Macmillan Way was excellent, and Network Rail had also made huge improvements to the crossing;
- It was hoped that the budget for the coming year would be in the same region as the previous year;

RESOLVED

That the update be noted.

30 DEFINITIVE MAP MODIFICATION ORDERS

(a) Rutland County Council

Consideration was given to a report which provided an update on definitive map modification orders carried out by Rutland County Council since October 2013. During discussion of this update the following was noted:

- The application relating to Ketton had been rejected;
- Two new applications had been received – one for Thorpe by water and another for Oakham;
- The timescale for progressing these, according to legislation, was one year;
- The applications were rejected on the basis that they were inconsistent and the evidence presented was not strong enough. It was thought unlikely that there would be an appeal.

RESOLVED

That the update be noted.

(b) Lincolnshire County Council

Consideration was given to a report which provided an update of progress of Definitive Map Modification Order work since the inception of the current prioritisation policy (October 2006 – 6th January 2014) and current caseloads.

Some of the points noted during discussion included the following:

- There had been a lot of progress on a number of cases, and a lot were close to being submitted, responses from parish councils were awaited;
- There were four cases relating to South Willingham, which were not completely linked but would all be submitted at the same time;
- The decision to make orders in relation to Utterby had been sent off, and objections were expected;
- In relation to case 364 – Skegness, it was noted that Paul Marshall had been involved with a group that was helping to clear sand from the pathway. The Forum was advised that this path was not a priority, at this time as it was hoped it would be included in the work for the Marine and Coastal Access Act;
- Many cases were over 30 years old, and since the prioritisation policy was rewritten in 2006, the oldest cases are now dealt with first;

RESOLVED

That the update be noted.

31 PUBLIC PATH ORDERS PROGRESS REPORT

(a) Rutland County Council

The Local Access Forum received an update on the Public Path Orders for Rutland County Council. During discussion the following was noted:

- There had been very little change - one order had been confirmed since the last meeting, a diversion had been extended, a couple of signs had been removed. No new cases had been opened;
- In relation to the paths at Clipsham, a 25 year temporary diversion had been applied for;

RESOLVED

That the update be noted.

(b) Lincolnshire County Council

A report on the progress of Public Path Orders by Lincolnshire County Council was received. During discussion, the following points were noted;

- There were 28 ongoing cases, a lot of these were very old and there may not be the opportunity for them to be progressed in their current form;
- 9 applications had been received during this year. Members were provided with an update on each of these applications;

RESOLVED

That the update be noted.

32 NATURAL ENGLAND UPDATE

The Chairman welcomed Fiona Taylor from Natural England, the East of England LAF contact, to the meeting. Members received a presentation which provided further information in relation to the following areas:

- Review of Coastal Access Scheme - context
- Coastal Access Scheme Review
- Key Changes to the Stretch Delivery Process
- How can LAF's help?
- Contacts

The Local Access Forum was updated on the activity of Natural England and some of the work highlighted included:

- NNR dedication – the first 6 had been dedicated as open access this month. The closest to Lincolnshire and Rutland was in South Yorkshire;
- National Trails – meetings were still taking place between Natural England and authorities to fine tune the new delivery model;
- ROWIP's – a range of approaches were being undertaken
- Planning for two national conferences was taking place which were planned to be held in Bristol and Durham, with talks and workshops from LAF members, NE, Defra, NFU and Network Rail;

Officers responded to a number of queries from members of the Forum in relation to the update provided.

RESOLVED

That the update be noted.

33 DISABILITY SUB-GROUP

John Law and Gordon Norris provided an update to the Forum in relation to the Disability Sub-Group. It was reported that the leaflets for the walks at Gibraltar Point and Mareham Pastures would be the first to be designed and printed.

It was noted that the request for a disabled toilet at the start of the walk at Mareham Pastures would not be possible due to the costs. However, discussions had since taken place and Tesco's has said that its store is open all hours and so walkers would be able to use its toilets. Sleaford Leisure Centre had also offered use of its facilities and Carholm's Hotel has said it would allow walkers to use its toilets as long as walkers purchased a coffee. All these locations did have disabled toilet facilities.

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It was reported that following the tidal surge in December 2013, Gibraltar Point flooded, and the conference centre, café and toilets were all closed until repairs had been carried out. A meeting would be taking place between the Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust and Lincolnshire County Council to establish a way forward. Work had started to improve the access between the two car parks on the site.

The Sub-Group was keen to set up a meeting between Rutland members of the Local Access Forum and disability groups.

Further to the last meeting, it was reported that an article would be going into County News later in the year.

Work was ongoing on getting the website ready, which would provide information on all standardised routes, with a standardised way of giving people information.

RESOLVED

1. That the update be noted
2. That this be a standard item on the agenda

34 TRAVEL4RUTLAND PROJECT

Stuart Crook, Rutland County Council, provided the Forum with an update on the Travel4Rutland Project. It was reported that this was taking a few different strands, and had received funding from the Sustainable Travel Fund. Work included development of cycling infrastructure, and discussions were taking place regarding the improvement of some bridleways. Work was underway to widen a footway from Gretham to Thiston Way. The CPO to move a dangerous route around the carriageway was ongoing.

Forum members were advised that improvements to some bridleways were unlikely to go ahead as gas pipes had been discovered which were too close to the surface for the work to proceed.

It was reported that the ShoreLink bus was now equipped with real time tracking equipment, but how that information was delivered to the public still needed to be finalised.

RESOLVED

1. That the update be noted
2. That a further update be brought back to the next meeting

35 2013 TIDAL SURGE - IMPACT UPDATE

The Chairman congratulated the emergency services and communities that came forward to help following the tidal surge on the East coast in December 2013, particularly those in the Boston area.

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It was reported that the only public right of way which had been seriously affected was Slippery Gowt Lane, which would need considerable work by both the highways agency and the environment agency.

While the tidal surge caused considerable damage along the coastline, it was noted that it removed some of the sand which had been building up on a Skegness path. However, some of the sea grass had been left exposed which could be a problem in the future, and further damage could be caused if there was another surge.

It was also noted that 500-600 acres of land was flooded when a seabank on private land was breached, however, there was a secondary defence which prevented further flooding. This area was a weak link in the defences between Boston and Skegness.

RESOLVED

That the update be noted.

36 DATE, TIME AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that the next meeting of the South Lincolnshire and Rutland Local Access Forum would take place in Oakham, Rutland, at 6.00pm. A date would be confirmed after the meeting.

It was also requested that an item on the deregulation bill be included on the agenda for the next meeting.

The meeting closed at 1.15 pm