

**Minutes of a meeting of the Leicestershire Local Access Forum held at County Hall, Glenfield on Thursday 12 June 2008.**

**Present:**

**ACTION BY**

Mr. R. J. Denney (In the Chair), Mr. P. Tame, Mr. M. Parr, Mr. J. Hefford, Mrs. H. Brown, Mr. H. Eppel, Mr. T. Kirby, Mrs. V. Allen, Mrs. L. Forman, Mr. S. Warren

**In attendance:**

Mr. Peter Williams, Mr. John Prendergrast, Mr. Edwin McWilliam, Mr. Nic Rowe and Mr. Sam Weston.

**196. Introductions and Announcements**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and in particular Mrs. Tamsin Phipps and Mr. Kevin East from the Rivers Access Campaign.

The Chairman took the opportunity to welcome Mr. Prendergrast back to the LAF after a period of illness, along with Ms. Jan Tilsley from Natural England who would be advising on the Forum until Natural England had found a permanent replacement for Jane Beech.

**197. Apologies for absence**

Apologies had been received from Mrs. L. A. S. Pendleton CC, Mrs. R. Camamile CC, Mr. J. Law, Mr. G. Mabbitt and Mrs. A. Pyper.

**198. Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 April 2008 were adopted as an accurate record.

**199. Matters arising from the minutes**

**Minute 181: Minutes**

Mr. McWilliam reported that the LAF Leaflet (discussed at the Forums meeting on 6 February) had been finalised and printed. He circulated a copy to all members.

**200. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest in respect of items on the agenda.

(Mr. P. Tame subsequently declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest in the matter discussed under Minute 206 below as a member of the NFU, whose membership consisted of some Co-Operative Group members.)

**201. Urgent items**

The Chairman asked members to raise any urgent items to be added to the agenda at his discretion. Members raised the following urgent items:

- Footpath diversion;
- Disposal of Country Parks.

**202. Presentation by Mrs. Phipps – ‘Rivers Access Campaign’**

Mrs. Phipps delivered a presentation to the Forum entitled ‘Rivers Access Campaign’. A copy of the slides forming the presentation is filed with these minutes.

Subsequent to the presentation, the following points were made:

- The Rivers Access Campaign genuinely sought to work together with other groups, such as anglers, to increase access to the Country’s rivers;
- The Campaign was hopeful that an ‘Access Code’ could be developed.

AGREED:

- (a) That the presentation be noted;
- (b) That the Forum be fully supportive of the Campaign.

**ALL**

**203. Change to the order of business**

The Chairman sought and obtained the consent of the Forum to vary the order of business from that set out in the agenda.

**204. Departmental Restructuring**

Mr. Williams updated the Forum on the Departmental restructuring that was taking place within the Community Services Department.

The Rights of Way and Country Parks Teams would now be merged to form a Countryside Team. Interviews would soon be taking place for management roles within the new structure.

**205. Urgent item – Country Parks Disposal**

Mr. Williams updated the Forum on the situation regarding the disposal of the following Country Parks:

### Crow Mills

Oadby and Wigston Borough Council interested in acquiring the site. Discussions on terms in progress. Target completion date September 2008.

### Sutton Cheney Wharf

This site is leased from British Waterways. Notice of termination issued. Final details to be agreed. Target completion date September 2008.

### Altar Stones

Heads of Terms agreed with Leicester and Rutland Wildlife Trust (LRWT). Target completion date September 2008.

The Chairman informed the Forum that he had received complaints about the County Council cutting trees down in this area and concerns about barbed wire being used to keep cattle in certain fields.

### Lount

Heads of Terms agreed with LRWT. Public consultation advert to be issued shortly. Target completion date December 2008.

### Other Sites

Pitt Lane, Coleorton
Sarah's Wood, Moira
A511 Coalville (2 No. sites)
Bagworth New Wood

Public advert to be placed by August 2008, to invite expressions of interest. The following bodies will be given advance notice to allow them to consider whether they may be interested:

Leicester and Rutland Wildlife Trust  
National Forest Company  
Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council  
North West Leicestershire District Council  
Forestry Commission  
Heart of the National Forest Foundation.

