



## SOUTH LINCOLNSHIRE AND RUTLAND LOCAL ACCESS FORUM 24 JANUARY 2018

Meeting held in Council Chamber, South Kesteven District Council, St Peter's Hill, Grantham, Lincs NG31 6PZ at 2.00 pm.

### **PRESENT: COUNCILLOR R WOOTTEN (CHAIRMAN)**

Representing Rutland County Council: Councillor Councillor Gale Waller

Representing Independent Members: John Law, John Williams, Ian Cox, Roger Linford and Barbara Smitheringale

Officers: Catherine Beeby (Senior Definitive Map Officer), Andrea Brown (Democratic Services Officer), Stuart Crook (Public Rights of Way Officer), Ian Froggatt (Site Manager - Central England, The Woodland Trust), Chris Miller (Team Leader for Countryside Services) and Janette Wickens (Regional Development Officer, The Woodland Trust)

### 28 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/REPLACEMENT MEMBERS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor B Adams, William Cross and Rosemary Harris.

### 29 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF THE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM HELD ON 25 OCTOBER 2017

#### RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 25 October 2017 be agreed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

### 30 ACTIONS ARISING FROM THE MEETING HELD ON 25 OCTOBER 2017

There were no actions arising from the previous meeting.

### 31 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 – Lincolnshire; and Rutland;
- Inclusive Countryside Access Course;
- Nineveh Charitable Trust's Visit;

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- Dementia Friendly Walks – Rutland;
- Funding Bids;
- Choice Unlimited Event – timings; Rutland; and Lincolnshire;
- Sensory Trails and Green Spaces;
- Changing Places Toilets – North Sea Observatory; Letter to Anglian Water; and
- Visit England (Promoting Accessible Businesses, increasing Tourism and Visitor Spending) – Rutland; Lincolnshire; and North East Lincolnshire.

The Chairman confirmed that he had received a reply from Anglian Water acknowledging the letter sent from the Forum on the issue of Changing Places Toilets at Rutland Water.

The Vice-Chairman provided a verbal update to the Forum following a meeting held with Anglian Water, Rutland Disabled Youth Forum and members of the LAF to discuss the Countryside for All Route at Rutland Water Nature Reserve. Issues highlighted included low branches, required improvement of compaction on some trails and suitable access to some of the older bird hides and the badger hide. It was explained that the badger hide was approximately twelve foot high, which meant those with mobility issues could not access the hide.

The Chairman thanked the Vice-Chairman for his comprehensive report.

AGREED

32 WOODLAND TRUST

The Chairman welcomed Janette Wickens (Regional Development Officer) and Ian Froggatt (Site Manager – Central England) from the Woodland Trust and invited them to give a presentation on the latest initiatives of the Woodland Trust.

The presentation covered the following areas:-

- The seed that grew into a mighty oak tree;
- Kenneth's (Watkins) vision;
- Woodland Trust estate;
- Destination sites;
- Welcome sites;
- How do the Woodland Trust promote access?;
- The Woodland Trust view on access to woodland;
- Systems prior to 2016;
- Six part system;
  - Path name;
  - Grade symbol;
  - Terrain description;
  - Path promotion;
  - Distance;
  - Time;

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- Paths For All – so why this one?;
- Examples;
- Londonthorpe Wood Investment;
- Reconnecting Grantham to its historic landscape; and
- Questions.

The Chairman thanked the Woodland Trust for the presentation and invited Members of the Forum to ask questions, during which the following points were noted:-

- Information on the terrain of a walk was welcomed as this would enable walkers to make provisions where necessary;
- Should the terrain be regularly affected by weather, a caveat would be included to explain the potential effects;
- The relationship between the Woodland Trust and the Forestry Commission was mentioned and, although there had been tension in the past regarding tree disease, this relationship had improved and information was regularly shared between the two organisations;
- The Woodland Trust would maintain existing access for equestrian access and, where there was a possibility to link bridleways, consideration would be given as equestrian use could considerably damage soft paths;
- Milton Keynes was noted as a good example of where equestrians, cyclists and walkers could enjoy the countryside together but it was acknowledged that this type of network required a considerable amount of investment to develop;
- Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) funding had been secured for stage 1 of Londonthorpe Road, Grantham, although this would need to be matched with £500k in order to unlock that funding. Working in partnership with the National Trust, the Woodland Trust was to commence an extensive consultation process in which the Forum would be included;
- "Reconnecting Grantham to its Historic Landscape" was the title of the project which was trying to merge Londonthorpe with Belton House;
- It was confirmed that the initial phase was for two years until 2020 and the next phase would follow, over four years, until 2024;
- A suggestion was made to include the width of the paths for ease of wheelchair users and parents with prams, etc. Also, to consider passing and resting places on single track paths. It was confirmed that these suggestions were being considered and, if trees were to be felled, it may be possible to leave stumps to rest on, thereby using nature to fulfil those needs;

The Chairman thanked the Woodland Trust representatives for the presentation and invited them to attend the next meeting to be held in Grantham to provide an update to the Forum.

AGREED

That the presentation be noted.

**33      UPDATE ON THE EYEBROOK RESERVOIR - ACCESS FOR WALKERS**

A verbal update was provided by John Law (Vice-Chairman) who stated the new process was now in place for walking groups. Meeting frequencies to monitor and resolve any issues had been agreed with Fishery Management UK Ltd.

Forum member, John Williams, confirmed that he had attended the meeting and would attend the next meeting also although he was not hopeful that the situation would improve.

