

Appendix A

LINCOLNSHIRE JOINT LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. Introduction

Function and Purpose

Section 94 of the countryside and right of way act 2000 (CROW), requires local highways authorities to establish advisory bodies known as local access forums.

Local access forums are required by law to advise certain bodies about certain public access issues, specifically:

- Advise as to the improvement of public access to land in the area for the purposes of open-air recreation and the enjoyment of the area, and as to such other matters as may be prescribed (S.94 CROW 2000)
- Public access to land in the area for 'any lawful purpose' other than the purposes already mentioned above (reg 22 of the Local Access Forum Regulations 2007)

The local access forums (England) regulations 2007 underpin the provisions set out in the CROW Act 2000 and these have been taken into consideration in defining these terms of reference.

The bodies to whom the Local Access Forum are to give advice and provide feedback are defined in statute.

In order to deliver the legal requirements of the Local Access Forum, authority has been delegated to the Executive Director – Place to establish new forums, withdraw from joint forums, merge forum and to publish annual Local Access Forum Reports under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, Section 94 and statutory regulations.

The Joint Lincolnshire Local Access Forum covering the administrative areas of Lincolnshire County Council and North East Lincolnshire Council was agreed in May 2019. Any variation of this arrangement would be required to follow the provisions in the Local Access Forum Regulations 2007.

2. Membership

In accordance with the Local Access Forum Regulations 2007, a Local Access Forum should consist of at least 10 but no more than 22 members.

The Membership will include one member appointed by the Leader of Lincolnshire County Council and one member appointed by the Leader of North-East Lincolnshire County Council.

All other members must be representative of either:

- User of local rights of way
- Owners or occupiers of access land
- Other interests relevant to the Lincolnshire Joint Local Access Forum

These representations will be as evenly balanced as reasonably practical.

Members must not be a serving District or County Councillor or appointed to a national park authority.

Members are appointed or reappointed by Lincolnshire County Council for a term of three years, unless they offer resignation in writing to the Head of Democratic Services, or their appointment is terminated in accordance with the Local Access Forum Regulations 2007.

A member of the Local Access Forum who is directly or indirectly interested in any matter brought up for the consideration at a Forum meeting must disclose the nature of their interest in the meeting.

3. Administration of the Forum

Local Arrangements for the secretariat will be provided by Lincolnshire County Council's Democratic Services.

Officers providing technical advice on relevant subject matters will be provided by both constituent members of the Joint Local Access Forum.

The Local Access Forum (LAF) may from time to time, as it sees fit, establish Ad Hoc sub-groups involving a reduced number of forum members, to consider particular issues. No direct action can be taken by a sub-group unless previously authorised by the LAF.

The LAF may conduct site visits to consider and discuss access and open-air recreational issues affecting the local area.

The LAF undertakes to support its members to meet any training requirements to support them in their roles.

Expenses by the membership of the LAF will be administered in line with Lincolnshire County Council's Members Allowance Scheme.

4. Conduct of Meetings

The Local Access Forum will meet a minimum of twice in any municipal year and all meetings of the Forum will be open to the public.

Meetings will be administered in accordance with the constitutional provisions applying to committees of Lincolnshire County Council, unless specified differently within these terms of reference.

The Quorum for meetings is 25% of the membership at the time of the meeting, or 3, whichever is the greater.

Substitute members are not accepted for the Lincolnshire Joint Local Access Forum

The Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Forum will be appointed from amongst the members of the Forum for a term of three calendar years.

On any occasion in which a vote needs to be taken a simple majority vote will be taken by the Chairman. If necessary, the Chairman will have the casting vote.

The Forum will operate access to information rules in accordance with the requirements for committees set out within the constitution of Lincolnshire County Council.

5. Reporting Arrangements:

The Forum will produce an annual report on the discharge of its functions which will be published and submitted to Natural England in accordance with legislative requirements.

The Forum will design its own forward work programme which will drive agenda items for each meeting.

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