Target completion date for these four sites is March 2009.

### Newfields Colliery

Preliminary discussions are underway within National Forest Company about them acquiring this small site.

AGREED:

That the information be noted.

**206. Growth Points and Green Infrastructure**

Mr. McWilliam delivered a presentation entitled 'Green Infrastructure: An Update for Leicestershire'. A copy of the slides forming the presentation is filed with these minutes.

Mr. McWilliam reported that an appointment would soon be made at the County Council for a Green Infrastructure Officer.

AGREED:

- (a) That the presentation be noted;
- (b) That the new Green Infrastructure Officer be requested to give a presentation at the Forum at such a time when he or she has had an opportunity to settle in their new post.

**E.McW**

**207. Eco-Town, Pennbury (Stoughton)**

Mr. Williams informed the Forum that a series of public meetings were taking place on this issue. He further informed that the County Council Cabinet would be objecting to the development on principle, as housing provision had already been made in the Regional Spatial Strategy document.

AGREED:

- (a) That the information be noted.
- (b) That a letter be sent to the Co-Operative Group stating that there were insufficient levels of detail within the consultation document.

**E.McW/S.W.**

**208. Gating Orders**

The Forum considered a report by Mr. Rowe of the Highways, Transportation and Waste Management Department concerning Gating Orders. A copy of the report marked 'B' is filed with these minutes.

AGREED:

That the report be noted.

**209. Rights of Way Circular 1/08**

Mr. McWilliam informed the Forum about the new Rights of Way Circular, a copy of which, marked 'C', is filed with these minutes.

AGREED:

That the report be noted.

**210. Urgent Item – Footpath Diversion**

Mr. Warren referred to a specific case on Footpath L86 at Donington where there was an apparent six month Extinguishment Order.

The footpath was now totally unusable due to security issues at a nearby camp site for the annual Download Festival.

Mr. Prendergrast informed the Forum that Legal Services were currently looking into the situation. There was, however, a diversion route, though it was thought that this was presently too long and unpractical. Mr. Prendergrast added that future applications of this nature would have to be looked at closely.

**211. Correspondence**

Mr. McWilliam reported that all items of correspondence appeared elsewhere on the Agenda.

**212. Natural England LAF Handbook**

Mr. McWilliam reported on the new LAF handbook from Natural England.

Due to the very large size of the document (278 pages), it was felt that, whilst comprehensive, there would be resource issues in printing and supplying all LAF members with a copy. Natural England had since sent a letter to all LAF Secretaries, informing them that it was envisaged that the document be a web-based source only and that they were considering changing the title of the document to 'LAF Information Source'.

Some members were unsure about the document being web-based only, as it presented some members of the Forum with accessibility issues.

AGREED:

That one copy of the document be printed and loaned out to any member who was interested in reading it and that CD copies of the document be circulated to all members.

**E.McW**

**213. National Access Forum (NAF)**

Ms. Tilsley informed the Forum that Neil Lewis, an Access Officer at Nottingham City Council would be contacting the Chairman in the coming days regarding how best to decide on the membership of the NAF.

The Chairman indicated that he was happy to meet with the officer to discuss the membership issue, but that he believed the only way forward was to have one permanent member from the LAF sit on the NAF and an other rotateable LAF member.

AGREED:

That the Forum receive future copies of the minutes from the NAF.

**E.McW**

**214. Subgroups**

LTP

Mr. McWilliam was hopeful that the Subgroup would be meeting shortly.

Publicity

The Chairman hoped that the Subgroup would be discussing the LAF Leaflet and Banner.

Verges

Mr. Williams reported that he was hopeful that there would soon be developments in regard to Mike Sheldrake's attendance at its next meeting.

**215. Agenda items for next meeting**

The following items were requested to be added to the agenda for the next meeting of the Forum:

- Open Forum;
- Meeting dates for 2009.

**216. Dates of future meetings**

NOTED:

That the next full meeting of the Forum would take place at 6pm on Tuesday 12 August 2008 at County Hall.

12.06.08  
6pm – 8.35pm

**CHAIRMAN**