Councillor Gale Waller (Rutland County Council) indicated that she would also like to attend the next meeting.

Councillor Wootten agreed to circulate the details of that meeting to Councillor Waller and the Vice-Chairman once received.

**AGREED**

That the update be noted.

**34      RECRUITMENT**

The Chairman welcomed Catherine Beeby (Senior Definitive Map Officer, Lincolnshire County Council) to her first meeting of the Forum.

Chris Miller (Team Leader for Countryside Access Services) advised that no further progress had been made on any appointment work but did acknowledge that this would need to be considered as soon as possible.

The Chairman requested that this be added to the agenda for the next meeting.

**AGREED**

That this item be added to the Forum's agenda for 18 April 2018.

**35      WATER RAIL PATH - HORSE RIDING RIGHTS**

Roger Linford (Forum member) provided a verbal update in relation to horse riding rights on the Water Rail Path. It had been disappointing to note that consideration of access to the path for equestrians had not been given before the path was created. It appeared that the shortcoming, nationally, not to give consideration to equestrians, had been replicated locally in this instance.

Following discussion, it was agreed that the Chairman of the Forum would write to Sustrans to express disappointment.

AGREED

That the Chairman write to Sustrans, on behalf of the Forum, to express disappointment at the lack of consideration to equestrians.

36 DEFINITIVE MAP MODIFICATION ORDERS - ONGOING

36a Lincolnshire County Council

Consideration was given to a report from Lincolnshire County Council, which provided an update on the progress of the Definitive Map Modification Orders (DMMOs) currently being progressed.

It was reported that of 152 outstanding DMMOs, 13 were actively being worked on. Four cases had been referred to the Secretary of State and one public enquiry in Woodhall Spa in relation to Coningsby.

It was also explained that more of this work was being reviewed by departmental officers rather than referral of some cases to the legal department.

AGREED

That the report be noted.

36b Rutland County Council

Consideration was given to a report from Rutland County Council, which provided an update on the progress of Definitive Map Modification Orders (DMMOs) currently being progressed.

The Public Rights of Way Officer advised that there were six ongoing cases, four of which were active. It was reported that the case at Clipsham was to be referred to the Planning Inspectorate.

During discussion, it was noted that Lincolnshire worked in collaboration with public health colleagues who had provided funding in order to remove stiles, etc, on walks in order to promote the benefits and ease of healthy walking. Unfortunately, due to recent budget reductions, that was one of the areas where funding had to cease. However, promotion of the countryside for all local people remained a key element of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan.

AGREED

That the report be noted.

**37 PUBLIC PATH ORDERS AND PROGRESS REPORT****37a Lincolnshire County Council**

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

It was reported that a public inquiry had been scheduled, for the case in Marking Deeping, on 21 and 22 August 2018.

The Senior Definitive Map Officer advised that she had attended various meetings to discuss Rights of Ways issues and had found that planners were keen to engage.

AGREED

That the report be noted.

**37b Rutland County Council**

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

The Public Rights of Way Officer explained that the order in Langham would be abandoned following discussions with the landowner to agree a suitable route.

During discussion, it was asked if new/different routes were properly signposted. It was confirmed that there had been a missing signpost at the end of one particular route but that an order had been placed with a contractor to replace all relevant signposts by the end of the financial year.

AGREED

That the report be noted.

**38 RIGHTS OF WAY IMPROVEMENT PLAN - UPDATE****38a Lincolnshire County Council**

The Forum was advised that the Team Leader for Countryside Services had not been able to meet the deadline for publishing the Lincolnshire Rights of Way Improvement Plan. There was an intention to consult with all Parish Councils in Lincolnshire to seek input into this plan. It was hoped that contact would be made with Parish Councils before the next meeting and a more detailed update would be provided at that time.

AGREED

That the update be noted.

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38b Rutland County Council

The Forum was advised that the Rutland Countryside Access and Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) remained in draft form awaiting approval by Cabinet.

The Chairman asked Councillor Waller to confirm when this item was listed on the Forward Plan for approval.

AGREED

That the update be noted.

39 DATES AND TIMES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Members suggested that the following items be considered for future meetings of the Forum:-

- Presentations from other organisations;
- Yew Tree Avenue, Clipsham, Rutland;
- Country Landowners Association – invitation to attend to provide information to the Forum on the issues posed to farmers, etc, in relation to rights of way;

AGREED

That future meetings of the Local Access Forum be held on the following dates, times and locations:-

- 18 April 2018 at 6.00pm – Stamford;
- 11 July 2018 at 6.00pm – Skegness Store House;
- 24 October 2018 at 6.00pm – Rutland County Council, Oakham

40 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Forum was advised that the Leicestershire and Rutland Ramblers had put together a mapping layer of potential Lost Ways. This had been made available to planners in Rutland with a request that the Ramblers be consulted should an application be received which affected those potential routes. The Public Rights of Way Officer (Rutland County Council) advised that he would be progress discussions with the Head of Development Control & Licensing. It was requested that Rosemary Harris, Forum member, be consulted also, as a member of the Lost Ways Sub Group.

The Team Leader for Countryside Services (Lincolnshire County Council) advised that the extension to the bypass in Lincoln could affect both the South Lincolnshire & Rutland Local Access Forum and the Mid-Lincolnshire Local Access Forum. It was hoped that a map to include proposals for some Rights of Ways which may be affected could be presented at the next meeting.

The meeting closed at 3.55 pm

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